



MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

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**Exploring Perceptions and Practices of Student-Centred Learning among
Third-Year undergraduate Students and Teachers in the English Department at the
University of Algiers 2**

Doctoral Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of
LMD Doctorate in English Didactics

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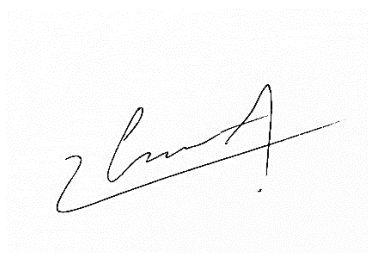
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Declaration of Authorship and Originality

I, Abdelmoumen Boulebnane, hereby declare that the thesis entitled: “*Exploring Perceptions and Practices of Student-Centred Learning among Third-Year undergraduate Students and Teachers in the English Department at the University of Algiers 2*” is the result of my original research and composition. This work has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification. I also certify that all sources utilised or cited in this thesis have been fully acknowledged through complete references.

Date: 24/07/2025

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abdelmoumen Boulebnane', is written over a light gray grid background.

DEDICATION

To my supportive family, whose unwavering love and encouragement have been my foundation throughout this journey. Your faith in me has lifted me in moments of doubt and sustained me with strength, hope, and courage to carry on.

To my dear friends, for your kindness, laughter, and companionship. You reminded me that even in the toughest journeys, joy and light can always be found.

To my mentors, whose wisdom, guidance, and generosity have illuminated my way. Your belief in my potential has shaped not only this work but also the person I have become.

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Abstract

Geared toward enhancing learning quality and fostering independent, active, and responsible learners, educational research has long stressed the need for a shift toward student-centred learning (SCL). Yet evidence from the higher-education literature, together with concerns about the realities of SCL enactment, suggests that SCL is often endorsed in principle but implemented unevenly in practice, especially under institutional constraints and with limited research integrating both teachers' and students' perspectives. Addressing this gap, the present study investigated the adoption of SCL in Algerian higher education, focusing on third-year undergraduate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms at the University of Algiers 2. Drawing on Weimer's (2002) five tenets of SCL, it examined how third-year EFL students and their EFL teachers perceive student-centredness and the extent to which these perceptions align with observed classroom practices. A mixed-methods exploratory design was employed with 220 students and 22 teachers, using questionnaires, classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and student focus groups. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic content analysis. Findings showed that most students valued SCL and largely endorsed Weimer's tenets; however, their participation and autonomy were strongly context-dependent as they were more visible in student-centred classrooms and reduced in teacher-centred learning (TCL) modules, with a minority still preferring directive instruction. Teachers also reported favourable views of SCL, yet their practices fell along a continuum from traditional to blended to fully student-centred, indicating partial and uneven enactment shaped by structural constraints and perceptions of student readiness and teaching efficacy. The study concludes that advancing SCL in this context requires targeted professional development, greater curricular and assessment flexibility, and explicit role shift of teachers as facilitators who share authority, scaffold autonomy, and prioritise formative feedback, and students as agentic co-constructors who prepare, participate in decision-making, and engage in self and peer assessment so that conceptual endorsement translates into consistent classroom practice.

Keywords: EFL, higher education, SCL, students, teachers, perceptions, practices.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AHE	Algerian higher education
EFL	English as a foreign language
IBL	Inquiry-based learning
LMD	License, Master, Doctorate
PBL	Problem-based learning
PJBL	Project-based learning
SCL	Student-centred learning
TCL	Teacher-centred learning

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

In an era characterised by continuous and rapid pedagogical and academic development, research in the educational field has been exponentially growing with the endeavour to enrich teaching and learning quality. There is an eagerness in higher education to produce lifelong learners who are active, responsible, and well-equipped to face real-world tasks with problem-solving skills and high-level qualifications. Educational reforms are thereby constantly suggested in higher education in order to meet contemporary students' needs and achieve a more efficient and lasting learning experience.

Considering the inadequacies and limitations of the traditional way of teaching to focus on active learning (Dewey, 1938), an emphasis on the shift in the teaching paradigm emerged. It embodied an alternation from teacher-centred learning (TCL), in which educators convey information to their students who take a passive role as knowledge receivers (Kain, 2003); towards student-centred learning (SCL), which stresses the responsible and active role of learners to discover and construct knowledge. Due to the fruitful and promising role of student-centeredness in fostering higher education learning quality, instructors have been progressively encouraged to embrace it within their classrooms (Kember, 2009). By the same token, the Algerian university tried to adopt the License, Master, Doctorate (LMD) system, which is characterised by its support and inherent alignment with the principles of SCL (Azzi, 2012).

It is, nevertheless, important to mention that while the adoption of SCL into AHE can present a promising development in its modernisation, it also comprises significant challenges that should be taken into account. The shift from TCL to SCL not only demands an alternation in the conventional teaching practices but also a fundamental rethinking of the roles of both students and teachers. The successful implementation of the approach requires a deep understanding of its principles, a willingness to embrace new and innovative teaching methods coming with it, in addition to the readiness of both students and instructors to adopt more

active and collaborative learning strategies and understand the new dynamics that SCL demands.

Within the context of this study, the aim is to investigate how SCL is perceived, understood, and practiced by both students and teachers in Algerian universities. Given the increasing momentum behind SCL and its growing potential in shaping the future of higher education, it is crucial to examine the perceptions and experiences of those directly involved with the approach. This research as such seeks to address gaps in the literature by exploring how the principles of SCL are perceived, enacted, and navigated within the LMD system. Ultimately, the findings aim to provide valuable insights for educators seeking to refine their practices and for policymakers working to enhance the quality of higher education in Algeria.

1. Background of the Study

Contemporary educational policies constantly attempt to keep up with the growing societal challenges and globalised labour markets. The demand for graduates equipped with high-level skills and qualifications has been a main driving focus in higher education institutions. There has been a notable recognition that the traditional approaches to education do not satisfy the demands of a 21st-century workplace, and therefore the need for innovative and more effective teaching approaches is mandatory (Brown & Holt, 2014; Camacho & Legare, 2016; Cooper, 2016; De Jesus, 2012; Deed et al., 2014; Easley, 2017; Gervais, 2016; Luna et al., 2014; Ryan & Cox, 2017). Consequently, educational reforms suggested SCL as a pedagogical approach to face these challenges (Damşa & Lange, 2019). Growing calls from researchers and educators have demanded a shift from teacher-centred methods of instruction to student-centred pedagogy as a promising educational remedy to promote learning quality in universities (Brown, 2003; Crick & McCombs, 2006; Harris & Cullen, 2007; Hoidn, 2017). The beliefs that support the adoption of SCL in education are gaining predominance as they are increasingly embracing the idea that the approach would yield favourable results (Brown & Holt, 2014; Camacho & Legare, 2016; Cooper,

2016; De Jesus, 2012; Deed et al., 2014; Gervais, 2016; Luna et al., 2014; Ryan & Cox, 2017).

Despite the increasingly widespread use of the notion of SCL, it is still under-theorised and fraught with ambiguity (Starkey, 2017). Attard et al. (2010, p. 8) assert that “SCL does not have one universally agreed definition, despite it being a term often used by several higher education policy-makers”. MacLellan and Soden (2004) further explain that the institutional practices required to subscribe to SCL are unclear. Maguire et al. (2013) support this view by maintaining that such new pedagogical approaches are usually lacking in specificity when it comes to practice. Similarly, Klemenčič (2017) argues that despite its universal appeal, SCL remains vague and poorly defined which may hinder its implementation. O’Neill and McMahon (2005) also point out that the variety of terms used to describe SCL, such as flexible learning, active learning, experiential learning, and self-directed learning (Taylor 2000; Burnard 1999), contributed to the confusion surrounding its implementation. It is worth mentioning that “Learner-centred learning” is a commonly used synonym for SCL and is referenced interchangeably and extensively within the literature (Starkey, 2017).

Throughout this confusion and in an attempt to bring some clarification, Cannon and Newble (2000, p. 16) offer a good starting point with their definition of SCL by labelling it as:

“ways of thinking and learning that emphasize student responsibility and activity in learning rather than what the teachers are doing. Essentially, SCL has student responsibility and activity at its heart, in contrast to a strong emphasis on teacher control and coverage of academic content in much conventional, didactic teaching”.

This definition is particularly insightful as it emphasises SCL as a pedagogical mindset rather than a fixed set of predetermined practices. It underscores a conceptual framework that prioritises learner autonomy, engagement, and active participation, rather than merely prescribing specific teaching techniques to be followed.

In another note, Hoidn (2017) refers to SCL as an umbrella term, encompassing students' attempts to actively engage in their learning and for teachers to plan and facilitate the learning process.

There is a general consensus that ascribes SCL to constructivist roots, in which the learner is considered an active independent individual who seeks to build a deep conceptual understanding through mentally organising and reorganising information to form new meaningful knowledge (Schmittau, 2004; Attard et al., 2010; Land et al., 2012; Lea et al., 2003; O'Neill & McMahon, 2005). Weimer (2002) argues that in the student-centred classroom, the teacher's role changes from being the "sage on the stage" to the "guide on the side" who does not consider students as passive knowledge receivers but as active intellectual seekers who need guidance and assistance through their learning process. In other words, the student is expected to be an active responsible agent and more than just a passive recipient of information; while the instructor serves as a facilitator without having to be an expert in the specific content (Tärnvik, 2007; Slunt & Giancarlo, 2004).

Attard et al. (2010) indicate that SCL is not a "one size fits all" approach, but rather one that varies depending on the type of students, their needs, the learning environment, and the discipline, amongst other factors. Therefore, SCL should be tailored accordingly in order to be effectively implemented.

Plush & Kehrwald (2014) noted that in spite of its advantageous outcomes, SCL adoption can present a real challenge, especially for new educators who lack experience and for the ones highly accustomed to the traditional way of teaching. This emphasizes the need for better comprehension of the notion and underpinnings of SCL to be able to design and efficiently apply a student-centred environment (Damşa & Lange, 2019). Moreover, it highlights the value of comprehending both teachers' and students' understanding and perceptions of the approach, as it would deliver a solid platform for better educational practices and more efficient implementation of student-centred values.

As AHE has started to put more emphasis on the adoption of SCL, concerns regarding its optimal adoption and practical application have surfaced. While SCL

has become a trendy and popular term among educators, its vague and complex nature highlighted earlier can be problematic in its implementation. Teachers may be able to reiterate its definition; nevertheless, when asked to elaborate and delve deeper into what it represents or demonstrate concrete examples of how to apply it, they often struggle. This highlights an important issue that first sparked the drive to conduct this study and get a better understanding of how the approach is understood in Algerian universities.

Moreover, in reviewing the available literature about SCL in the Algerian context, the available studies were surprisingly limited, with only one significant study that focused only on the teachers' perspectives, leaving out the students who are the central individuals within the approach. This further suggested a top-down implementation which lacked valuable feedback from the main actors in this approach, ultimately becoming a driving force behind this study.

2. Statement of the Research Problem

Despite the beneficial and prominent role that SCL brings to the educational experience, effectively implementing it can be a highly challenging task. In addition to its demanding role on teachers, SCL's success is dependent on their perceptions and execution (Ilieva et al. 2019; Branden, 2016). In fact, the appropriate application of SCL demands an invigorating environment, high awareness, and mastery of teaching skills (Marwan, 2017; Shehadeh, 2018; Troyan et al., 2017). This requires a proper understanding of the underpinnings held by student-centredness philosophy. Nevertheless, the unfavourable working environment of higher education institutions together with the increasing constraints and the pressure therein, do not allow educators to diligently and thoughtfully reflect on the pedagogical concept of SCL, which makes it barely understood and superficially implemented (Geven & Attard, 2012).

The lack of understanding that could be displayed by teachers of the foundational principles of SCL may lead to a superficial implementation of the approach, possibly overlooking key elements that are crucial to its effectiveness (Weimer, 2002). This would ultimately lead them to persist in a shallow adoption

of student-centredness, failing to embrace the deeper and more complex underpinnings which are required for the approach's success.

Furthermore, the notion of SCL can be a source of confusion and disagreement over its components and what it entails (Farrington, 1991; Lea et al., 2003). According to Trinidad (2019), the term is usually understood differently by instructors, mostly in higher education. This ambiguity in interpreting SCL can result in divisive implementation and practices (Damşa & Lang, 2019). Many educators even claim that they adopt SCL when in reality they do not (Biggs, 1999; Lea et al., 2003). With that in mind, "little granular qualitative research has been done so far in student-centred higher education classrooms" (Hoidn, 2017, p. 9). In fact, McPherson (2020) maintains that there still exists minimal academic research that explores the perceptions and lived experiences of educators in transitioning to this educational philosophy. Likewise, Ryan and Cox (2017) claim that relatively little research has been conducted to investigate educators' perceptions regarding the implementation of SCL. Therefore, there is a need for a thorough investigation of teachers' understanding of student-centredness; and an evaluation of the link between teachers' perceptions and their actual practices of the approach.

Students' standpoints on their roles and practices in the SCL classroom should further be explored since understanding the approach necessitates investigating students' perceptions of the approach as it dictates new different roles and responsibilities from those of the TCL (Hannafin & Land, 1997; Lee, 2009). Ampadu (2012) argues that overlooking students' perceptions about learning despite them being affected by teachers' practices diminishes the validity of the currently used approach. However, after exploring the literature in the Algerian context, while some attention has been given to understanding teachers' perceptions regarding SCL, the perspectives of students, who are equally, if not more, impacted by the approach, have often been overlooked. This lack of exploration and integration into the students' perceptions regarding SCL can

render the approach's implementation even more "top-down" driven, thus failing to resonate with the very students it intends to empower.

On another note, research on SCL displayed inconsistencies between beliefs and practices. In an observation of almost 300 teachers, Farrington (1991) found that, in spite of a large number of educators believing that they were adopting a student-centred approach, they projected a highly rigid tendency for teacher control. This highlights a gap between teachers' theoretical understanding of SCL and its actual practical implementation. He also asserted that there is "more rhetoric than reality involved in claims about student-centred learning methods in Further Education" (Farrington, 1991, p. 16). This suggests that SCL is not always implemented in a way that truly reflects its core principles.

In another highlighted issue, Lee (2009) found that although many teachers were aware of the prominence that SCL brings, their teaching was still influenced and bound to textbooks. This dependence on structured materials demonstrates one of the challenges of transitioning from a teacher-centred to a truly SCL, whereby learning becomes more dynamic, interactive, and customised to individual students' needs. Neglecting such issues can ultimately lead to teachers' resistance towards SCL, hindering its implementation in educational settings.

3. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to significantly contribute to the enrichment of the theoretical frame and emergent body of knowledge on SCL in Algerian EFL classrooms at the higher education level. They would provide a better understanding of how EFL teachers perceive the premise of student-centredness, and how their perceptions reflect on their practices in the classroom, which would clarify any possible discrepancies thereof. Moreover, data from this study would identify challenges that may hamper SCL, which would therefore inform better future practices. Lea et al. (2003) assert that there is a need for more research investigating factors that foster the implementation of SCL. Addressing students' perceptions and practices, notably their views of their role and

environment in a student-centred classroom would shed light on their needs with respect to the new paradigm. Hoidn (2017, p. 11) points out that:

“Exploring authentic student-centred classroom learning, teaching, and interaction practices provides rare and detailed glimpses into student-centred classrooms in order to carve out and systematize different recurring teaching patterns and specific practices in terms of instructional strategies for the successful facilitation of student sense-making”.

Relatedly, Damşa and Lange (2019) claim that the effective incorporation of SCL depends on a better understanding of what it actually entails and what principles underlie its practices; thus, understanding more about how SCL is executed and capitalized upon is key to its improvement. Accordingly, the findings of this study would be of significant importance for the implementation of student-centredness in the AHE context.

4. Aims of the Study

This study attempts to address a significant gap in the literature by offering a comprehensive examination of the perceptions and implementation of SCL within the AHE context, specifically within the English EFL classrooms at Algiers 2 University. The primary objective is to investigate how SCL is perceived and enacted by both teachers and students, while paying attention to the interplay between pedagogical beliefs and instructional practices.

Particularly, the research aims to explore EFL teachers' perceptions and understanding of SCL, examining whether they exhibit a genuine inclination towards adopting the approach or whether they prefer the more conventional TCL. By carrying out such investigation, the study not only evaluates the degree of philosophical alignment between teachers and SCL but also assesses their pedagogical willingness to transition away from TCL. Additionally, understanding how educators interpret and internalize the principles of student-centred pedagogy is critical for identifying whether their instructional approaches are grounded in genuine philosophical alignment or whether their adoption of the approach remains superficial. This includes examining the extent to which teachers demonstrate a

coherent understanding of SCL and how this understanding influences their pedagogical choices.

The research also seeks to investigate the teaching strategies and classroom practices employed by educators. By doing so, the study aims to discern whether these practices reflect a substantive implementation of SCL or whether they remain rooted in traditional, teacher-directed teaching. Also, by comparing these practices with their stated perceptions, the study intends to evaluate the consistency, or potential discrepancy, between perceptions and practices. This comparison will offer valuable insights into the operational challenges and pedagogical constraints that may hinder the effective implementation of SCL.

On another note, the study also aims to investigate third-year undergraduate EFL students' perceptions and practices of SCL, providing a comprehensive view of their experiences. Understanding students' attitudes toward and readiness for this learning approach is crucial, as it can yield constructive feedback that may enhance teachers' practices. As noted by Kain (2003), exploring the student perspectives is essential for the successful implementation of SCL, ensuring that both teachers and learners are aligned in their understanding and application of this pedagogical approach. In addition to perceptions, it is imperative to examine students' actual classroom behaviours and learning strategies. The way students interact with different teachers or course content, collaborate with peers, and manage their learning processes serves as a practical indicator of how well the principles of SCL are being internalised and operationalised.

Ultimately, the research aspires through the findings to fill in the gap in the literature regarding SCL and provide thorough data, leading to the improvement of teaching practices and the overall effectiveness of the adoption of the approach in the Algerian context.

5. Research Questions and Overview of Methodology

In order to gain a better understanding of how SCL is perceived and adopted in higher education in Algeria, this study aims to explore the perceptions and

practices of EFL teachers and students at Algiers 2 University. Specifically, the research seeks to investigate teachers' understanding and perceptions of SCL in addition to the strategies they employ in this regard in their classroom. Moreover, it also aims to explore students' perceptions, readiness for, and engagement with SCL to provide a more holistic view of its application.

To address these objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

Q1: What are the perceptions of third-year EFL students at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL??

Q2: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL students' practices with regard to SCL?

Q3: What are the perceptions of third-year EFL teachers at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL?

Q4: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL teachers' practices with regard to SCL?

To answer the aforementioned research questions, this research adopted a descriptive exploratory case study using a mixed-method design. The study was undertaken at the English department at Algiers 2 – Abu el Kaacem Saadallah University with 220 third-year undergraduate students and 22 EFL teachers. A variety of research tools were adopted in this study, including questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations. A multi-level analysis of the acquired data was optimal to induce comprehensive insights into the research questions.

6. Limitations of the Study

The study was subject to certain limitations which could affect the generalisability of the findings. The most significant one was that the research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. In such circumstances where social distancing was emphasised, teachers may have altered or inhibited some of

their usual practices that require cooperative work for safety. On another note, in this type of research where qualitative methods are present, the researcher may bring subjectivity and personal biases to the study. The research bias is any form of influence that induces distortion in the results, analysis, and interpretation which can lead to erroneous conclusions (Simundic, 2013). Developing high awareness and considering “bias” as a problem to be dealt with during the research in addition to highlighting its potential sources can be a way to minimize its risk. Another limitation of this research was the original plan to interview all instructors involved in the classroom observations and who completed the questionnaires. However, due to time constraints and obligations, several teachers were unable to take part in the interview phase and had to decline.

Another challenge encountered was teacher responsiveness. Despite efforts to recruit a diverse and representative sample, some educators demonstrated a lack of collaboration, limiting overall participation. This, in turn, affected follow-up procedures for teachers who had participated in classroom observations, potentially constraining the perspectives captured in the study. As a result, the generalizability of the findings may be affected, as the insights derived from a relatively constrained sample may not fully represent the diversity of SCL practices across different higher education institutions.

7. Structure of the Thesis

This dissertation is divided into four chapters preceded by the general introduction and followed by the general conclusion. The introductory part of the research will introduce the topic, providing the statement of the problem, the aim and the significance of the study, the research questions, the research design as well as the limitations and organization of the thesis.

The first chapter, being a theoretical one, deals with the review of the related literature. Starting with the theoretical framework of SCL, covering its constructivist and humanist foundation. Then it proceeds to present an overview of the origin of SCL, a conceptual definition of TCL and SCL, and its evolution to an instructional approach. Furthermore, the chapter reviews Weimer’s (2002)

characteristics of SCL, makes reference to the LMD system, and explains how it adopts student-centredness. Additionally, the chapter delves into the importance of studies on perceptions and beliefs, then proceeds to explore previous studies on the perceptions and practices of SCL, including the Algerian context.

The second chapter, Research Design and Procedure, begins with a reminder of the research objectives and the research questions that guide this study. It then presents a detailed description of the research design, establishing the methodological framework within which the study is conducted. Following this, the chapter describes the settings where the research took place and provides comprehensive information about the participants. Next, the chapter outlines the data collection tools and delves into the specific procedures used for gathering the data. The data analysis procedures are also thoroughly detailed, highlighting the methods employed to process and interpret the findings. After that, the chapter proceeds to further discuss the trustworthiness of the research and finally, concludes by outlining the limitations of the study.

The third chapter, Data Presentation and Analysis, rigorously reports and analyses the data gathered through the research tools and attempts to report on the different reoccurring themes within the study. Quantitative data from questionnaires are analyzed statistically, highlighting trends, correlations, and patterns that emerge from the responses. Meanwhile, qualitative data from focus groups, interviews, and classroom observations are examined for recurring themes and significant insights, offering a nuanced understanding of the participants' perspectives

The fourth chapter, Discussion, Interpretation and Pedagogical Implications, attempts to provide answers to the research questions and discusses the findings in relation to the reviewed literature. After that, it addresses the implications of the thesis findings and proposes a set of recommendations for a better implementation of the SCL at Algiers 2 University. The thesis ends with a general conclusion to the study, in light of the results and their interpretations, sums up the main findings and provides suggestions for potential future research.

8. Ethical Issues

A paramount aspect of qualitative research lies in its ethical conduct. Accordingly, this research tried to ensure that it undertakes a set of ethical considerations to maximise the quality of the study.

The head of the English department at Algiers 2 University was asked to provide written permission to conduct the research in a legitimate frame. Participants' written consents to be a part of the research were also collected. The absence of such validation evidence may lead to mistrust that can jeopardise the quality of the collected data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The research attempted to take into consideration the participants' cultural backgrounds; therefore, teachers and students were asked for their permission to be recorded or possibly videotaped during the classroom observation.

The research additionally accentuated maintaining participants' confidentiality. They were assured that their personal identities and information would be dealt with in a strictly confidential manner. This commitment to protecting their privacy aspired to foster a sense of trust and professionalism, which is crucial for the integrity of the research.

Great care was also undertaken to avoid any kind of plagiarism. All sources that have been used in this study were rigorously verified and properly cited. To ensure that no passage was overlooked in this regard, the research was checked using the Turnitin plagiarism detector which gave favourable results. This focus on originality and integrity was important in upholding the ethical standards

Finally, the study diligently sought to avoid any instances of data manipulation or fabrication. All reported data were confirmed to be accurate and valid, ensuring that the results accurately represent the genuine experiences and perspectives of the participants. Through upholding these ethical aspects, the study aimed to achieve high standards of professionalism, integrity, and trustworthiness throughout its execution.

9. Operational definition

To ensure conceptual clarity and methodological consistency, this study adopts operational definitions for its key constructs. Rather than relying solely on broad or theoretical descriptions, the following definitions specify how the main concepts are understood, identified, and examined within the context of this research. As such, these definitions provide a shared reference for interpreting findings and facilitate the link between theoretical constructs and empirical evidence.

9.1. Student-Centred Learning (SCL)

In this study, SCL refers to a pedagogical approach in which students are positioned as active agents in the learning process, and where learning is characterised by the enactment of Weimer's (2002) five core tenets: the redistribution of power between teachers and students; the use of content as a means for inquiry, critical thinking, and skill development; the reconceptualisation of the teacher's role as a facilitator and guide rather than a sole knowledge transmitter; the sharing of responsibility for learning between teacher and learner; and the use of assessment as a formative, learning-oriented process.

Within this study, A learning environment is considered student-centred to the extent that these principles are consistently supported through instructional strategies, classroom interactions, assessment practices, and opportunities for learner autonomy. In other words, SCL would be evidenced when students actively contribute to classroom discussions, construct knowledge through inquiry and reflection, engage with content beyond memorisation, and assume responsibility for managing aspects of their own learning, while teachers adopt supportive, guiding, and motivating roles rather than transmissive ones.

9.2. Teacher-centred learning

Within this research, TCL is operationally defined as a pedagogical approach in which instructional authority, decision-making, and responsibility for

learning are majorly teacher's responsibility. TCL is characterised by the dominance of lecture-based instruction, content transmission, limited student participation, and a hierarchical classroom structure where students are positioned mainly as passive recipients of knowledge.

TCL is then identified through classroom practices that reflect minimal power-sharing, a predominant focus on syllabus coverage and factual knowledge transmission, teacher-controlled classroom interaction, and an emphasis on summative assessment practices. In such contexts, students' roles are largely confined to listening, note-taking, reproducing content, and complying with teacher-directed tasks, with limited opportunities for inquiry, collaboration, or autonomous learning.

9.3. Perceptions

Perceptions are operationally defined in this research as the beliefs, attitudes, interpretations, and subjective understandings held by teachers and students regarding SCL and its principles. These include views about the value and feasibility of SCL, beliefs concerning teacher and student roles, attitudes toward power-sharing, responsibility for learning, content use, and assessment practices.

In this study, perceptions are examined through self-reported data collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and student focus group discussions. They are treated as interpretive lenses that shape how participants make sense of pedagogical practices and influence their willingness to adopt, resist, or partially enact student-centred approaches in classroom contexts. In other words, they are treated as subjective yet influential cognitive constructs that shape participants' acceptance, resistance, or engagement with particular pedagogical approaches and directly influence the extent to which SCL principles are supported or enacted in practice.

9.4. Practices

Practices refer to the observable and reported pedagogical behaviours and strategies enacted by teachers and students in the classroom. For teachers, practices include instructional methods, modes of content delivery, classroom management approaches, forms of assessment, feedback practices, and strategies for promoting student participation and autonomy. For students, practices encompass levels of engagement, participation in decision-making, collaboration, self-regulated learning behaviours, and responses to assessment and feedback.

Therefore, practices in this research are identified primarily through classroom observations, supported by interview and focus group data, and analysed according to their alignment with Weimer's (2002) five tenets of SCL. Practices are thus conceptualised as the enacted dimension of SCL, which may either align with or diverge from participants' stated perceptions.

CHAPTER ONE:
REVIEW OF THE RELATED
LITERATURE

Introduction

Higher education institutes worldwide have attempted in recent years to put SCL in the spotlight and integrate the approach as a philosophy within universities (Hoidn, 2017). Nevertheless, the notion is still, for the most part, ambiguous and needs further research. In fact, despite the ongoing and expanding research, the field of student-centredness continues to seek enriching data on the subject, which can enhance the approach's implementation in educational settings. This section, as such, attempts first to shed light on the main theoretical contribution regarding SCL. It goes over its theoretical underpinnings and presents the major definitions and characteristics of the term while it makes reference to TCL and points out its drawbacks. Furthermore, it tackles how SCL shifts educators' and students' roles and addresses paramount factors related to applying student-centredness in addition to listing major advantages and benefits that the approach can bring. Moreover, the chapter explains Weimers' (2002) influential key tenets of SCL, which will serve as an important basis for this study. After that, aligning with the scope of this research, the chapter covers how perceived perceptions about learning can shape the educational process and the teaching practices in the classroom. The chapter afterwards proceeds to address an overview of the educational reforms in AHE, mainly with the introduction of the LMD system and how it focuses on integrating student-centredness. It then ends by providing an overview of related empirical research that examines the concept of student-centredness both in the worldwide and Algerian contexts.

1.1 Theoretical Framework of SCL

Over the years, education has been constantly evolving in a continuous quest for better teaching and learning approaches. As teachers and specialists in the field sought more effective strategies to better engage students and meet their needs, they started to challenge and highlight the drawbacks of traditional teaching, which was deemed to be heavily influenced by behaviourist theory and placed a strong emphasis on teachers and their roles of being the main sources of information. The search for better approaches has given rise to a number of

theories regarding teaching and learning, framing the core of which is today known as SCL, and which advocates for student agency, active learning, and personal development.

Several prominent educational philosophers have consistently and significantly contributed to the development of new insights into the process of student learning. These influential figures have introduced various perspectives that have shaped the field of education. The influence of these perspectives has notably contributed to the development and establishment of SCL by shaping the approach and setting the basis for its fundamental principles.

While in many cases SCL is reduced to certain teaching methods to follow, understanding the root frameworks of the approach can provide educators with a deeper appreciation and understanding that can help them to effectively, and to a greater extent, accurately implement it in their teaching practices. Within the literature, three main frameworks are commonly identified: the constructivist, humanistic, and agentic frameworks, each offering unique perspectives and guiding principles for SCL.

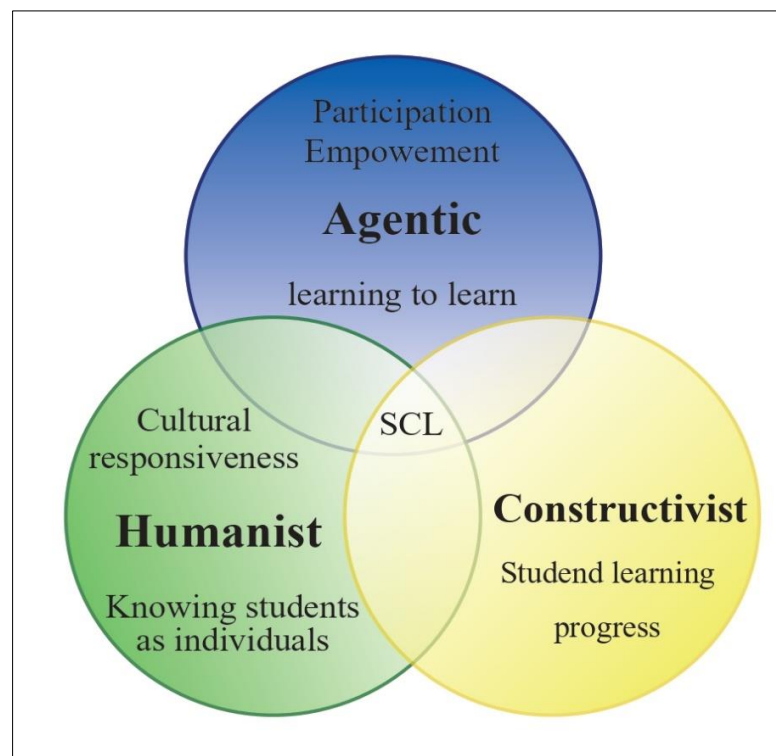


Figure 1- The holistic framework for SCL (adapted from Starkey, 2017).

1.1.1 Constructivist Framework

Several schools of thought played a role in influencing and shaping SCL during the twentieth century, mainly through the contributions of pronounced educators such as Jean Piaget, John Dewey, Carl Rogers, Lev Vygotsky, Frank Hayward, and several others, many of whom set the theoretical frame for SCL. Among the different conceptual theories, constructivism had the most influence in setting the approach's foundation (Tudor, 1996; Tabulawa, 2003; O'Neill & McMahon, 2005).

Two different forms can be identified under the constructivist framework: the psychological model and the social model. Psychological constructivism, also known as cognitive constructivism, is mainly accredited to the work of Jean Piaget. It regards learning as the interplay between assimilation and accommodation while putting emphasis on individual beliefs, background knowledge, self-concepts and identity (Kalpana, 2014). This means that when the learner is introduced to new information or experience, cognitive equilibrium is achieved through the combined process of assimilation, which is incorporating the new information into the individual's pre-existing conception, and accommodation, which stands for adapting and altering the individual's existing knowledge to fit the new information. In other words, the fundamental concept behind psychological constructivism is the belief that learning occurs through a process of mentally organising and reorganising new information and relating it to prior knowledge (Kalpana, 2014). It is worth mentioning that the constructivist view also positions educators in a process of incorporating and altering their experiences and conceptions due to the constant interactions in the classroom similar to their students (Zeki & Sonyel, 2014).

Alternatively, the social constructivist theory, which is accredited to Lev Vygotsky, is a model that showcases the role of social, physical, and cultural contexts in learning. It suggests that knowledge is mutually built and constructed within a certain social frame (Kalpana, 2014). The theory contends that learning is

influenced by different factors such as language, culture, beliefs, and individual skills. Social constructivism also introduced the idea of situational cognition which holds that knowledge is tightly related to the specific situation where it occurs and it is thereby more efficient to rely on real-life situations while learning. Moreover, social constructivism asserts that learning and cognitive development occur in the zone of proximal development. That means that effective learning does not lie in the lone attempts of the individual, but through guided and meaningful participation in social contexts and cooperative activities while being guided by a knowledgeable peer or instructor (Vygotsky, 1978).

The constructivist theory can have a major impact on educators and their teaching philosophy. Teachers who made the transition from TCL to SCL are usually ones who have been influenced by the constructivist framework. This can be reflected in establishing and recognising key guiding principles for the educator in creating a SCL environment with constructivist attributes. These may include strategies or practices such as allowing the individual to participate in making decisions about their own learning process, personalising instruction, problem-solving activities, preparing a learning environment that reflects real-life situations, and presenting opportunities for learners to reflect and critically analyse the information instead of simply transmitting it to them (Conti, 1990, as cited in Zygmunt & Schaefer, 2005).

For a classroom to be constructivist, students' prior knowledge and experience must be taken into consideration by teachers, and based on that, they should design learning activities that permit the learners to be active knowledge seekers who construct their own understanding in an environment that allows them to thoughtfully reflect on their previous beliefs and experience in order to make sense of new information (Gibbs, 1992; Harden and Crosby, 2000; Huba and Freed, 2000). This constructivist view frames the classroom's essence to be student-centred. It further integrates developmental and social learning theories, including scaffolding, acknowledging students' needs, encouraging collaborative learning, self-reflection, and fostering autonomy and critical thinking, etc. to forge

a nourishing classroom, where students are able to continuously develop and build new skills (fig. 2)

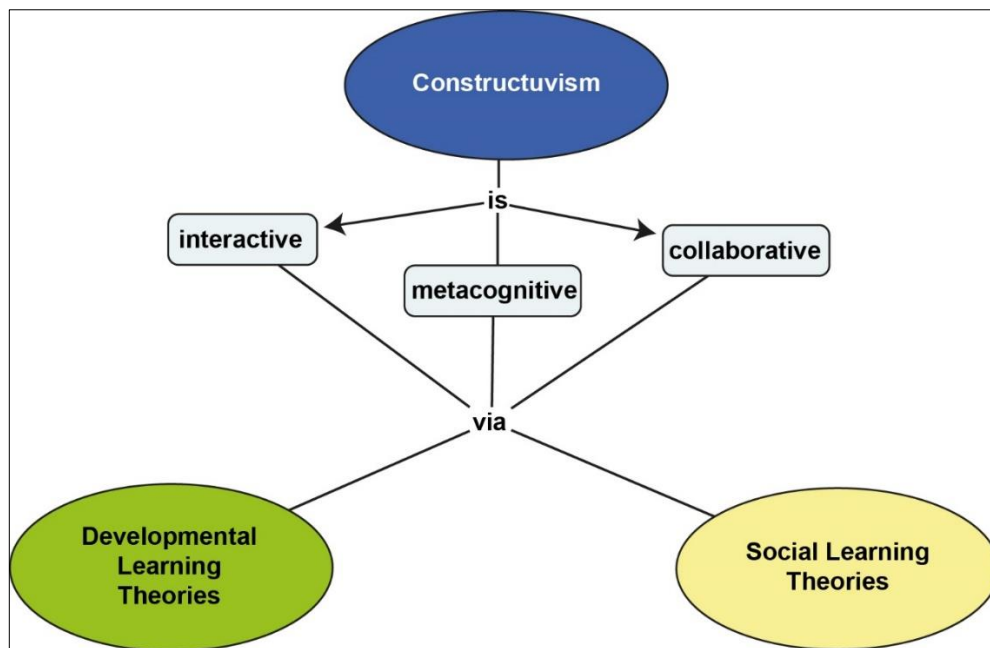


Figure 2- The interplay of developmental and social learning theories in constructivism.

1.1.2 Humanist Framework

Tangney (2014) pointed out the presence of a humanist perspective underpinning SCL, which represents a more comprehensive and holistic viewpoint that has been largely overlooked in the existing body of literature regarding the approach, as well as in the previous approaches to teaching. This frame comprises an increased awareness and recognition of students' abilities, a desire for achieving their personal development, in addition to an elevated sense of respect and care towards them.

The primary focus of humanists revolves around the fundamental principles of human freedom, potential, dignity, and growth (Brockett, 1997). This perspective can be traced back to the writings of Rousseau (1762/1979), who further criticised educational methods that he thought hindered children's creativity and curiosity. This view has further been significantly shaped by the contributions of two prominent theorists, namely Maslow (1970) and Rogers (1989), as well as the work of Rogers and Freiberg (1994). A fundamental tenet of

humanist philosophy is the belief that individuals are not bound to a predefined fate based on cognition solely during their learning journey. According to Kurtz (2007), future situations are determined by human agency and the acts undertaken by individuals. The concept can be reflected upon SCL as it encompasses the recognition and awareness of the responsibilities and potentials of the learners in attaining a flourishing learning path. Another humanist aspect that can be detected in SCL is placing emphasis on comprehending students as distinct individuals, each possessing their own set of aspirations, interests, cognitive processes, and life experiences that influence their learning.

The humanistic theory, as posited by Pitrik and Holzinger (2002), acknowledges that students possess an inherent inclination to acquire knowledge, strive for personal development, and aspire to be creative. To foster these qualities, it is important to establish a conducive learning environment that encourages and cultivates these inclinations. This can be done by attempting to nourish learners' responsibility, comprehension, self realisation, and profound investment in their own educational goals.

On another note, three fundamental dimensions that constitute the humanist perspective on student-centred education can be highlighted within the literature. These dimensions encompass considering human interpersonal emotions, recognising the uniqueness that characterises each individual's developmental trajectory, and acknowledging the social and cultural situatedness (Starkey, 2017). This implies that there is an emphasis on the importance of understanding and addressing the emotional needs of students by creating a supportive and nurturing environment that fosters positive relationships and emotional well-being while being heard by teachers. Additionally, such environment requires tailoring instructions to meet students' needs, strengths, and interests, all while considering the influence of social and cultural factors on students' learning experiences. This further emphasises Fay's (1988) perspective that SCL is inherited in humanist philosophy, wherein learners' dignity, freedom, and autonomy are acknowledged and respected.

In conclusion, when considering all the factors, several aspects of SCL settings may be identified in the humanist literature and are encouraged to be taken into consideration by educators (Freire, 1974; Mezirow, 2009; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994; Cowan, 2006; Gage and Berliner, 1991):

- Education ought to offer possibilities for empowerment;
- The choice for students in what they do and how they do it (and subsequent responsibilities of that choice) is a necessary component of a humanist educational environment (though this is generally expressed within the confines of the local situation, e.g., societal demands, a programme of study, etc.);
- The inclusion of student freedom of choice and the corresponding responsibilities that may arise from this are integral aspects of a humanistic educational setting.
- The process of learning and developing metacognitive abilities is prioritised over focusing on the product.
- The cultivation and promotion of innovation and creativity are actively endorsed.
- Learning is an ongoing lifelong process, with a highly personalised trajectory dependent upon the unique characteristics and circumstances of the learner.
- The assessment of students' self-perceived progress is of paramount importance.
- The learning environment in which students are situated is characterised by a minimal power disparity, with a strong emphasis on unconditional positive respect and attentiveness to emotions.



Figure 3- Humanist frame of SCL.

1.1.3 Agentic Framework

A major underpinning focus in SCL is the emphasis on improved student agency (Starkey, 2017). It entails enabling students to actively engage and make decisions regarding different aspects of their own learning. This premise is based on the concept that when students are given the chance to influence their learning experiences, they develop a deeper sense of belonging and empowerment over their learning. As a result, these feelings of ownership can result in heightened desire, deeper involvement, and ultimately seeking to take greater charge of the learning experience, which would result in more desirable learning outcomes.

Students often demonstrate agency when they possess the necessary skills and opportunities to actively engage in both the learning and teaching processes, as well as contribute to the construction of knowledge (Klemenčič, 2020). This

engagement goes beyond the confines of the classroom to include the design of the educational curriculum and learning environment. The agentic framework promotes a collaborative and inclusive educational experience through actively attempting to engage students in some important aspects of their education. Doing this would ensure that students are not mere passive recipients of knowledge, but active participants in shaping their own learning.

Furthermore, student agency requires a certain level of autonomy and freedom to take action, as well as institutional frameworks that offer opportunities for students to participate in decision-making or assume different responsibilities related to education. This certain degree to act freely is essential, as it enables students to delve into their interests, make decisions that align with their individual objectives, and assume accountability for their education (Tagg, 2010). In this regard, institutional support is crucial as it establishes the essential prerequisites for students to exert their agency with efficacy, guaranteeing that they possess the appropriate tools, resources, and platforms to exert control over their educational experiences. Thus, respecting students' voices by not dismissing their inputs and suggestions, but rather being open to cherishing their contributions and considering their criticism, is paramount for establishing a student-centred environment which encourages agency.

The agentic framework not only promotes a feeling of empowerment and belonging which are key in student-centredness, but also supports the broader educational objectives of cultivating critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and learner autonomy. By placing student agency as a top priority, educators not only facilitate personal development but also provide students with the necessary skills to effectively handle intricate real-life problems, where demonstrating initiative and making well-informed choices are crucial for achieving success (Klemenčič, 2020).

The following figure presents key components that teachers should be aware of in order to enable students' agency:

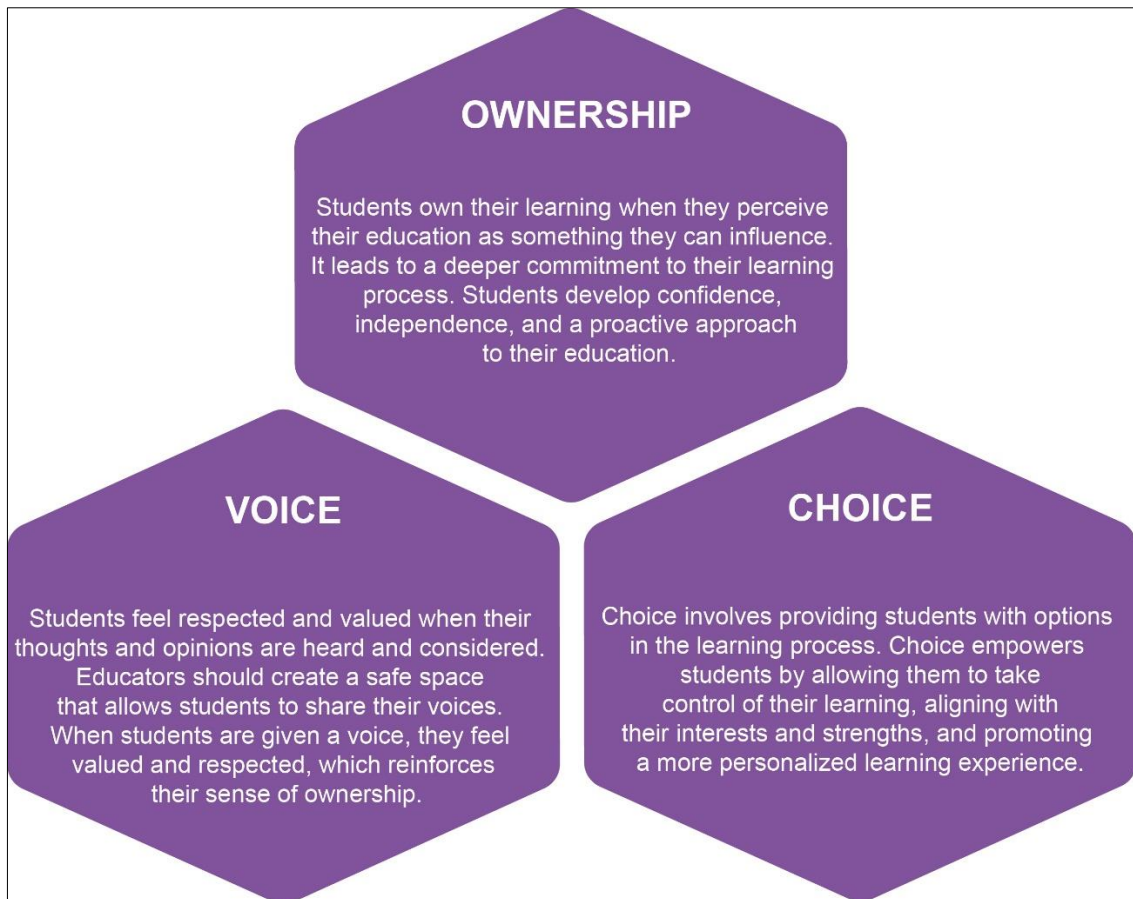


Figure 4- The pillars of students’ agency; adapted from Saad (2024).

As we explored the theoretical foundations of SCL, we have covered how the constructivist, humanistic, and agentic frameworks underpin the approach. Constructivist theory mainly highlights the role of active learning and knowledge construction, humanistic principles emphasise the importance of the learner’s individuality, feelings, and emotional well-being, while agentic perspectives advocate for autonomy, involvement and responsibility in the educational process. These frameworks illuminate the philosophical and psychological foundations that make SCL a transformative pedagogical approach.

In what follows, we delve into the historical roots of SCL, from its emergence to its evolution within the context of educational reforms. This may allow for a deeper understanding of how SCL emerged as a response to the traditional teacher-centred paradigms and the societal shifts that called for more inclusive and learner-focused education systems.

1.2 Roots of SCL

The term SCL has been gaining high profile and popularity among educators while attracting a great deal of research attention throughout the pedagogic field. The notion has been attributed to Frank Herbert Hayward as early as 1905, and later to John Dewey's work in the 1950s. It was also associated with the work of Carl Rogers, Jean Piaget, and more recently with Malcolm Knowles' notion of self-directed learning in adult education. But its modern form, which insinuates the paradigm shift, occurred in the latter decades of the 20th century (Cowan 2006; O'Sullivan, 2004; Burnard 1999; O'Neill and McMahon, 2005)

Historically, teaching within university classrooms has exhibited traditional methods of transmitting information to passive learners, establishing a passive setting which, for a long time, set itself as the norm default approach for university teachers, and generally in the teaching dynamics at different educational levels (Feden, 2012). During the 1950s and the 1960s, learning theories kept raising calls challenging this behaviourist paradigm of learning, arguing against the effectiveness of the passive transmission of information approach and stressing the importance of actively constructing knowledge in a meaningful setting.

The growing drive for SCL extended beyond the walls of educational institutions and took inspiration from broader societal and political movements. The worldwide student protests of 1968, driven by a quest for social justice and educational reform, emphasised the importance of acknowledging student voices, roles, and experiences within educational institutions (O'Sullivan, 2004). These movements highlighted student agency and underscored the significance of establishing a learning atmosphere that mirrored the varied experiences and viewpoints of the student population. As a result, critical pedagogies evolved, urging educators to take into account the social environment of learning and develop curricula that tackled real-life problems and allowed students to think critically and actively participate in society, laying fundamental foundations for student-centredness in the educational framework.

As the labour market started to know changes during the 1970s and 1980s, and with the societal shifts and massification of higher education at that period, SCL kept gaining more attention. During that time, an apparent need for a change in educational approach arose accordingly with the rising number of students lacking self-regulatory and critical thinking skills. An increasing number of dropping out was also registered among students who felt that they did not fully benefit from the learning experience. Amidst all that, SCL presented an alternative that creates a flexible and energising environment that introduces innovative methods such as project-based learning and digital literacy and prepares students for a life-long learning experience. (e.g., Biggs, 2003; Bembenutty, 2011; Pintrich & Zusho, 2007).

For the past few decades, implementing SCL has been a priority in many higher education institutes. The Bologna Process, a series of meetings conducted in 1999 by different European ministers of higher education in order to bring reforms to the sector, played a vital role in shedding more light on SCL. Aiming for more efficient and transparent higher education programs which ensure students' mobility and leading roles, the recurrent theme that dominated the meetings was the need to put the students at the centre and grant them prominence. Higher educational institutes began, thereafter, to embrace SCL, mainly in European and American universities. Today, SCL is gaining momentum in Asian and African institutions since educators and policymakers started to recognise the potential of the approach to cultivating well-rounded, adaptable, and lifelong learners who can contribute meaningfully to a rapidly changing world (Hoidn, 2017).

Having examined the historical emergence of SCL, we tracked back the term's origin and highlighted the approach's evolution as a response to the limitations of the traditional approach of teaching. The historical analysis underscored the progressive shift in pedagogical priorities, advocating for greater learner autonomy and adaptability in education.

To better contextualize SCL and its transformative impact, the notion of TCL needs to be addressed. By defining TCL and exploring its characteristics, as well as the criticisms it has garnered over time, this discussion sets the stage for a comparative understanding of the two approaches. This exploration of TCL highlights the key challenges it poses in fostering critical thinking, creativity, and active engagement among students, further emphasizing the necessity and significance of SCL in modern education.

1.3 Teacher-Centred Learning

For several decades, traditional teaching, also known as TCL, instructor-centred learning or conventional learning, dominated the higher education pedagogy and was the norm as a default instructional approach for many teachers (Feden, 2012; Johnson et al., 2009; Schiro, 2013). Being equated with behavioural learning theories, TCL drew controversies concerning its effectiveness as a teaching approach, and its efficacy was challenged as more research in educational pedagogies and learning theories started to surface.

1.3.1 Definition

TCL is a teaching approach that regards learning as the process of transmitting knowledge; that is to say, the teacher is considered to be the expert knowledge holder, and it is his responsibility to pass that knowledge to students who take a passive role as a mere recipient of information.

This approach emphasizes traditional methods of instruction such as lectures, seminars, assigned readings, classroom exercises and drills, coupled with almost only summative examinations (Armstrong & Fukami, 2009; De La Sablonnière, Taylor, & Sadykova, 2009; MacLellan & Soden 2004). A major focus within its process is given to rote memorisation of information for later recognition and reproduction.

The curricular design in traditional learning is the sole responsibility of the teacher who is considered as the superior authority. Therefore, teachers dictate what and in which manner students are supposed to learn and go about their

learning. These latter assume a passive and reactive role with little involvement and participation, whereas, the attention is devoted towards educators as they are considered the primary providers of knowledge and ultimate orchestrators in the learning process (Wright, 2011).

Being considered as a non-participatory approach, learners in TCL rarely engage in meaningful debates, ask profound questions or try to challenge the ideas and beliefs brought by the teacher even if they deem them inadequate. Students' motivation in a teacher-centred setting is usually the result of competition between students on who has the better grades, with the sole focus on passing the exam at hand.

Regularly, TCL employs an elicitation pattern known as IRE, in which educators initiate a question to which they already have the answer. The student thereafter offers a succinct response, which then would be evaluated by the instructor (Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979). Hancock, Bray and Nason (2003) described the teacher's role in traditional learning as follows:

- Rules and settings in the classroom are set and enforced by the teacher who takes a dominant role in the learning process;
- The teacher is the only responsible for structuring classroom tasks, methods and deadlines;
- The teacher sets and models the objectives of the lesson while ensuring that students stay involved in the tasks at hand;
- The teacher relies on prompts and cues, offers correct answers when needed, and gives students immediate, right-or-wrong feedback in response to their questions;
- The teacher stimulates students through direct and recall-based questions while asking few inferential and critical queries;
- The teacher frequently summarizes and outlines major points of the lesson during the course.

1.3.2 Criticism of TCL

The conventional TCL has been subject to criticism in recent years, with the evolution of different learning theories and approaches and with the application of new pedagogical methods within the higher education setting (Attard, 2010; Dubs 2019).

Concurrent research suggests that traditional approaches to education are outdated and obsolete (Brown & Holt, 2014; Cote, 2017). With TCL methods used in instruction, researchers and teachers noted that persistent shortfalls occur in students' understanding and a great deal of passive knowledge is transferred across all ages and grades including university (Perkins, 1999). For instance, Reusser and Pauli (2015) reported that TCL induces a "surface" level of comprehension rather than a "deep" level of understanding which is regarded as the goal of effective learning. Furthermore, adopting the traditional approach to teaching drives students to make as little investment and effort for the purpose of getting a satisfactory grade. Additionally, TCL denies students valuable opportunities to train their reflective, analytical and critical thinking, and prevents them from acquiring cognitive and problem-solving skills deemed critical in the labour market nowadays.

On another note, the traditional approach hampers students' independence, autonomy, and sense of initiative and responsibility. Thus, students are not sufficiently encouraged to build their identity and develop their confidence. TCL also overlooks students' personal needs, failing to cater to diverse levels and personal goals. As a result, students may feel disengaged and less motivated to invest in their learning and progress.

The environment of a TCL is often subject to criticism, and it is believed that effective and persistent learning cannot occur therein (Valls & Ponce, 2013). Such a setting usually lacks elements of engagement and fun that could stimulate students' interest and motivation to learn (Chall, 2000). In fact, the shortfall of meaningful interactions and discussions is heavily criticized in traditional lectures, which is one of the reasons why many students started to halt from attending lectures and prefer to read notes at home (Dubs, 2019).

Considering that lecturing is the most dominant format of teaching in TCL, and while research evidence has shown that relying on lecturing for the entire class

period proved to be unproductive (Bligh, 2000; Middendorf & Kalish, 1996), it is still worth noting that lecturing continues to assume a pivotal role in higher education, for it equips students with an important overview of the field and key ideas about the discipline.

The subsequent table attempts to provide a comparison of SCL and TCL, highlighting key differences between both approaches.

Teacher-Centred Learning	Student-Centred Learning
Knowledge is transmitted from lecturer to students.	Students construct knowledge through gathering and synthesizing information and integrating it with the general skills of inquiry, communication, critical thinking, problem-solving and so on.
Students passively receive information.	Students are actively involved.
Emphasis is on the acquisition of knowledge outside the context in which it will be used.	Emphasis is on using and communicating knowledge effectively to address enduring and emerging issues and problems in real-life contexts.
The lecturer's role is to be the primary information giver and primary evaluator.	The lecturer's role is to coach and facilitate students' learning and evaluate their progress.
Teaching and assessing are separate.	Teaching and assessing are intertwined.
Assessment is used to monitor learning.	Assessment is used to promote and diagnose learning.
Emphasis is on the right answers.	Emphasis is on generating better questions and learning from errors.
Desired learning is assessed indirectly through the use of objectively scored tests (summative assessment).	Desired learning is assessed directly through papers, projects, performances, portfolios, and the like (summative and formative assessment).
Focus is on a single discipline.	The approach is compatible with interdisciplinary investigation.
Culture is competitive and individualistic.	Culture is cooperative, collaborative, and supportive.
Only students are viewed as learners.	Lecturer and students learn together.

Table 1- Major differences between SCL and TCL (Huba & Freed, 2000).

It is important to note that TCL and SCL are not considered as strictly dichotomous parallels, but rather exist on a continuum. The transition between them may vary depending on the educational context, the learning objectives, and the needs of the students, and that allows for flexibility in adapting teaching approaches to achieve the desirable learning outcomes.

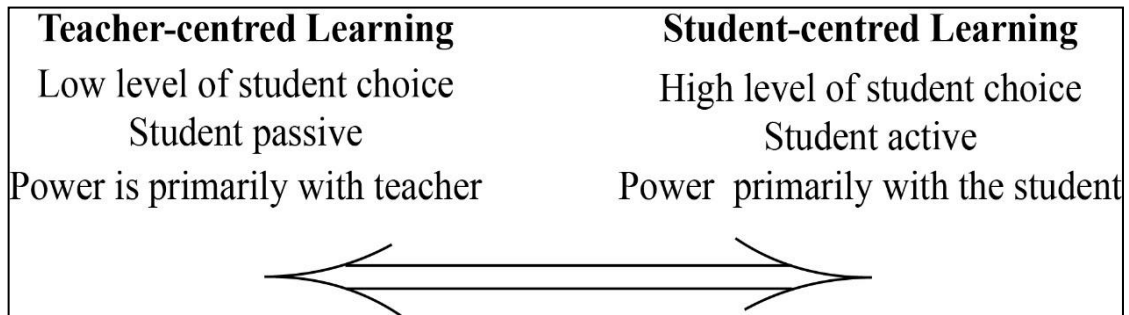


Figure 5- SCL and TCL Continuum.

The exploration of TCL highlighted its traditional focus on teacher authority, content delivery, and passive student roles. While TCL has long dominated educational systems, its limitations, including its inability to foster critical thinking, collaboration, and student autonomy, have been widely critiqued.

In response to these challenges, SCL will subsequently be presented, addressing the definitional nuances and potential confusion surrounding the approach, before moving on to its fundamental characteristics. Special emphasis is placed on Weimer's (2002) landmark five tenets of SCL, which provide the conceptual framework for this study. Additionally, key practices associated with SCL will be examined, offering a comprehensive understanding of its application and relevance in fostering active, meaningful, and learner-driven education.

1.4 Student-Centred Learning

1.4.1 Attempts to Define the Concept

The notion of student-centredness is usually vague and ill-defined in the existing body of literature (Tangney, 2013). Klemenčič (2020, p.1) asserted that SCL “remains rather poorly defined, under-researched and often misunderstood and misinterpreted”, thus making the formulation of a comprehensive and

operational framework and definition for the term "SCL" a challenging task. What makes it even more complicated is that there are many variations, definitions and terms that relate to SCL, which at times led to confusion on what the approach entails (Trinidad, 2019). Nevertheless, some common grounds can be detected and as such general premise could be formulated on what student-centred learning is.

Terms such as “learner-centred” or “learning-centred” have been widely used interchangeably in education literature. The notion of student-centredness is often attributed to a variety of instructional methods and specific academic programs. Some definitions associate SCL with the applications of teaching methods that drive students to be active and keep them engaged. In this regard, Singh (2006), for instance, points out that SCL is a model of teaching that prioritizes the needs of students and emphasises authentic personalised instruction through innovative methods such as active and collaborative learning. Various teaching methods and techniques that fit under the umbrella of SCL and meet its criteria were developed such as project-based learning, problem-based learning, collaborative/cooperative learning, discovery learning, case studies, classroom workshops, class/ group discussions, debates, role-plays, open-ended assignments, higher-order thinking/ critical-thinking exercises, minimal guidance approach, discovery learning, simulations, goal-based scenarios, self-assessment, peer mentoring, field trips, and reflective diaries (Felder & Brent, 1996; Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Baeten et al., 2010; O’Neill & McMohan, 2005). Nevertheless, it should be noted that the narrowed scope and limited interpretation of SCL, solely as a pedagogical strategy aimed at promoting student engagement in the classroom, impedes the more comprehensive theoretical understanding of its underlying ideological foundations.

The alternative more holistic perspective to SCL holds that it is not the mere application of predefined teaching strategies but it is rather a mindset that needs to be adopted. Tudor (1992), in this regard, asserted that

“Learner-centredness is not a method, nor can it be reduced to a given set of techniques or activities. Rather, it represents, in the first instance, an awareness of learner variability and of the contribution which learners can potentially make to

the development of their learning programme, and then an openness to accommodate learner input as far as the human and pragmatic constraints of the target learning environment can comfortably allow” (p. 41).

McCombs et al. (1997) define learner-centredness as a perspective that binds the attention to learners’ individual differences, backgrounds, and needs with a focus on how the most effective learning occurs. Attard et al. (2010) consider SCL as a mindset and a culture about learning that gives students prominence and holds them as active participants in the learning process. It emphasises deep learning and aims at developing problem-solving skills, accountability, autonomy, and critical and reflective thinking among learners through innovative methods of teaching. It is worth noting that these perspectives view SCL not as a series of methods to be slavishly applied, but as a philosophy and a way of thinking about education.

A key factor about student-centredness and what it means involves putting the student at the heart of the learning process by empowering them and granting them leverage over their learning. Brown (2008) asserts that SCL is a form of active learning that involves students in making decisions about lesson plans and execution. Likewise, Gibbs (1992) describes SCL as the process that empowers learners and grants them greater control over the choice of subject matter, methods used, and the pace of their learning; all in an environment that deems them responsible for their own learning progress. Gibbs (1992, p. 23) states that SCL “gives students greater autonomy and control over the choice of subject matter, learning methods and pace of study”. As such, it can be noted through the literature that several definitions stressed students’ involvement in decision-making regarding different aspects of their learning.

Amidst the vague and ill-defined concept of SCL in the literature (Tangney, 2013), some similarities can be detected. They encompass a constructivist view of learning that focuses on active engagement, discovery learning, creating one’s own understanding, reflecting and building on prior knowledge. SCL accordingly can be identified as an active learning relying on a deep approach in which students’ responsibility, accountability and autonomy are accentuated; and which displays

an interdependence between the student and instructor (Lea et al., 2003; O'Neill & McMahon, 2005).

It should be noted that SCL is not a “size fit for all” approach and does not espouse a singular, universally applicable formula for effective pedagogy across all instructional contexts. The design of the learning environment requires careful consideration of various factors from the teacher, including the anticipated learning outcomes, the specific subject or discipline, as well as the unique attributes of the students and the institutional context within which the learning and teaching processes are situated.

To gain a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of SCL, it is essential to explore its defining characteristics. Examining these features provides more insights into what distinguishes SCL from traditional TCL and highlights the key principles that guide its implementation. Moreover, by identifying the core attributes of SCL, it becomes easier to assess how effectively the elements defining it are integrated into educational practices. A closer look at these characteristics will also help provide a framework for analysing how SCL is perceived and applied in higher education settings.

1.4.2 Characteristics of SCL

SCL is often criticised as a fuzzy concept that refers to a vague assortment of concepts and ideas. While the definition of the term is still evolving, researchers posit that SCL contains certain core tenets, regardless of discipline or content.

Lea et al. (2003) list some of the characteristics that designate SCL to include the following premises:

- reliance upon 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 in the learner,

- an interdependence between teacher and learner,
- mutual respect within the learner–teacher relationship,
- and a reflexive approach to the learning and teaching process on the part of both teachers and learners.

In the same manner, Weimer (2002) identifies five key tenets that characterize SCL:

- The assumption that empowering students and considering them as capable learners in an egalitarian environment will foster their learning experience.
- The content is used to rejuvenate students' critical thinking and drives them to reflect on major issues in their field of study, rather than serving as a collection of isolated facts
- The change in the role of the teacher from absolute responsibility to a guide and a colleague in seeking knowledge.
- Students hold a significant share of responsibility for their learning, so as to have a better of their strengths and weaknesses and feel self-directed in their search for knowledge.
- Assessment is used formatively in order to promote learning, rather than being used solely in a summative way to assign grades.

These fundamental principles have played a significant role in advancing research on SCL, providing a comprehensive perspective and incorporating essential criteria that have previously been overlooked in the examination of this topic. Therefore, the current study relied on these tenets as the basis for designing the research instruments. In the subsequent discourse, a more extensive elucidation pertaining to the fundamental principles should be provided. Further comprehensive elucidation of the principles is provided below.

1.4.3 Weimers' Key Components of SCL

Weimer (2002) contends in her book that university classes are mostly teacher-centred, a dynamic that hinders students' evolution into proficient,

independent learners. She observes that while many instructors acknowledge this issue and strive to adopt a more student-centred approach, their comprehension of the problem differs, ranging from those who can pinpoint particular concerns to others who possess just a vague awareness of the deficiencies in the educational process. She thus tried to determine five foundational key areas that set the essence of student-centred instruction. These tenets would enable the attribution of fundamental and operational key concepts to the teaching approach in a way that aligns it with student-centredness.

1.4.3.1 Power Sharing

The traditional teacher-centred classroom embodies a structure that grants the teacher responsibility over most of the decisions about the learning process in a clear demonstration of holding the power. Certain educational tasks including the development of the syllabus, the selection of content, the design of classroom activities, the determination of the study pace, and the implementation of assessments, among others, are typically assigned to the teacher alone, without any significant input or interference from the students, who unquestionably follow the educator's lead. Such an environment, although commonly anticipated and favoured by a notable portion of students, usually results in passive and dependent learners who lack the motivation and initiative to learn.

Weimer (2002) points out that the balance of power should be shared between teachers and students. That implies that teachers should give up the authoritarian role and should no longer make all the learning and pedagogical decisions within the classroom. Students should be active participants in making decisions by providing their input regarding the course content, assignments, evaluation, etc.

SCL in fact cherishes a classroom environment where students' opinions and different points of view are valued. McCombs and Miller (2007, p. 25) indicate that learning is improved "in contexts in which learners have supportive relationships, have a sense of ownership and control over the learning process, and can learn with and from each other in safe and trusting learning environments".

Klemenčič (2020) also assert that when students are afforded the opportunity to actively engage in decision-making processes regarding their own learning, it is highly probable that their learning behaviour would yield enhanced learning outcomes, as well as foster deeper learning experiences and a sustained motivation to acquire knowledge. Thus, students are encouraged to be given opportunities to exert autonomy, and they are also invited to reasonably challenge teachers' inputs when they see fit. Even if the application of students' choices is not possible in certain situations, a sense of autonomy will be present.

Nunan (1988, p. 93) asserted that in a student-centred environment, students should be involved in the learning process as he considered that "in a learner-centred classroom, key decisions about what will be taught, how it will be taught, when it will be taught, and how it will be assessed will be made with reference to the learner". Involving students in making such decisions has proved to have a positive impact on their level of motivation and sense of responsibility (Brandes and Ginnis 1992; Weimer, 2002; Patall *et al.*, 2010)

This idea of power-sharing was founded upon Weimer's belief that:

- 1- Being granted a certain degree of control, which fulfils a basic human desire, drives students to be more actively engaged and comfortable in their learning.
- 2- Making choices and taking more responsibility is essential for students in order to learn good decision-making and be more responsible.

It is worth noting that empowering students does not mean that teachers should hand all decisions to them; instead, the power is rather shared between both parties (Weimer, 2002; Nunan, 2013). Teachers continue to provide leadership in the classroom but the authority to make choices regarding learning is no longer in their hands alone (Verst, 2010). Thus, power should be redistributed depending on students' abilities to handle it. The allocation of power in learning is a dynamic process that unfolds gradually, depending on students' individual aptitude and level of development to effectively navigate and engage with it. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the teacher to distribute power to students in a

scaffolding manner, while at the same time imparting upon them the required training to assume responsibility. Moreover, it is imperative for teachers to focus on equipping students with the essential skills that enable them to competently and conscientiously make decisions in an effective and informed manner.

1.4.3.2 The Role of Content

In the traditional TCL, there is a large focus on the need to cover a predetermined, rigid syllabus in a given academic year. This can lead to cramming too much knowledge in lectures while “students resort to rote memorisation of content for the sole purpose of passing the exams” (Wright, 2011, p. 93).

Weimer (2002) confessed that, quite often, teachers find it difficult to admit that their instructional practices within the classroom are, to a high degree, driven by the necessity to cover the prescribed content of their modules. For the most part, managing to go over the whole content is a primary determinant of the success of a given academic year. Moreover, a prevailing belief exists within a substantial number of educators that the quantity and complexity of covered content correlates with instructional effectiveness. In other words, “the more content there is and the more complicated that content is, the more rigorous and therefore the better that course and its instructor are” (Weimer, 2002, p. 47). Accordingly, easy courses are frequently viewed as ineffectual, regardless of how well students can comprehend them.

These rooted beliefs regarding content can significantly hinder the effectiveness of the learning process, “The race to cover content has equally negative consequences for students. It reinforces learning strategies that focus on memorizing, regurgitating, and forgetting” (Weimer, 2002, p. 48). Moreover, the rooted conviction and unwavering commitment to the need to fully cover prescribed content impede educators from exploring alternative pedagogical strategies aimed at fostering students' cognitive abilities and ultimately enhancing educational outcomes. In fact, a significant number of teachers have a dichotomous view: “either content is being covered or active learning is happening, as if the two were isolated, independent, and unrelated activities.” (Weimer, 2002, p. 48).

The notion of the majorly important need of covering a predetermined content is called into question based on two principles. First, teaching students all aspects of a particular subject matter is an unattainable objective due to the vast expanse of knowledge. Thus, students should possess the capacity and the skills to engage in lifelong learning outside the confines of university halls, while also demonstrating the ability to assess their own levels and understanding.

Second, when students embark on a lifelong journey of learning, they will not only be acquiring new knowledge but they will also be revisiting previously acquired information. The acquisition of information, conforming to the constructivist view, occurs through a continuous replacement of previous understandings with novel ones. Consequently, students may find it necessary to revisit and update their college-acquired knowledge. Therefore, it is crucial that “students need to graduate from college knowing as much about learning content as they know about the content itself” (Weimer, 2002, p. 49). For that purpose, content should serve a dual function of both establishing a knowledge foundation and developing learning skills.

Weimer (2002) views that in a student-centred setting, content should not only be for the sole focus of developing knowledge and understanding of the subject, but it should also serve as a means that can help to forge lifelong learners with high-order critical thinking abilities. Students should also be able to seek their own information and judge the quality of knowledge, in addition to reflecting on how that knowledge can be used to solve real-life problems.

Teachers should not rely solely on lectures that provide knowledge to be devoured, but they should rather incorporate methods that drive students to critically assess and reflect on the quality of information, such as problem-based learning, debates, cooperative learning, etc. Furthermore, they are urged to provide situations in which students are driven to reflect on their previous knowledge while building new ones. All of that can lead students to build their own knowledge and engage in the deep learning process.

1.4.3.3 The Role of the Teacher

Traditionally, the teacher is considered to be “the sage on the stage” in the learning process, meaning that educators are the expert knowledge providers who transfer absolute information to students. Freire (2000) describes this approach to teaching as the “banking method”, he explained that “In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing (p. 72).

In the context of the banking method, instructors presume the responsibility of controlling the dissemination of knowledge to students. In this relationship, thinking about academic information is exclusively reserved for teachers who are presumed to possess expertise in the field. That entails that educators possess the sole authority to determine the body of information, which is deemed as absolute facts, and then it is subsequently imparted to students who are expected to accept the new knowledge without question.

Freire (2000) viewed this educational dynamic as dehumanising due to its tendency to immobilise students within the confines of mere passive recipients of information while perpetuating the underlying presuppositions of intellectual superiority in the learning environment. Moreover, research studies have documented its deficiencies, associated with the inability to foster sustained academic achievement and to forge lifelong skilled learners (Hoidn and Reusser, 2020).

The emergence of SCL, influenced by the constructivist view, instigated a transformative alteration in the traditional roles assumed by teachers. This shift not only challenged the conventional power dynamics between educators and learners, but also contributed to the disruption of the wider expert-novice hierarchies within the realm of education.

The premise holding that teachers should cede authority and that students should take an active role and be responsible in the learning process is often interpreted as suggesting a reduced role for the instructor within the educational setting. Nevertheless, it may be contended that instructors undertake further

responsibilities and assume various roles in developing the factors that provide the most optimal learning encounter.

Alternatively, to TCL settings, SCL equips teachers with a new set of responsibilities. They should be responsible for creating a positive learning environment that stimulates students' critical thinking abilities and designing a set of activities that actively involve students. They should also assume the roles of a coach, facilitator, motivator and guide that should help students construct knowledge and make sense of new input through interaction and analysis (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Teachers are also expected to portray humanistic traits such as showing care for their students, making them excited about the course and encouraging them during the learning experience (Terrence & Brendan, 2020).

In the context of SCL, it is the responsibility of educators to help promote the growth of students as self-regulated and self-motivated individuals, hence fostering their autonomy as learners. Educators need to play the role of guiding the students as self-learners (Kus, Filiz, & Altun, 2014), while employing strategies to stimulate their intrinsic motivation to participate in educational endeavours, such as making them aware of the significance and value of learning in relation to their objectives and goals or providing avenues for self and peer assessment (Boud et al., 1999).

Educators can also engage with students in a one-on-one manner, depending on the circumstances, thereby addressing students' specific needs and effectively aiding them to employ their own unique learning strategies. In addition to the aforementioned roles, teachers are responsible for posing inquiries, offering guidance, monitoring progress, providing suggestions, and fostering motivation within students (Singh, 2011). For instance, teachers can cultivate a sense of responsibility among students by providing them with ample opportunities to independently develop effective questioning skills, comprehend the various ways in which problems can be conceptualised, and discern the most appropriate methods for gathering pertinent information (Burbules & Linn, 1991).

1.4.3.4 The Responsibility for Learning

In a teacher-centred setting, students assume a passive role waiting to be spoon-fed with information and to be told what to do by teachers all along their learning process. Weimer (2002, p.98) describes such students as “unable to function without structure and imposed control” with “little or no commitment to learning” and their only concern of getting good grades. According to Hains and Smith (2012), some students who had an experience receiving learning instruction primarily via TCL exhibit a preference for the approach as they grow comfortable and accustomed to it, leading them to usually express dissatisfaction with SCL, referring to challenges in assuming accountability for their own learning.

SCL, on the other hand, calls for students to take an active role in the classroom; therefore, they should not only rely on what the teacher brings to the classroom, but they should be able to conduct their own research regarding different subjects and contribute to the discussion and the content. Baxter and Gray (2001) state that adopting a model in which students are actively engaged in the learning process is key to an effective learning experience. The field of neuroscience has provided valuable insights indicating that active engagement in learning is crucial for knowledge acquisition. Doyle and Zakrajsek (2013, p. 7) asserted that “it is the one who does the work who does the learning”. Therefore, in order to foster the quality of their education, students must increase their involvement and engagement in activities such as reading, writing, researching, and problem-solving. In the same vein, Weimer (2002) states that students learn best by doing, therefore, making them actively involved in learning activities promotes their learning.

According to Holmes (2004) and Biesta (2010), SCL suggests that the student bears significant responsibility for their own learning outcomes. If students are sufficiently engaged and encounter no impediments from the instructor, they will achieve success irrespective of other variables. SCL thereby equips students with responsibilities that require them to be self-directed with enough awareness of their own potential, strengths and weaknesses. They should also “take initiatives

in planning and executing learning activities, and regularly review their learning and evaluate its effectiveness” Little (2004, p. 1). This would naturally shift the responsibility towards students. Warren (1997, p. 17) holds that “students should take on primary responsibility for learning factual information so that class time can be liberated for other issues”. This requires students to acquire self-regulated and reflexive skills that allow them to judge the quality of information that they collect.

The allocation of responsibilities should adhere to a logical framework. SCL does not result in the decreased role of teachers, nor does it suggest that students may achieve complete independence from their instructors via autonomy. The teaching and learning processes are characterised by a shared sense of responsibility, whereby instructors and students contribute to the learning process in an environment of mutual trust and interdependence.

1.4.3.5 The Purpose and Processes of Evaluation

In TCL, the general assumption is that the purpose of learning is to have good grades at the end of a given educational unit. These grades are the sole responsibility of teachers to give, usually through summative assessment. The act of summative examination may be seen as a means of exerting power, whereby students are subjected to a system of "micro-penalties" in the form of attributed grades, which in turn establishes a pervasive field of surveillance as stated in Broadfoot (1999, p. 88). This may put the sole reliance on summative assessments under criticism. According to Vavrus et al. (2011), quite often summative assessments, in the form of standardised tests, evaluate students based on their capacity to replicate information delivered by teachers.

Alternatively, Weimer (2002) asserted that for learning to be student-centred, assessment should serve to promote the learning process rather than merely assigning grades. Thus, teachers should imply formative assessment given that it can enhance students' lifelong learning by equipping them with a variety of learning skills and positive attitudes (Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Not only that, but formative assessment is considered to be an efficient way for students to identify

their mistakes and know their weaknesses so that they can make proper adjustments in their learning.

In addition to that, SCL invites teachers to adopt alternative assessment strategies such as self-assessment and peer assessment which often drive students to critically reflect and engage in constructivist thinking. Furthermore, these types of assessments grant students more responsibilities and autonomy, making them an important part of SCL (O'Neill, 1991). For instance, self-assessment is considered as a key element that enables students to assume accountability for their own learning, which makes it a valuable component of SCL (Benett, 1999). Moreover, both peer and self-assessment empower students by giving them authority and accountability, hence fostering an enhanced feeling of autonomy in the learner (Lea et al., 2003).

According to Maclellan (2004), alternative assessment refers to a form of evaluation wherein students are required to engage in a specific task, as opposed to relying solely on standardised testing methods that are typically aligned with the content covered in instructional sessions. The table presented below encompasses a selection of some examples of alternative assessment methods.

Diaries, logs and journals	Portfolios	Peer/self-assessment
Learning contracts and negotiated	Projects	Group projects

Figure 6- Examples of SCL assessments (Gibbs, 1995).

Adopting these forms of assessments can forge a more interesting, engaging, and interactive learning experience, and which allow students to develop critical thinking skills and demonstrate their progress through different lenses over the span of their academic journey.

The discussion on SCL highlighted the problematic definition of the term; as we attempted to navigate through its operational definition and furnish a clear understanding of its philosophy, we proceeded to report distinctive characteristics of student-centredness. By emphasizing Weimer's five tenets of SCL, a comprehensive understanding of the philosophy of how this approach can be effectively implemented in educational settings was established. This may further explain the foundational framework for examining SCL in this research.

While SCL philosophy implies redefining the conceptual framework regarding several aspects and principles of teaching and learning, its effectiveness still hinges on how this mindset is translated into practical applications in educational settings. Examining the specific instructional methodologies and pedagogical strategies can often serve as an indicator of whether a TCL or SCL approach manifests in the classroom. Thus, an overview of the most prominent SCL practices may help bridge the gap between theory and implementation giving a precursor to the existence of the approach or not.

1.4.4 Main criticisms of SCL

Despite its widespread endorsement in educational research and policy discourse, SCL is not safe from criticism, particularly regarding its practical feasibility and contextual applicability in higher education. Critics argue that while the approach is pedagogically appealing, its implementation is often more complex and problematic than its advocates suggest.

One major criticism concerns learner readiness and cognitive load. Scholars such as Kirschner et al. (2006) contend that minimally guided or unguided SCL practices may overwhelm learners who lack sufficient prior knowledge or self-regulatory skills. From this perspective, placing excessive responsibility on students, especially novices, can lead to confusion, surface learning, or disengagement rather than deep understanding. This critique is particularly relevant in contexts where students have been socialised into teacher-centred educational cultures, as is often the case in higher education systems influenced by transmissive pedagogies.

A second line of criticism targets the romanticisation of learner autonomy. Biesta (2006) warns that SCL discourse can overemphasise independence and choice at the expense of structured guidance and disciplinary knowledge. He argues that education should not be reduced to individual preference or learner control alone, as this risks neglecting the teacher's ethical responsibility to introduce learners to complex knowledge and intellectual traditions. In this sense, critics caution against interpreting SCL as a withdrawal of teacher authority rather than a thoughtful reconfiguration of it.

Practical and institutional constraints also represent a significant criticism of SCL. Researchers such as Kember (2009) and Fanghanel (2007) note that large class sizes, rigid curricula, time constraints, and assessment-driven systems often limit teachers' ability to implement student-centred approaches effectively. In such environments, SCL may remain superficial or symbolic, reduced to isolated activities rather than a coherent pedagogical framework. Consequently, teachers may experience tension between institutional expectations and student-centred ideals, leading to hybrid or inconsistent practices.

Another criticism relates to assessment and accountability. Traditional examination systems prioritise standardisation and content coverage, which can conflict with formative, process-oriented assessment advocated by SCL (Boud & Falchikov, 2006). Critics argue that without systemic assessment reform, SCL risks being undermined by evaluation practices that reward memorisation rather than critical thinking or autonomy.

Finally, some scholars highlight the emotional and professional risks for teachers. Brookfield (2015) points out that relinquishing control and sharing power with students may challenge teachers' professional identities, expose them to uncertainty, and increase classroom unpredictability. Without adequate institutional support and professional development, teachers may resist SCL not out of opposition, but as a protective response to perceived risk.

The criticisms of SCL do not necessarily reject its underlying principles but question its uncritical adoption and universal applicability. These critiques

underscore the importance of contextual sensitivity, gradual scaffolding, and institutional alignment.

1.5 SCL Practices

SCL represents a paradigm shift from traditional education models toward an approach that prioritises the needs, interests, agency and active engagement of students. This learner-focused philosophy can be translated in the classroom through a myriad of teaching practices and strategies, each adaptable and designed to different educational contexts and serving specific learning objectives. Rather than just focusing on mere content delivery, SCL practices prioritise the interaction with knowledge, peers, and teachers in dynamic and reflexive ways in order to achieve deep learning experience.

1.5.1 Defining Practices in the Context of Learning

In the context of education, practices refer to the specific strategies, techniques and activities that the teachers and students rely on to better achieve their academic goals (Biggs & Tang, 2011). These practices are rooted in educational theories and philosophical assumptions that shape the specific instructional design and classroom dynamics. Within the framework of SCL, practices refer to the specific methods and strategies that teachers use to design and implement student-centred instruction. While for students, they indicate the strategies and roles which students play in their own learning experience.

It is nevertheless important to note that SCL is not limited to a rigid and predetermined set of instructional methods, but rather it represents a dynamic and flexible educational philosophy that can be achieved through a wide range of strategies depending on the specific situation. It can be argued that the classification of a strategy as student-centred depends less on the method itself in favour of how it is actually applied in practice. For instance, lectures which are traditionally associated with TCL, can be transformed into interactive and participatory experiences reflecting student-centredness when students are often actively engaged within through discussions, questioning, or problem-solving

activities. In this sense, the core of achieving SCL lies in promoting autonomy, engagement, and responsibility, regardless of the specific techniques employed, rendering them as tools to a greater end. While many strategies can embody the principles of SCL, this study mentions some of the most prominent and widely recognised practices. While these strategies are not exhaustive, they can still serve as examples of how pedagogical choices can match with the core tenets of SCL to enhance student agency and deepen the learning experience.

1.5.2 Strategies for Implementing SCL

1.5.2.1 Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

PBL is regarded as one of the cornerstone SCL strategies; it presents students with complex real-world problems to solve, encouraging them to be active investigators instead of passive recipients. In other words, rather than passively absorbing information, students collaboratively explore with the aim of finding solutions to these problems through developing hypotheses, testing ideas, and reflecting on the outcomes (Barrows & Tamblyn, 1980). Consequently, critical thinking and problem-solving skills would be stimulated and cultivated. Also, PBL reflects student-centredness as it promotes self-directed learning since students are required to identify their own knowledge gaps and seek appropriate solution, reflecting thus a constructivist view to learning.

1.5.2.2 Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL)

IBL is a model that emphasises students' curiosity and sense of investigation as a driving force for learning. It urges learners to formulate their own questions, conduct their own research and construct well-founded answers and solutions; all while the teachers play the role of and facilitators, guiding and help students in the process rather than giving them direct instructions (Pedaste et al., 2015). IBL fosters learners' autonomy and cultivates their sense of ownership over learning. Moreover, it fosters key cognitive skills such as formulating hypotheses, critically thinking and evaluating evidence, in addition to polishing reflective thinking. The active construction of knowledge through inquiry also

facilitates deeper and more enduring conceptual understanding. All of these skills fall within the aspirations of SCL to achieve and nurture.

1.5.2.3 Project-Based Learning (PJBL)

PJBL closely aligns with the principles of SCL, as it actively positions students at the heart of the learning process. It engages them in extended, inquiry driven projects that aim for the creation of a final product or presentation (Thomas, 2000). By allowing students to select the topics of their personal interests and goals, PJBL addresses students' personal preferences, fosters intrinsic motivation and autonomy, and advocates for power sharing (Krajcik & Blumenfeld, 2006). This self-directed aspect reflects core tenet in SCL, where learners take initiative, make decisions, and assume responsibility for their learning.

1.5.2.4 Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is one of the key practices within SCL environment. It advocates for knowledge construction through social interaction and shared responsibility between students. In this strategy, students work together aiming to achieve their learning goals by engaging in meaningful discussions and mutual problem-solving dialogues (Dillenbourg, 1999). This can be enriching for students' development and understanding; for instance, activities such as group projects or structured discussions foster critical thinking and autonomy, granting learners more opportunities to develop independently in a student-centred setting.

1.5.2.5 Role-Playing

Role plays offer an immersive, experiential learning opportunities by placing students in realistic scenarios that require decision-making and problem-solving in real life context (Bonner, 2010). This strategy enhances emotional intelligence, perspective-taking, and real-world application of theoretical concepts (Aebersold & Tschannen, 2013). Role-plays are also particularly effective in fostering communication and interpersonal skills that would be beneficial for learners in applying their knowledge (Lateef, 2010).

While the previous strategies represent some of the most common practices under the umbrella of SCL, it is important to note that they are not absolute and they must be implemented in each context for student-centredness to occur. The versatile and adaptable nature of SCL advocates for the integration of several other pedagogical strategies depending on the appropriate context, namely the nature of the discipline or module, student needs, and learning environments, etc. Furthermore, the effectiveness of these strategies in enacting student-centredness does not depend only on the mechanical application, but rather on its alignment with the fundamental principles and goals of SCL such as promoting student agency, fostering collaboration, encouraging critical reflection, and cultivating meaningful engagement and deep understanding. With the evolution of educational contexts, more creative strategies can emerge, granting educators room for creativity to place students at the heart of the learning process.

As will be examined afterwards, there are a myriad of benefits to adopting SCL. We will thus delve into some of the advantages of the approach, such as its potential in enhancing student motivation, critical thinking, collaborative skills, and overall academic performance. Additionally, we will explore how SCL nurtures essential life skills, bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world application. These may constitute further evidence on the effectiveness and value of SCL.

1.6 Benefits of SCL

The effectiveness of SCL has been a recurring topic of inquiry and research within the educational field. Researchers and scholars have consistently sought to examine and evaluate the impact of SCL on various aspects of students' learning experiences and achievements, aiming to gather evidence of its outcomes and potential benefits. The findings had some promising results;

1.6.1 Enhanced Student Engagement and Motivation

One of the most notable advantages that SCL adds to the learning experience is its capacity to boost students' motivation. Traditional teaching

methods, in which teachers assume the overwhelming authority over the classroom often dampen student curiosity, which is a key driver of motivation (Carrabba & Farmer, 2018). In such an environment, students often resort to passive role, leading to diminished levels of involvement, creativity, and curiosity among them. This can further lead to students not feeling a strong connection to the subject matter that they learn.

In contrast, SCL prioritises the involvement of students in their education, placing them as active contributors to the learning process. This active involvement and participation significantly increase students' motivation and engagement, as they become more personally committed and invested in their learning. In fact, several studies have demonstrated that SCL results in increased levels of satisfaction (Kemm & Dantas, 2007) and motivation compared to traditional TCL (Edwards, 2017; Scarrow, 2017).

For example, Marzano et al.'s (2001) research has indicated that employing student-centred strategies, such as cooperative learning, can enhance students' self-esteem, motivation, and empathy. Such strategies promote collaboration among students by encouraging the exchange of ideas and mutual respect and support, which can result in a constructive and inspiring, even motivating and enjoyable learning atmosphere. When students experience a feeling of respect, mutual support and receive assistance, their motivation to learn and achieve success is enhanced.

In another research conducted by Qutoshi and Poudel (2014), the findings have shown that SCL promotes students' engagement and interaction within their learning environment, assisting them further in achieving their goals. A separate research by Stout (2004) attempted to incorporate SCL into his instruction for eighth-grade U.S. history students. The course involved analysing and interpreting historical documents through collaborative activities and making comparisons. The results revealed an increased level of motivation, engagement and self-confidence among students. Moreover, they developed a higher sense of teamwork and gained a better understanding of the subject matter.

It is also important to note that innovative and active learning tasks in addition to SCL settings, which are customised to consider the needs and preferences of students, play a role in intensifying students' drive for academic success. Smit et al. (2013) found that students exhibit higher levels of motivation when they are granted the freedom to select tasks that are in line with their individual needs and interests. McLaughlin et al. (2014) also indicated that the use of active learning strategies, such as group discussions, projects, peer assessments, and online quizzes in instruction can play a role in improving students' motivation. Broadly speaking, relying on SCL models which actively engage students in the learning process while respecting their needs and interests proved to be more effective and desirable by students, driving them to engage and invest more in their learning (Baxter & Gray, 2001).

1.6.2 Deeper Learning and Understanding

On another note, relying on student-centred techniques was found to induce deeper understanding and better retention of information, in addition to eliciting a positive attitude towards learning (Baeten et al., 2016; Collins & O'Brien, 2011).

According to Hoidn (2017), TCL is often linked with surface learning strategies, where students mainly rely on rote memorisation and repeated drilling to retain information. While this approach may be effective for short-term recall, it is not effective in fostering deeper understanding of the material, and the knowledge gained is often quickly forgotten. In contrast, SCL encourages students to engage with the material on a deeper level, thus leading to a more refined and thorough understanding of different concepts. Rather than passively absorbing information, students are actively involved in their learning. This often leads to a more thorough and lasting understanding of the concepts being taught, which in turn leads to better academic performance.

Similarly, Weimer (2002) pointed out that SCL establishes a learning environment in which students interact with content in more meaningful ways, like when stimulated by PBL and real-world application of knowledge. This active engagement with content is often associated with deeper understanding and

retention of material. In fact, these SCL environments possess shared epistemological foundations that emphasise knowledge construction over knowledge transmission, competencies over declarative information, and social exchange over individual learning, thereby fostering profound conceptual understanding (e.g., De Corte, 2004; Sawyer, 2014). Specifically, these assumptions are rooted in the constructivist view of learning and instruction which centres the student in the learning process and encompasses a wide range of participatory learning practices, which have been proven to promote more profound conceptual understanding (e.g., Dubs, 2013; Land, Hannafin, & Oliver, 2012; Lea et al., 2003; O'Neill & McMahon, 2005).

1.6.3 Improved Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills

Through the various active learning strategies it presents, SCL is accredited for encouraging students to develop higher-order thinking skills as it drives them to analyse, assess, and invent, which fosters independent and critical thinking (Weimer, 2002). These skills are paramount for academic success as well as professional growth and personal development.

Kornell and Bjork (2007) assert that SCL advocates for a classroom where students' independent thinking and cognitive abilities are cherished and stimulated, leading to their critical thinking abilities improving as well. For instance, in a student-centred classroom, learners engage in different cognitively stimulating activities such as debates, group discussions, and conducting projects. In these activities, students are required to evaluate different viewpoints, assess information, and defend their points of views with rational and well-constructed arguments. This process would thus enhance their critical thinking skills by making them think deeply and critically about the subject at hand.

In a similar vein, Adriani (2010) also confirms that SCL can foster transferable skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and reflective thinking which would empower students and lead to their academic success. As an example, SCL often includes problem-solving activities that replicate real-world situations. These assignments are often open-ended and can have multiple

acceptable solutions, compelling students to engage in creative problem-solving and equipping them with valuable competencies.

The development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills that SCL brings may allow students to better develop strategies in the face of challenges in various settings whether professional or personal. These skills lead students to learn to better navigate in the face of problems, helping them to become more adaptable and open to new ideas when solving different situations. Moreover, these skills are highly valued in the contemporary labour market, and achieving them attain one of the primary objectives of universities regarding their graduates.

1.6.4 Better Academic Achievements

The different positive effects that SCL elicit, such as the increase in engagement and motivation and the development of cognitive skills, would in turn lead to better academic achievements among students.

In a study conducted by Schell (2012), it was found that SCL was associated with higher levels of academic achievement compared to the more traditional and passive standardised TCL. Hall and Saunders (1997) explored the use of a more student-centred approach within a first-year information technology class using student-centred methods instead of conventional ones. Sessions relied on student presentations, quizzes and continuous assessment courses. Despite some of the difficulties it presented, SCL proved to have a significant positive effect on learners' achievements. Moreover, the majority (94%) of students recommended the new approach over the traditional one. Student-centredness was also accredited for polishing the four skills in language learning; Luke (2004) executed the SCL approach which depended on inquiry-based learning to teach Spanish to college students. His learners explored authentic inquiries and had freedom in selecting topics. They constructed their own research questions, conducted their own studies through different sources, created and shared multimedia presentations with peers, and also used small-group and whole-class activities. This approach significantly fostered their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

In another study that aims to determine the impact of SCL methods on students' success, Geisli (2009) opted for a pretest-posttest experimental design comprising a control and an experimental group and using an achievement test as a data collection tool. Findings provided evidence of significantly higher success in the group where student-centred methods were applied compared to the teacher-centred group. The above studies are further proof of the success that can be brought by SCL in terms of academic success.

1.6.5 Inspiring Students to be Independent Lifelong Learners

One of the most significant and highly regarded benefits of SCL is its role in cultivating a lifelong learning culture among students and equipping them with the necessary skills for nowadays world's labour market. Through SCL, students are driven to develop necessary skills that enable them to address challenges and real-life problems as they arise and turn these experiences into opportunities for growth that may benefit them in their real lives.

For instance, Klemenčič (2020) indicates that students who actively engage in SCL are more likely to become lifelong learners and active contributors in their work fields after graduation. In today's world, where information is widely accessible, the challenge is not merely acquiring knowledge but critically engaging with it and applying it. As such, these skills acquired under the framework of SCL such as being self-regulated, independent and problem-solvers prepare students to adapt to the rapidly changing demands of the workforce, making them more effective and resilient professionals (Francis, 2010; Boud et al., 2018). These skills are considered essential for navigating the complexities of the modern world, where continuous learning and adaptability are key to success. Therefore, equipping graduates with them would ensure a labour force that is able to continue learning, evolving, and solving challenges if they emerge.

Weimer (2002) also indicates that SCL fosters student autonomy, and urges learners to take responsibility for their own learning. This inspires cultivating lifelong learning skills, enabling students to autonomously manage their educational objectives and assess their progress independently. She adds that the

voluntary information pursuit that would be developed in a student-centred environment instils intellectual and personal growth to succeed in one's life. For instance, as students learn how to set and manage their own goals, evaluate and monitor their progress, in addition to adjust their strategies and behaviours for better results, they get inspired to continue learning even beyond the classroom or after formal education comes to an end.

1.6.6 Better Teacher-Student Relationship

SCL plays an important role in reshaping and strengthening the relationship between teachers and student. Unlike the traditional classroom dynamic, where the teacher is often seen as the sole authority and students as passive recipients of knowledge, SCL encourages a more collaborative and respectful partnership. By nourishing collaboration, mutual respect, and advocating for shared responsibility, SCL moves beyond the traditional classroom dynamic to create a more equitable and engaging learning environment (Weimer, 2002). This shift enhances the learning experience, developing a more meaningful and fulfilling relationship between educators and learners.

As teachers move away from the rigid and traditional top-down roles and instead adopt the role of facilitators, guiding, listening, and encouraging inquiry; they naturally foster more open and supportive relationships with their students. In fact, this shift breaks down communication barriers often found in TCL replacing them with a learning environment where students feel heard, respected, and comfortable expressing their thoughts and concerns. This would lead to an inclusive and safe learning atmosphere where students feel more appreciated.

SCL also invites educators to better understand students' challenges, preferences and needs, resulting in more responsive and adaptable instructional methods. This would not only lead to better learning achievements but also to better satisfaction among students, reinforcing their relationship with their teachers as they feel understood and valued. In addition to that, SCL ensures mutual trust and respect between educators and students, leading to a more conducive and supportive classroom environment. In such a setting, students would likely feel

more respected and develop more appreciation for their teachers who in turn would be more efficient in assisting their students to reach their true potential accordingly.

While the benefits of SCL highlight its potential to transform educational experiences by promoting autonomy, critical thinking, and deeper engagement, etc., it is equally important to address the challenges associated with its implementation. The next section explores the obstacles educators and students face in adopting SCL, including structural, cultural, and pedagogical barriers that can hinder its effectiveness. Understanding these challenges provides a balanced perspective and lays the groundwork for identifying areas requiring targeted interventions and support.

1.7 Challenges in the Implementation of SCL

Implementing SCL comes with multiple challenges across different educational contexts. From logistical constraints, pedagogical impediments, and cultural barriers, these obstacles underscore the complexity of transitioning from the traditional TCL framework to the SCL approach.

1.7.1 Time Constraints and Preparation Challenges for Faculty

One of the most significant challenges in implementing SCL is the time commitment it requires, both in preparing and executing the approach effectively. Educators often highlight the considerable effort involved in designing innovative, student-centred lessons, which necessitate creating complex and unconventional activities in addition to interactive examples that go beyond the textbook content (Trinidad, 2019). Additionally, the execution of SCL within large classrooms amplifies the time constraints problem even more. For instance, facilitating meaningful discussions in such settings can be time-consuming, making it challenging to ensure that all students' voices are heard. This time limitation frequently forces educators to revert to lecture-based methods, particularly when they feel pressured to cover extensive course material.

Besides, the time allocated for session in Algerian universities proves to be insufficient for the depth of engagement SCL requires. Short lesson durations, which usually last one hour per module, and tightly packed academic schedules frequently limit opportunities for active, student-led learning

In fact, research has consistently shown that time constraints hinder the successful implementation of SCL. Qutoshia and Poudel (2014) observed that in classrooms with limited time and overcrowded schedules, teachers often abandon interactive methods in favour of direct instruction, which they find easier to manage within the available time. Similarly, Hoiden (2017) emphasised that the limited time allocated for each session in university courses reduces opportunities for meaningful exploration, particularly when instructors must cater to large, diverse groups of students.

1.7.2 Overcrowded Classrooms

Overcrowded classrooms represent a significant barrier to the effective implementation of SCL. Large class sizes hinder meaningful interactions between students and instructors, limit opportunities for active engagement, and create logistical difficulties that undermine the principles of SCL.

One of the core tenets of SCL is fostering active participation and dialogue among students. However, overcrowded classrooms, where the number of students often exceeds 40 or 50, make this goal difficult to achieve. Large class sizes limit the personalised attention that students require to feel valued and engaged, which may lead to passive behaviour and disengagement. In such settings, many students feel overshadowed or intimidated, preventing them from voicing their opinions or contributing to discussions (Hoiden, 2017). For teachers, the strain is just as evident. They find it challenging to provide timely and meaningful feedback, a key component of SCL, with such number of students. Furthermore, overcrowded classes come with logistical constraints; for instance, the difficulty in changing seating arrangements and inadequate space for group work in such large classes restrict the flexibility required for interactive activities (Hoiden, 2017).

1.7.3 Student Reluctance and Resistance

Despite the potential benefits of SCL, a notable challenge lies in students' reluctance or resistance to adopting this approach. While SCL seeks to empower learners by fostering autonomy, active engagement, and critical thinking; not all students are open to embrace these practices. This reluctance often stems from a lack of familiarity and comfort with SCL practices. Many students struggle with active participation, particularly among those who are introverted or fear being judged by peers.

Trinidad (2019) notes that while some students prefer interactive activities such as group work and presentations, others express a clear preference for passive learning modes, such as listening to lectures and taking notes. This is particularly evident with students who are unaccustomed to or feel unprepared for the demands of SCL, highlighting the need for a gradual introduction to such methods.

When students are resistant and reluctant to engage in SCL practices such as meaningful discussions, group work, or interactive activities; the classroom dynamic shifts back toward passive traditional learning. This reluctance prevents meaningful dialogue, collaboration, and the exchange of different perspectives, thereby hindering the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills and negatively affecting the implementation of SCL.

1.7.4 Teachers' Resistance to Change

Many teachers, particularly those with a long experience in traditional methods, find it challenging to adapt to SCL. Having built their careers on teacher-led, directive practices, these educators may strongly view their role as the sole authority in the classroom, rejecting any alternative frame. De La Sablonnière et al. (2009) highlighted that in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan, many educators resisted reforms aligned with SCL, clinging instead to the familiar teacher as an expert and authoritative figure model. This was due to perceived stability and familiarity that TCL provides for them. Similarly, educators elsewhere may perceive SCL as a

threat to their traditional authority, resulting in a reluctance to relinquish control or redefine their roles as facilitators.

Certain teachers view SCL as a disruption to established practices that can result in undermining their authority or complicate lesson delivery. SCL inherently shifts the focus from the teacher to the learner, reducing the teacher's dominance in the classroom. For some educators, this perceived loss of control is unsettling, particularly if they associate authority with effectiveness. Teachers may fear that granting students autonomy will lead to chaos, disengagement, or diminished respect (De La Sablonnière et al., 2009).

1.7.5 Balancing Course Content and Interactive Teaching

Another one of the central challenges in implementing SCL is striking a balance between covering extensive and often requested course content and incorporating interactive, participatory teaching methods. The pressure to meet curriculum requirements and deliver comprehensive subject material often leads educators to prioritise traditional lecture-based approaches, which are perceived as more time-efficient. However, this approach can limit opportunities for student engagement and critical thinking, both of which are central to SCL principles (Trinidad, 2019; Weimer, 2002).

1.7.6 Cultural Context in SCL

An ongoing assumption regarding SCL considers it to be a Western-constructed pedagogical theory, making its adaptation in other contexts not suitable to all cultures (Hallinger, 2001; Schweisfurth, 2011). In fact, despite cultural factors being often overlooked in teaching and learning pedagogical discussions, they play an important role in the successful implementation of student-centredness and in shaping a fruitful dynamic between teachers and students. In this regard, a primary challenge lies in the conflict between SCL principles and the prevailing social and cultural norms and values in certain regions. Thus, in the absence of cultural awareness, policies advocating for SCL are likely to encounter implementation issues (Klemenčič, 2017).

SCL advocates for egalitarian and participative interactions between educators and learners; nevertheless, some cultures maintain hierarchical educational structures that contradict these principles (Schweisfurth, 2015). For instance, cultural discord is seen in Asian countries, where beliefs prioritising hierarchical social order conflict with the SCL framework, which advocates for collaborative learning and mutual accountability between educators and learners (e.g., Saengboon, 2004;). To illustrate, Thai students and teachers initially expressed reservations when they were exposed to SCL, particularly concerning their ability to adapt to the autonomy and critical thinking required in student-centred environments as the concept of being co-workers with their teachers was deemed strange and uncomfortable to them (Klunklin et al., 2011; Sovajassatakul et al., 2011). Even several educators in Thailand admitted that the local culture affects the extent to which SCL is applied; the reason was that the teachers had a certain allure of authority that shouldn't be challenged by students (Hallinger and Kantamara, 2000; Kantamara et al., 2006; Baker, 2008). A similar resistance to SCL has been seen in Korea, where students familiar with conventional TCL were initially hesitant to adopt SCL, despite the enhancements in their communication abilities which the approach stimulated (Jambor, 2007). This reluctance was attributed to the potential profound connection to traditional methods and the over-reliance on the teachers in the learning process which was rooted in the educational setting therein.

Alternatively, implementing SCL in Western cultures is generally less challenging owing to cultural, institutional, and pedagogical factors which align with the principles of SCL. For instance, western educational institutes often emphasise and promote independence, autonomy, and personal responsibility, leading to the establishment of an egalitarian classroom. Furthermore, the educational structures in Western institutes support active participation and encourage shared decision-making between teachers and students from an early stage, where SCL can be recognised under the name “child-centred learning”. In fact, the main principles of child-centredness, which is mostly adopted in the West, can be highlighted in Rousseau's work (1762) which holds that children have their

own unique ways of perceiving, thinking, and feeling, and that adults should not impose their own perspectives on them. Considering that children are naturally curious and want to learn about and explore the world, teachers should support them in making discoveries and drawing inferences from their own experiences rather than pressuring them to absorb ideas that are above their level of understanding (Darling, 1994). This flexibility, majorly found in Western education, tends to grant students a voice since childhood. They are told, for the most part, to believe in themselves and solve problems counting on their own, shaping them into believing that is culturally acceptable to negotiate meaning and seek knowledge rather than taking it for granted if delivered by the teacher.

Considering the cultural variables requires careful consideration when implementing SCL since the approach must accommodate various identities while still nourishing autonomy and facing possible pushback from students. Holliday (2005) indicated that SCL principles are deeply embedded in Western cultural and educational values. Thus, these principles should not be hastily and blindly adapted to other cultures without acknowledging the different cultural traditions and settings. Moreover, even students themselves are not a homogeneous group as they may come from diverse cultural backgrounds in the same country. This can engender different reactions and perceptions of educators and teaching in general. For instance, in some regions of Algeria, students were raised from an early age on the fact that teachers are authoritative figures who must be respected and obeyed. This perception can even extend beyond the classroom, with students often feeling scared of being seen by their teachers playing in the streets instead of spending their free time studying. Such perceptions could shape how students feel, act and go about their studies at later stages in higher education.

Having discussed the benefits and broader challenges associated with implementing SCL, it becomes essential to contextualise the application of the approach within specific educational frameworks. In the Algerian context, the LMD reforms stand out as a significant initiative aimed at fostering SCL in higher education. Therefore, we will examine how these reforms were designed to

promote SCL principles, providing details on the new educational policies it embedded.

1.8 SCL in Algerian Higher Education: the LMD Reforms

The Classic educational system in Algeria, consisting of a four-year bachelor's degree, a two-year magister, and a six-year doctorate, was increasingly seen as inadequate in addressing the major challenges brought about by shifts in the economy, politics, and society (Sarnou et al. 2012). This prompted the policymakers in Algeria to re-evaluate the higher educational structure and introduce a new system capable of aligning with and addressing the socio-economic transformations that are driving significant progress in the country.

The LMD system which stands for “Licence-Master-Doctorat” was adopted as part of the higher education reform in Algeria. It was the fruit of the “Sorbone-Bologna Process” with the participation of many European countries. Beginning with the French universities and then in several other European countries, the LMD system gained a foothold within and beyond European countries. Likewise, the Algerian government decided to implement the LMD system in 2004.

The new system hoped to foster the quality of the Algerian university and grant it a universal dimension, in addition to coping with real-life challenges and meeting the work market demands. The reforms attempted to reposition the Algerian university in a global and competitive spot. Furthermore, there was an emphasis on forging students who are responsible and skilled enough that it would enrich their chances of employability. To achieve these goals, several changes were ought to be made in terms of the university’s pedagogy, policies, and organization. For instance, there was an emphasis on the integration of some key parameters that reflect autonomous and independent learning, including developing soft skills such as the mastery of computing skills, and the acquisition of at least one foreign language (MHESRA, 2012). The reform further required innovative teaching methods that would promote students’ learning competencies, critical thinking and autonomy.

The LMD system issued a number of key changes that were meant to reshape the educational process at universities. Regarding the assessment, the reforms advocated for relying on continuous and formative assessment in combination with summative exams instead of the sole use of the latter at the end of each semester. This was intended to put emphasis on continuous monitoring and learning as a process. Moreover, educators were prompted to make a shift towards SCL instead of TCL, while students were encouraged to be active and primary actors in learning. The LMD further granted educators more freedom in developing and employing their own innovative teaching methods instead of having a prescribed program by the Ministry of Higher Education.

Amidst the attempt of the teaching development that was intended through adopting the LMD system, the pedagogical changes that it brought were perceived unfavourably, which has contributed to a low adoption rate (Azzi, 2012). This perception can be attributed to a top-down approach which failed to involve teachers in the early stages of the planning and implementation of the reforms which makes it often prone to failure. In fact, the LMD reform in higher education has been criticized for imposing a European educational model without sufficient adaptation to the local context or consideration of Algerian educators' perspectives (Missoum, 2021). Bellalem (2014) pointed out that reforms which neglect the input and beliefs of teachers are less likely to be successful, as they can create negative attitudes among educators, which in turn can obstruct the successful implementation of the reforms.

After examining the integration of SCL within AHE through the lens of the LMD reforms, it is crucial to shift focus to the perceptions of the key stakeholders, namely students and teachers. Understanding these perceptions is pivotal, as they shape the implementation and effectiveness of SCL in educational settings. Research on perceptions provides invaluable insights into how individuals experience and interpret learning approaches, offering a nuanced understanding of the successes, limitations, and areas for improvement within SCL practices. Therefore, we will explore the importance of investigating these perspectives in

studies about learning, setting the stage for this study's focus on student and teacher perceptions of SCL.

1.9 Research on Perceptions and Beliefs

The concept of perception has been widely examined in many disciplines, particularly in psychology and education since it plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' understanding of their environment and experiences. Perception can be generally defined as the process by which individuals interpret, organise, and make sense of sensory information and experiences, influenced by their prior knowledge, beliefs, and contextual factors (Gibson, 1979; Bruner, 1990).

In the context of education, perceptions refer to the ways in which students and teachers interpret and evaluate their learning and teaching experiences. These perceptions influence their behaviours, practices, and the level of engagement with different instructional approaches (Trigwell & Prosser, 2020). Moreover, it is to note that such perceptions are not passive reflections of reality; rather, they are actively shaped by a combination of cognitive, emotional, and social factors.

Throughout their careers, teachers tend to construct certain beliefs about the process of learning, the subject matters that they cover, and the students that they teach. These beliefs influence teachers' decisions and practices and affect the way in which they interact with their students (Hoidn & Klemenčič, 2020; Trigwell & Prosser, 2020). Considering the importance that they hold, teachers' perceptions and beliefs attracted a notable deal of research within higher education. Zheng (2009) noted that exploring teachers' beliefs constitutes an important step in understanding their thought processes, choice of teaching methods and practices, and teaching approach. Addressing teachers' beliefs is of significant importance in educational studies as it aids in the refinement and enhancement of their perspectives about what constitutes effective learning and efficient practices in the classroom.

Educators' beliefs have a major influence on their lesson planning, decision making, and classroom practices. These beliefs can even affect teachers'

behaviours towards their students based on how they perceive their abilities and roles, thus adjusting their educational choices accordingly (Li, 2012; Pajares, 1992). Harste and Burke (1977) and Kuzborska (2011) both noted that EFL teachers base their classroom teaching decisions on their beliefs about language teaching and learning, which in turn deeply influence their goals, procedures, roles, and students. Similarly, Richards and Rodgers (2001) emphasized that teachers' beliefs about language learning inform their approach to language teaching and practices inside the classroom.

Nation and Macalister (2010) and Amiryousefi (2015) have also suggested that teachers' actions are greatly influenced by their overall perceptions about what constitutes effective learning. Williams and Burden (1997) further underscore this point by stating that a teacher's beliefs about the optimal language learning have a stronger impact on their classroom practices than any specific teaching methodology they are instructed to use. In a similar vein, Kagan (1992) noted that a teacher's teaching practices are often a reflection of their perceptions about what constitutes an effective language teaching and learning. Thus, in light of these pieces of evidence, it is imperative to comprehend teachers' perceptions concerning different aspects of language teaching and learning. Riley (2009) further emphasised that when a teacher's and student's beliefs align, it can lead to an increased level of learning.

Recognising learners' positions regarding the learning process is equally important for the success and development of an efficient teaching experience. Breen (2001) and Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005) posit that learners' pre-existing perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes significantly impact their learning process. Learners hold strong beliefs regarding language acquisition, learning strategies' efficacy, their own ability, and their expectations for the success of the teaching approaches. Acknowledging these beliefs and their impact on language learning and teaching, as well as the learners' expectations and strategies, can assist educators in developing an effective syllabus and assuming a teaching approach with effective teaching practices.

Breen (2001), for instance, states that the beliefs and attitudes that students bring into the classroom have a significant impact on shaping the learning process and their eventual success. For instance, students who feel a lack of communication and feedback from their teachers are likely to experience frustration and reluctance to actively engage in their studies (Kamran, 2022). Benson (2011), as another example, indicates that studies on students' perceptions reveal that there is a range of diverse beliefs regarding language and language learning, which can influence the level of students' engagement (Benson, 2011). This highlights the need to address these views so that teachers can adapt their practices to better enhance the learning experience given that perceptions and beliefs can significantly influence learning behaviours (Cotterall, 1995).

Trigwell and Prosser's (1991) research provides significant insights into the relationship between students' perceptions of their learning environments, their approaches to learning, and the corresponding teaching approaches employed by educators in higher education. They identified a strong connection between the ways students perceive their learning environments and the approaches they adopt. Students who view their learning contexts as supportive, stimulating, and aligned with their needs are more likely to engage in deep learning approaches. Such approaches are characterised by intrinsic motivation, critical analysis, and an aim to achieve a conceptual understanding of the subject matter. In contrast, students who perceive their educational environment as rigid, unsupportive, or focused primarily on surface level achievements tend to resort to surface learning approaches, which are dominated by rote memorisation and minimal effort to meet academic requirements.

In a parallel analysis, Trigwell and Prosser (1996) examined teachers' perceptions of their teaching roles and their subsequent approaches to instruction. Their findings revealed that those who viewed teaching as a process of fostering student engagement and deeper understanding were more inclined to adopt SCL which aims for conceptual change. Such an approach emphasises active learning, critical thinking, and student empowerment. On the other hand, teachers who

perceived their primary role as delivering content or meeting institutional expectations tended to employ TCL that focuses on information transmission, wherein teaching is centred on the delivery of material with limited engagement with the students' learning processes.

Trigwell and Prosser (1999) proposed a model emphasising the reciprocal relationship between teaching and learning. This model highlights the alignment, or lack thereof, between teaching approaches and students' learning strategies. Environments where teachers adopt SCL often foster deep learning among students. Conversely, in settings where teaching is dominated TCL, students are more likely to adopt surface learning strategies.

After tackling the significance of studies exploring perceptions among both teachers and students, we will then delve into relevant previous research pertaining to SCL and providing a comprehensive overview of studies conducted in both global and Algerian contexts. By highlighting key findings and methodologies from similar investigations, this review would place the current study within a broader scholarly conversation and highlight its contribution to the understanding and implementation of SCL practices.

1.10 Empirical Studies on SCL

Although SCL has become increasingly popular in higher education, it has been reported that there is still a lack of empirical research on its implementation and the perceptions revolving around it, especially within higher educational context. Nevertheless, as a result of the increasing focus on the approach and the ongoing educational reforms, a body of research has started to emerge to investigate different elements of SCL. The following review examines significant studies that explore perceptions and practices of SCL on a global scale as well as within the specific context of Algeria.

A pivotal study investigating students' perceptions regarding SCL in higher education stems from Lea et al. (2003). Relying on a mixed-methods approach, the authors used focus groups and questionnaires to explore students' attitudes towards

student-centredness at the University of Plymouth in The United Kingdom. This combination of qualitative and quantitative methods aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of student perceptions. The results showed that students generally held positive views about the SCL. However, they were skeptical on whether the resources available were sufficient to support the effective implementation of the approach. This shows that there is a mismatch between students' expectations and aspirations for a SCL environment and the reality of the resources and materials provided by educational institutions. While the study is considered as a landmark research that employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, the unique reliance on self-reported data from focus groups and questionnaires may not be sufficient to capture the full complexity of students' experiences and attitudes.

Another notable study conducted by Al-Humaidi (2015) investigated EFL students' perceptions of SCL implementation at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman. Utilising a quantitative approach with a survey of 57 students, the study revealed varying degrees of SCL integration within the learning process. For instance, data revealed that teachers' roles which subscribe to the SCL approach, such as providing multiple means of accessing information, acting as facilitators, being open and empathetic, using real-life problems and case studies to structure the subject matter, etc., were moderately practiced. Alternatively, the assessment methods were found not to be aligned with student-centredness, as they constituted up to 80% of summative examinations. Other aspects that were revealed to be moderately employed are students' involvement in the educational process, setting goals and determining learning objectives. Nevertheless, when specifically questioned about their views on certain aspects related to SCL in the learning outcomes, the students had good perceptions. While the research highlighted the potential of SCL, the limited sample size and reliance on solely quantitative methods constrained a deeper understanding of student experiences and perceptions.

Trinidad (2019) attempted to investigate how SCL is perceived and implemented in the Philippines' higher education setting. He carried out interviews with 52 undergraduate students majoring in different fields in addition to 41 faculty members, all enrolled at Sierra University. The aim was to elicit their understanding of student-centredness and to identify the challenges and gaps between theory and practice regarding the approach. The findings revealed that both students and faculty members mostly view SCL through a reduced lens of merely a set of classroom practices aimed at increasing engagement, and motivation. Deeper aspects of SCL, such as the implications for assessment, increased freedom of choice, and classroom power dynamics were not recognised. Furthermore, while the participants pointed out the approach's benefits in increasing engagement and polishing real-world skills, they also expressed their concerns regarding challenges in implementing it, namely time constraints, students' resistance to participate, and faculty management issues. It is worth noting that the findings of this study may embed cultural factors affecting the study, as the Philippines could hold cultural values that emphasise the hierarchical nature, thus reflecting the traditional teacher-student dynamic. The narrowed exploration and discussion of the factors that led students to halt from engaging and participating could also limit the findings of this study. The study also lacked observational data, relying only on self-reported responses which may threaten the validity of the findings as personal responses can be subjective.

In a more recent study, Oluwafunmilola (2024) carried out a research implementing a mixed-methods research design with the aim of exploring the perceptions of both students and teachers regarding SCL. The study sample consisted of 64 students and 8 teachers and was conducted at the Community College in England. The participants were subjected to questionnaires and interviews to gather data on how SCL is perceived and practiced in their educational settings. The findings identified several aspects that positively influence the effectiveness of SCL according to the participants; a cooperative approach including different group tasks was found to enhance students' engagement and collaboration. Additionally, motivating factors such as

advocating for students' independence and encouraging the exchange of opinions among peers were highlighted as key elements in creating a supportive SCL environment. The study also emphasised the importance of diverse teaching and learning strategies, including debates, discussions, and presentations, which were shown to inspire a dynamic and interactive learning atmosphere.

In the Algerian context, prominent research on SCL is limited, especially within higher educational institutes. The most notable study relates to Badjadi (2020), in which she investigated the implementation of SCL among second language teachers at Algerian universities. The study relied on a survey administered to a random sample of 128 teachers from the departments of French, English, and Translation across different universities, along with follow-up interviews with 9 teachers chosen based on their reported SCL implementation rates. The aim of the research was to gather insights into the teachers' backgrounds, attitudes, practices, and the extent to which they applied SCL principles in their classrooms. The findings revealed that teachers found that the implementation of student-centred methods in second-language classrooms is likely to have a positive impact on teaching and learning outcomes. However, it was highlighted that these methods should be introduced progressively, rather than imposing them across all modules. Moreover, Badjadi's study pointed out that it can be counterintuitive to apply full time use of student-centred methods in the classroom. The effectiveness of SCL is not necessarily linked to the amount of time spent on student-centred activities but rather to the appropriateness of the methods used in relation to the learners, the instructional goals, and the manner of implementation. Interestingly, the study also observed a teacher-initiated shift towards a more socially-centred approach, as a reaction to the reform-driven emphasis on learner-centredness. Despite its valuable insights, Badjadi's study has several limitations. The specific context of the study, including details about the educational environment and institutional factors was not thoroughly elaborated, which may limit the generalisability of the findings. Additionally, the study primarily focuses on teachers' perspectives, without addressing students' viewpoints, which are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of SCL. Furthermore, the study does not

address many key aspects of SCL tenets, leaving certain important dimensions unexplored. These limitations suggest the need for further research that includes a more detailed contextual analysis, integrates student perspectives, and thoroughly examines the various components of SCL.

Boudesra and Hamada (2015) acknowledged the ongoing shift towards SCL in Algeria and the growing prominence of its philosophies within the learning settings. In their study, they particularly focused on PJBL, as they labelled it as a student-centred method. Their aim was to explore whether PBL promotes student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes across various subjects.

Their study relied on a questionnaire administered to 20 high school educators from the Tlilani Mohamed Larbi High School in Constantine. The questionnaire aimed to gather information about educators' experiences, their perspectives on educational reforms, and their implementation of project work in their classrooms. The majority of teachers expressed satisfaction with the educational reforms and the incorporation of PJBL into the curriculum, emphasizing the flexibility it provided for innovating and adapting instructional approaches. Teachers also noted that students often perceived project work as engaging and motivating, with the assignments effectively fitting with academic goals. Additionally, the study also revealed that PJBL encourages students to apply knowledge in real world contexts, enhances collaboration, promotes problem-solving skills, and nurtures self-confidence and autonomy. In spite of that, the study revealed some challenges in implementing PJBL, including difficulties in managing and assessing the projects fairly, time constraints, and the difficulty in ensuring that all students contribute equally.

It is important to note that Boudesra and Hamada's (2015) study was limited by the small sample number of participants, hence hindering the generalizability of its results to other contexts. Moreover, it depended only on instructor evaluation via questionnaires, excluding student input, which may result in bias in the findings. The absence of observations of classroom practices, which may corroborate teachers' self-reported answers with the classroom reality might hinder

the study's reliability. Finally, the study failed to provide a comprehensive analysis of how PBL promotes student autonomy and independence and reflects student-centredness tenets.

Within the scarcity of research bodies addressing SCL in its holistic premise, most of the related studies are interested in students' autonomy, most of which focus mainly on students' readiness to take responsibility and teachers' perceptions regarding it. For instance, Fakhri (2024) attempted to explore EFL first-year Master's students' readiness for autonomy at the University of 20 August 1955, Skikda. Through analysing their perceptions and behaviours, the study aimed to reveal the extent to which students are prepared to take responsibility for their own learning. Data were collected using an online questionnaire aiming to assess how responsibility is divided between teachers and students, give learners the opportunity to self-evaluate their ability to direct their learning, and grant them the chance to express their experience with autonomy. The findings reveal that the majority of students declared that they take responsibility for their learning, especially outside the classroom. However, tasks such as setting the course objectives and evaluating learning are viewed as the sole responsibility of the teachers. Furthermore, students considered their ability to be autonomous as good while admitting that there are some learning areas that could be intimidating to do on one's own. While students further expressed that they engage in autonomous learning through collaborative work and increased engagement, other areas such as questioning teachers or making suggestions regarding learning were rare. Despite the promising finding, the study had several limitations; the relatively small size sample may not fully represent the wider Algerian university contexts. The online form of the questionnaire and the absence of triangulation may threaten the validity of the study as it derives its findings from solely self-reported responses.

While several prominent studies have explored aspects of SCL within the Algerian context, they often do so with a narrow focus. Many of the studies regarding SCL in Algeria concentrate on specific related methods, such as studies

on collaborative learning, PJBL, competency-based approach, etc., rather than examining SCL as a holistic approach. Additionally, other research has focused on related topics like student autonomy, which is only one component of SCL, rather than addressing the full spectrum of SCL principles. This limited scope in the literature in addition to attempts to find similar studies over the previous few years highlights a significant gap in understanding how SCL operates as an educational framework within Algerian universities. Recognising this gap, our research seeks to provide a broader and more integrated examination of SCL by exploring both teachers' and students' perceptions and practices. By doing so, the study aims to contribute with a more complete understanding of SCL's application and effectiveness in this specific educational context.

Conclusion

Chapter 1 covered the literature related to the present research, aiming to place the reader within the appropriate context of the study by presenting a thorough explanation of the most important aspects relevant to the research. The chapter began by presenting the theoretical framework of SCL, delving into its philosophical foundations to provide a holistic image and a deeper understanding of its principles. Then, it traced the origins and emergence of SCL, showcasing how it evolved in response to the limitations of TCL to reach its current prominence as a highly suggested approach in modern pedagogy.

Following this, an explanation of TCL was undertaken, focusing on the criticisms it imbedded and which contributed to the shift towards SCL. These critiques demonstrated the rigidity and limitations of TCL, most notably in advancing student engagement and creativity, which ultimately led to the adoption of more dynamic and flexible learning framework, namely SCL.

The chapter after that dealt with the complex nature of SCL, recognizing the hurdles in forging a single, clear and agreed-upon definition due to the wide range of interpretations and applications of the concept. Then various attempts to define SCL were explored, focusing on the most notable ones with the aim of providing more clarity and framing an operational construct of the term. After this,

aiming to provide more understandable setting, the key characteristics of SCL were outlined, focusing thereafter on Weimer's (2002) five key tenets, which play a central role of the conceptual framework for this study. This attempted to offer a structured understanding of the principles guiding this research.

Next, the benefits of SCL were examined, showcasing its potential to improve students' engagement, enhance deeper learning, equip students with critical skills for lifelong learning, and promoting positive relationship with the teacher. These benefits help explain the ongoing support for SCL as an effective remedy to TCL.

After that, the chapter covered the cultural dimension of SCL, acknowledging the influence of cultural on the application of the approach. It explained how SCL is implemented and regarded differently across different societies, and being aware of these cultural aspects is key for its effective implementation. This was followed by an overview of the LMD system reforms in Algeria, which adopts some ideologies that advocates for SCL. The reforms aim to modernise Algerian universities by fostering student autonomy and adopting teaching practices to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world same as SCL.

The importance of research into perceptions and beliefs was also noted in this chapter, as such factors play a crucial role in shaping both teaching practices and learning experiences. Highlighting the importance of research on such aspects provided further legitimacy to the current study, which seeks to explore the perceptions of both teachers and students on SCL. Finally, the chapter reviewed relevant bodies of research at both national and international levels, summarising their findings and highlighting their limitations. This critical assessment of previous studies underscored the gaps in the existing literature, particularly within the context of Algeria, and reinforced the necessity of conducting further research on the implementation and perceptions of SCL.

In conclusion, this chapter laid the groundwork for the study by exploring the theoretical, historical, and contextual aspects of SCL, emphasising the need for

further research into its application and the beliefs surrounding it, especially within the specific educational context of Algerian universities.

CHAPTER TWO:

RESEARCH DESIGN AND

PROCEDURES

Introduction

Professional researchers strongly emphasise that high quality research needs to be accomplished in terms of methodology in order to gain prominent and reliable insights. The key to any solid research work is a robust and thorough research methodology that guides and justifies its different procedures. In fact, a well-defined and rationally structured methodology is the cornerstone of research findings that are significant, valid and with minimum biases.

According to Creswell (2015), conducting research must follow certain steps and include some key elements. They consist of establishing a well-informed design and methodology of the research, identifying and describing the research setting and participants, selecting relevant research instruments and developing appropriate data collection procedures, clarifying the methods and strategies to analyse the data, and identifying the limitations of the study.

This chapter attempts to provide a thorough and detailed description of the methodological framework that underpins this study. It seeks to explicitly presents an explanation of the research design, providing an intended comprehensive account of the underlying principles guiding the selection and implementation of the research methods and procedures. Afterwards, the chapter describes the setting, offering an account of the participants and the location of the study. It then proceeds to expound upon the instruments employed in the study and offers details pertaining to the procedure employed for data collection, as well as the subsequent data analysis methods. Finally, the chapter examines the trustworthiness and generalisability of the study, addresses ethical problems, acknowledges the study's limitations, and ends with a concise conclusion.

2.1 Research Objectives and Questions

Educational institutions worldwide have been advocating for educational reforms founded upon the promotion of a student-centred environment. These reforms aim to shift the focus from traditional teacher-led instruction to more

interactive and personalised learning experiences in hopes of forging students who are better equipped to thrive in the modern world labour market.

Following this stream, the Algerian universities were no exception as they have recognised the significance of students' agency and centrality. An emerging emphasis on the need to create a student-centred environment surfaced since the implementation of the LMD system. Nevertheless, one might wonder about both teachers' and students' understanding and perceptions of the approach, particularly when considering its ambiguous nature. Furthermore, the successful implementation of SCL depends on how it is perceived by both instructors and learners, making these perceptions a key factor in determining its effectiveness.

Based on that, the research methodology was designed to meet the objectives of this research in order to provide an accurate and reliable representation of the implementation and perspectives surrounding student-centredness in higher education. Therefore, we aim to find comprehensive and fulfilling answers to the following research questions:

- Q1: What are the perceptions of third-year EFL students at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL?
- Q2: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL students' practices with regard to SCL?
- Q3: What are the perceptions of third-year EFL teachers at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL?
- Q4: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL teachers' practices with regard to SCL?

As noted before (chapter 1, P. 33), the concept of SCL can often be a source of confusion, as it varies considerably among scholars, and there is no universally agreed-upon definition to it. For the purpose of this research and to establish an operational construct of the concept, we have chosen to adopt the framework proposed by Weimer (2002). Weimer's definition of SCL, articulated through five key tenets, offers a comprehensive understanding of the concept, avoiding the

limitation of confining it to specific strategies. Nevertheless, recognising the richness and complexity of SCL beyond these tenets, participants were granted opportunities to provide their own understandings of the concept through different tools.

2.2 Research Design

Prior to starting the research process, it is of utmost significance for the researcher to deliberate upon and determine the most optimal design and research plan that would enable the attainment of the study's objectives. According to Marczyk et al. (2005), the research design refers to the plan and the strategic framework employed to investigate a specific inquiry. It can be regarded as a structural blueprint for conducting the study which offers researchers a roadmap for planning and structuring their research, indicating the different steps and procedures of how the study will be undertaken and ensuring that the research objectives are met effectively with maximum validity and control over the findings (Burns & Grove, 2003; Mouton, 1996). The research design thus dictates the course of action to be undertaken in order to effectively address the research purpose and provide comprehensive responses to the research inquiries at hand.

Bryman (2016) states that the research design is vital to the integrity of a research project, as it establishes the framework for data collection and analysis. This assures consistency among the research objectives, theoretical underpinnings, and applied methodology. Kothari (2014) asserts that the research design is essential as it facilitates the seamless execution of the study which renders the research process efficient in that it paves the way for yielding maximal data while minimising the required effort, time, and resources. It is also worth noting that the selection of the research design is contingent upon the nature and characteristics of the research topic in addition to the types of research questions that the researcher seeks to investigate. Therefore, the present study deliberated upon all of its constituent elements in order to determine the most suitable research design to be implemented. Consequently, in order to answer the aforementioned research

questions, this study adopts an exploratory case study using a mixed-method design.

2.2.1 Case Study

According to Yin (2014, p.16), “A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the case) within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident”. Mackey and Gass (2021, p. 308) further assert that “case studies generally aim to provide a holistic description of language learning or use within a specific population and setting” making it an optimal option for the goals of this study. Additionally, case studies are often used in second and foreign language research to enable a thorough examination and comprehension of the teaching and learning experiences (Lambert, 2008).

Gillham (2000) notes that a fundamental characteristic of the case study method is that it uses multiple sources of evidence and data collection instruments in investigating a topic of interest. This renders it as a multifaceted approach which permits researchers to gain a comprehensive and rich understanding of the phenomena being studied. Moreover, Duff (2008) highlights that employing case studies can be significant in accurately examining behaviours and attitudes exhibited by various entities, whether being individuals or groups such as an entire class. The depth that case studies generate allows to better explore the perceptions, and experiences of participants, ultimately providing a holistic understanding to the study.

Scholars such as Bartlett et al. (1982) noted that the main limitation to conducting case studies resides in the degree to which the findings of a particular study can be extrapolated and applied to other contexts beyond the specific case under investigation. The cautious consideration of generalisations derived from case studies is imperative. In order to establish a solid basis for making generalisations, it is crucial that case studies be positioned within a given theoretical framework. This theoretical framework, in turn, may undergo modifications and refinements as the findings of the case studies furnish novel

evidence. The enhancement of the generalisability of case studies can be achieved through the implementation of a strategic approach in the selection of critical cases and settings (Mikkelsen, 2005).

The rationale behind the selection of the case study in this research was predicated upon the intention to investigate a particular case involving third-year undergraduate students and teachers at the University of Algiers 2. The selection of this particular approach can be deemed suitable as it attempts to examine the perceptions and behaviours of the given population in relation to SCL within its authentic setting. Moreover, the selection of the case study was considered advantageous in obtaining comprehensive insights into the subject matter making it a reasonable choice to meet the research objectives.

2.2.2 Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Method Designs

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), mixed methods integrate both qualitative and quantitative data in a research study. “Qualitative data tends to be open-ended without predetermined responses while quantitative data usually includes close-ended responses, such as the ones found on questionnaires or psychological instruments.” (p. 51)

2.2.2.1 Quantitative Research

The quantitative method, which is associated with the positivist paradigm, “involves data collection procedures that result primarily in numerical data which is then analysed primarily by statistical methods” (Dörnyei, 2007, p.24). One of the primary characteristics of quantitative research is its objective nature since it is carried out in a way that aims to minimise bias and subjectivity. Additionally, this kind of research involves putting forward specific questions that can be quantitatively measured and assessed. The data yielded from quantitative research are quantifiable and can be subjected to rigorous statistical analysis. Notable examples of quantitative research methods include the use of questionnaires, tests, and experiments.

According to Dörnyei (2007, p.34), quantitative research has a variety of

merits, as it is characterised by a systematic approach, rigorous methodology, focused investigation, strict control measures, precise measurement techniques, and the generation of reliable and replicable data that can be generalised to different contexts.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that quantitative research is not without its limitations. Brannen (2005, p. 07) deems quantitative research to be “overly simplistic, decontextualised, reductionist in terms of its generalizations, and failing to capture the meanings that actors attach to their lives and experiences”. That is to say, quantitative methods may exhibit a deficiency in comprehensively grasping the intricacies within certain specific phenomena that are the subject of inquiry. Given the limitations found in quantitative methodologies, it is preferable to support it by adding the incorporation of the qualitative approach into the research endeavour.

2.2.2.2 Qualitative Research

The qualitative approach is associated with the interpretivist paradigm. The roots of this approach can be traced back to the foundational methodologies employed in the domains of field anthropology and sociology. Qualitative research exhibits the distinctive characteristic of flexibility, wherein the elements of the research design are not rigidly predetermined, allowing the study to remain receptive and open to unforeseen details that may surface during the course of inquiry (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Qualitative research is commonly linked to the application of participant observation, semi and unstructured interviewing, focus groups, the qualitative analysis of texts, and diverse language-based methodologies such as conversation and discourse analysis (Bryman, 1992). The researcher converts the data acquired from these instruments into a textual format, represented by words to be analysed. Also, one of the characteristics of qualitative research is that, in its essence, it is conducted within its natural setting, devoid of any deliberate manipulation of the circumstances being investigated. In contrast to the objective nature of quantitative research, qualitative research seeks to explore the subjective opinions, experiences, and emotions of the participants in the study (Kothari, 2004). It is also worth noting

that within qualitative research, it is common to implement a limited sample size, and that the analysis of the collected data is subject to the researcher's personal interpretation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

According to Corbin and Strauss (2014), qualitative methods are suitable and effective for studies that aim to comprehend individuals' experiences, investigate unexplored areas to acquire novel insights, and acquire detailed and comprehensive information about phenomena that are challenging to obtain through quantitative research methods. However, qualitative research has some drawbacks. Some of the areas of criticism are being too context-specific, the lack of representativeness in the sampling, and the potential diminishment of generalisability due to the limited number of participants involved in studies (Brannen, 2005, p. 07).

The examination and analysis of both approaches may ultimately indicate that the strong points and advantages of one paradigm is inversely linked to the limitations of the other (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). While a quantitative research design aims to attain objectivity in the collection and analysis of data and attain generalisations, a qualitative research design offers supplementary insights and a comprehensive understanding and explanations of various factors within a specific context. The qualities and demerits of both approaches call for the use of mixed methods.

2.2.2.3 Mixed Methods

Often linked with the pragmatic paradigm, the "mixed method involves the collection and "mixing" or integration of both quantitative and qualitative data in a study" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 34). The qualitative data is characterised by its open-ended nature and the lack of predetermined responses, whereas quantitative data typically encompasses closed-ended responses, often found in surveys. The significance of employing mixed methods resides in the recognition that every method possesses incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods, the weaknesses of each type of data are effectively mitigated.

This research bases the inquiry on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data best provides a more complete understanding of a research problem

than either quantitative or qualitative data alone. This study as such begins with classroom observations, providing an initial understanding of the dynamics of SCL in practice. This is followed by administering questionnaires to both teachers and students to gather quantitative data and generalise findings to a broader population. Finally, the study employs qualitative, open-ended interviews to collect in-depth views from participants, offering richer insights and helping to explain the trends identified in the earlier phases.

- **Quantitative Data Tools:** structured teachers' and students' questionnaires have items that were designed to gather quantitative data on various aspects of SCL implementation. This would offer numerical data which allow for identifying the intensity of participants' perspectives regarding SCL, and providing a solid statistical foundation for the research.
- **Qualitative Data Tools:** semi-structured interviews were carried out with teachers, while focus groups were conducted with students, both focusing on a smaller, purposely selected set of participants. Both of these tools generated qualitative data, providing a more in-depth analysis and detailed accounts that further elaborated the quantitative findings of the questionnaires regarding SCL. In addition, the open-ended items of the questionnaires also yielded qualitative data that helped elaborating more elaborated responses. Moreover, non-participatory observation was employed, generating qualitative data that document the types of activities and student-teacher interactions.

2.3 Research Setting and Participants

The present research was undertaken at Abou El Kacem Saâdallah - Algiers 2 University during the academic year 2021/2022, with 22 EFL educators teaching third-year undergraduates in Didactics of English and 220 EFL students enrolled at the aforementioned level. The researcher's affiliation with the same university made it both a convenient and easily accessible choice to undertake the study in, thus facilitating access to the sample and providing a suitable location for conducting the research process.

The rationale behind selecting the study sample was based on the premise that third-year undergraduate students possess the ability to engage in critical reflection and offer comprehensive insights about their perspectives and experiences with SCL. Moreover, at that level, it was esteemed students possess an understanding of fundamental concepts in SCL, and are capable of assuming a certain level of independence in their learning. Additionally, they are also expected to have developed metacognitive strategies and awareness regarding their learning process which would allow them to answer faithfully and carefully (Hoidn & Klemenčič, 2020).

2.3.1 Sampling

Sampling, which is a fundamental element of any research methodology, refers to the process of selecting a subset, also known as a sample, from a larger population for the purpose of making inferences about that population. This process is typically undertaken before the data collection phase and serves as a key step in ensuring the validity and reliability of research findings (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Bhardwaj, 2019). In fact, effective sampling allows researchers to gather relevant data without the need to study the entire population, thereby gaining time and economising costs (Kumar, 2014).

It is vital that the chosen sample is highly representative of the entire population in order to generate valid data, minimise bias, and achieve generalisations based on the inferences drawn from the sample (Kothari, 2014; Bhardwaj, 2019). As Kothari (2004) emphasises, a well-chosen sample minimises bias and enhances the validity of the data, and that enables researchers to draw more accurate conclusions. A non-representative sample can lead to sampling bias, potentially distorting results and undermining the study's credibility (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this regard, choosing an appropriate sample size is important. As Kothari (2004, p.56) points out, the sample “should neither be excessively large, nor too small; It should be optimum. An optimum sample is one which fulfils the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility”.

There is a variety of different sampling techniques such as simple random sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling, each with its pros and cons. It is important to carefully consider the sampling method based on what suits the nature of the study to ensure that the results are representative.

2.3.1.1 The Students' Sample

For the purpose of undertaking this research, a cohort of 220 students was selected from five distinct academic groups, chosen from the 12 academic groups that were perusing their studies at the university during that academic year. The sample size guaranteed a wide variety of student viewpoints and experiences about SCL. The gender distribution within this group showed a predominance of females (n=179), while males accounted for the remaining portion (n=41).

The initial phase of data collection involved classroom observations and the sampling was designed to serve it accordingly. In order to obtain a representative sample which best suited the study, a purposive-convenience sampling strategy was employed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). An analysis was conducted on the timetables of the available 12 third-year student groups in order to identify those that did not intersect significantly. This selection criterion aimed to allow for observation across all modules within each chosen group without scheduling conflicts. This further allowed to collect the maximum amount of observation data, reaching a broader sample, thus increasing the validity of this research.

Groups 3 and 6 emerged as the most suitable candidates, as their timetables offered no overlap. This selection allowed the comprehensive observation of SCL practices across various modules within each group. With approximately 50 students in each group, the combined observation groups sample comprised roughly 100 students.

After conducting classroom observations, a larger sample of students was selected to take part in the subsequent stage of the research, namely the questionnaires. In addition to all students from the previous two groups that underwent the classroom observation, additional participants from three other groups were selected to amount to a total number of 220 students. The three

additional groups were chosen based on another convenience sampling, as they were the most appropriate in terms of time and availability. The inclusion of additional groups increased the sample size and diversity, hence reinforcing the credibility and generalisability of the results.

After distributing the questionnaires, a more targeted and smaller sample of 16 students was chosen for detailed focus group interviews. These participants were deliberately selected from the initial pool of questionnaires and observations participants, which enabled them to furnish potentially elaborated details to the data collected. The sample of the focus groups encompassed 11 females and 5 males divided into two groups, each comprising 8 students corresponding to their distinct academic group. The purpose of this selection procedure was to collect more comprehensive qualitative data and examine student experiences with SCL in a more detailed manner through targeted discussions. For the purpose of facilitating the analysis of the collected data, focus groups were attributed codes which helped organising the responses (table 2). Further information regarding the sample is presented in Chapter 3.

Focus Group 1	Focus group 2
S1 (Female)	S9 (Female)
S2 (Female)	S10 (Male)
S3 (Female)	S11 (Female)
S4 (Male)	S12 (Female)
S5 (Female)	S13 (Male)
S6 (Female)	S14 (Female)
S7 (Male)	S15 (Female)
S8 (Female)	S16 (Male)

Table 2- Distribution of student participants by focus group.

2.3.1.2 The Teachers' Sample

In order to gather data regarding teachers' practices related to SCL, 17 third-year educators from different modules, who instructed the observed student groups

(Academic groups “3L3” and “3L6”), constituted the teachers’ sample for the classroom observation phase. The selection of these teachers was directly linked to the prior selection of the student groups for observation, making this a case of purposive sampling. This selection allowed to encompass the implementation of SCL throughout the different range of modules. For the sake of clarity and efficient data processing, Academic Groups “3L3” and “3L6” were respectively labeled as “Group 1” and “Group 2” in this research.

It is important to highlight that while the study covered 10 different modules across 2 groups, which accounts for a total of 20, only 17 teachers were observed due to some educators teaching different modules across the two groups. For instance, Teacher T1 was responsible for teaching ESP in Group 1 and Didactics in Group 2, while Teacher T2 taught Didactics in Group 1 and Written Expression in Group 2. Similarly, Teacher T10 instructed Sociolinguistics in Group 1 and Cognitive Psychology in Group 2. This overlap in teaching assignments allowed for a more extensive analysis of how instructors adapted their pedagogical approaches across different modules and student cohorts.

Following the classroom observation phase, a larger pool of teachers was approached to participate in the subsequent stage of the study. A total of 38 third-year educators were invited to complete the questionnaire, including the 17 teachers who had been previously observed. Among them, 12 teachers from the initial observation sample (T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T15, and T17) responded to the questionnaire. Additionally, 10 new teachers who had not been part of the observational phase also completed the questionnaire, bringing the total number of respondents to 22. Despite efforts to engage all 38 invited teachers, not all participants responded, which may be attributed to time constraints or varying levels of willingness to participate in research.

An additional sampling process was undertaken for the interview phase. Seven teachers who participated in the questionnaires and the observations agreed to take part in the in-depth interviews, offering additional comprehensive details regarding student-centredness.

For better organisation and to provide the reader with a thorough comprehension of the participants, the samples from the observations and interviews were assigned coding. This coding system facilitates the research process.

Module	Group 1	Group 2
ESP	T1	T11
Didactics	T2	T1
Cognitive psychology	T3	T10
Civilization	T4	T12
Didactics of oral	T5	T13
Written expression	T6	T2
Translation	T7	T14
Methodology	T8	T15
Literature	T9	T16
Sociolinguistics	T10	T17

Table 3- Coding and group distribution of observed teachers.

2.4 Research Instruments

To effectively capture the various teachers' and students' perceptions, beliefs, and practices of SCL; multiple research instruments were used as a means of triangulation. Relying exclusively on one data collection method can establish constraints and biases. For instance, questionnaires alone may not fully capture the details of real-life experiences and the reasons behind certain perspectives, whereas interviews can be influenced by participants' tendency to remember things inaccurately. Thus, the combination of data collection tools will provide solid findings and a degree of trustworthiness and credibility to the research (Bowen, 2009).

2.4.1 Classroom Observations

Marshall and Rossman (1989) define observation as “the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for study” (p.79). A qualitative observation is when the researcher records and takes field notes in an unstructured or semi-structured form on the behaviour and activities of individuals at the research location (Creswell& Creswell, 2018). Instead of another individual’s interpretation, the observation allows the researcher to acquire a first-hand account of the phenomenon of interest (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

For the purpose of this research, and in order to answer the research questions: Q2: What are Algiers 2 University’s third-year EFL students’ practices with regard to SCL? and Q4: What are Algiers 2 University’s third-year EFL teachers’ practices with regard to SCL? an unstructured non-participant observation was employed. This method enabled a detailed analysis of the interactions and behaviors within the classroom setting.

Hennink et al. (2020, p.385) described non-participant observation as “conducting an observation without participating in the activities that you are observing. In order to do this, you often observe people, activities or events from a distance, so that you are not part of the situation you are observing”. The objective of this observation was to report and investigate the actual practices within the classroom environment in relation to the implementation of SCL. Specifically, it attempted to report on practices related to Weimer’s (2002) tenets of student-centredness, and other strategies that are often associated with SCL within the literature. Additionally, its use sought to corroborate the practices reported by both teachers and students within the questionnaires and interviews. Accordingly, a series of observation sessions were implemented and was undertaken primarily on two distinct groups (g1 and g2) of third-year undergraduate students enrolled in the English department at the University of Algiers 2. The observations were conducted subsequent to obtaining participants’ consent and mutual agreement on a suitable time for their participation. The

observation sessions were structured to encompass all of the modules within the sample's curriculum, with the exception of the Italian language module. Each module underwent a dedicated four-hour observation over the span of 4 sessions, which enabled a comprehensive examination of different instructional practices, students' engagement, and teachers' behaviours. The aims behind these observations were disclosed to the participants only after the completion of the procedures in order to capture authentic, reliable, and unaltered classroom dynamics, in addition to minimising any possible bias or influence that may emerge as a result of participant expectations.

It is worth mentioning that the initial plan for classroom observations involved a semi-structured approach with a predetermined scheme to identify specific student-centred practices. However, upon closer examination of the diverse modules and considering the nature and wide spectrum of SCL, it became evident that employing a rigid scheme may be impractical for capturing this rich variety of practices. Therefore, a transition was made towards a more open and adaptable approach which the unstructured observation presents. This allowed for a more holistic capture of the student and teacher behaviours within the observed classrooms, all while considering taking detailed notes on these interactions and activities throughout the four observation sessions. Following the observations, a comprehensive analysis was undertaken from a broader lens to examine the collected data.

2.4.2 Questionnaires

According to Nunan (1992, p. 231), the questionnaire is “an instrument for collecting data, usually in written form, consisting of open and/ or closed questions and other probes requiring a response from subjects.” It is often used by researchers to acquire data about the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, personality, and behavioural intentions of research participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Two types of questionnaires were designed for this research; one for teachers and the other one for students. On the one hand, the teachers' questionnaire sought to obtain information about their SCL practices,

their overall perceptions of the approach, in addition to the challenges they face when implementing it. On the other hand, the students' questionnaire was designed for the purpose of exploring their attitudes and perceptions of SCL, offering an overview of how they engage with and respond to this learning approach.

The decision to employ questionnaires as a quantitative research instrument was driven by two factors. Firstly, it affords an opportunity to gather data from a vast and diverse population, thereby facilitating an in-depth and rich exploration of the research subject. Secondly, the outcomes derived from this method can subsequently be extrapolated and applied to a broader context which enables generalisability. This combination of breadth and applicability makes the questionnaire an optimal tool for investigating complex subjects such as SCL.

2.4.2.1 Students' Questionnaires

In order to capture students' perceptions, readiness, and some practices regarding SCL, a questionnaire that addresses students' perspectives regarding the approach with respect to Weimers' (2002) five key principles of SCL (see pages 36 - 46) and inquiries about the participants' general understanding of the concept was designed. The questionnaire was structured into seven distinct sections, each of which investigated various facets pertaining to the examination of student-centredness. The survey instrument encompasses a total of 36 items, comprising yes or no questions, Likert scale statements for measuring agreement, as well as open-ended questions.

- **Section 1: Personal Information**

The first section of the questionnaire collected students' personal demographic data, covering their age (item 1), gender (item 2), and group affiliation (item 3). Item 4 in this section intended to explore student agency by revealing their reasons for pursuing their chosen field of study. This aligns with the emphasis on student freedom of choice within SCL principles from early stages. Item 5 attempted to gauge students' overall motivation towards learning.

The aim behind this item was to provide insights into the potential influences of students' perceived motivation on SCL implementation.

- **Section 2: Power-Sharing**

The second section of the questionnaire explored the students' perspectives and experiences regarding power-sharing and agency within the framework of SCL implementation. This section is in line with one of Weimer's (2002) main principles of student-centredness, which highlights the shift in power dynamics and the increase in students' involvement. Item 6 assessed students' comfort level and desire to actively add to the course content, while item 7 explored student willingness to engage in critical thinking and challenge ideas raised by their teachers. Both of these items are key to SCL as they reflect knowledge contribution and the extent of readiness to building knowledge. Item 8 investigated the extent to which students value and embrace the opportunity to express themselves and use their voice in the educational setting since that constitutes an integral element of SCL. Items 9 and 10 explored students' preferences about their active involvement and ownership over their learning process since SCL principles frequently entail student engagement in establishing learning objectives or selecting learning tasks.

Positive replies to these items would indicate that students value the chance to engage actively, contribute to the lesson with their own knowledge, question ideas, and express their viewpoints on the learning process. This is in line with Weimer's (2002) fundamental power-sharing principle of SCL, where students are no longer passive recipients of knowledge, but rather active contributors in building their own comprehension.

- **Section 3: Role of the Content**

Section 3 delves into the role of the content in learning through investigating how students perceive it and what type of content they prefer. Item 11 assessed students' preferences for active learning strategies over rote memorisation. SCL practices often emphasise inquiry-based learning, where

students actively engage with the content through activities like problem-solving or research projects. Positive responses to this item may suggest that students appreciate opportunities to develop critical thinking skills, inquire more, and build their own understanding, all being important aspects of SCL. Item 12 explored students' views on course clarity and objectives. Effective SCL implementation stress that students need to understand the learning objectives and how the course content contributes to their learning and achievement. Positive responses to this would suggest that students feel empowered by knowing the learning goals and can relate the content to their overall learning journey. This would promote a sense of ownership over their learning.

Item 13 explored the inclination of students to content that reflects the constructivist approach. Particularly, if students who would like to draw on their prior experiences and critically analyse new information which aligns with SCL principles. Item 14 investigated students' preferences for applying knowledge to real-world scenarios, while item 15 sought to explore their perspectives regarding content that presents opportunities to learn practical problem-solving skills. The rationale behind both of these questions is the fact that SCL tends to include activities that enable students to utilise their knowledge to address issues or provide solutions in real-life situations. Positive replies would demonstrate that students appreciate the practicality of learning that extends beyond the classroom. This aligns with the fundamental principles of SCL, which empowers students by helping them recognise the significance of the subject matter they are studying.

Through the examination of the combined answers to this section, the study can reveal findings about students' perspectives on the presentation of course content and its impact on their learning process. Students who indicate a desire for content that promotes inquiry-based learning, clear objectives, and chances to link and apply knowledge are essentially showing that they are in agreement with the concepts of SCL instead of content that focalises on transmitting blocks of information to be memorised.

- **Section 4: Role of the Teacher**

Section 4 examines the multifaceted dimensions presented by the roles of teachers, and addresses the expectations that students hold towards them. Item 16 unravelled whether students prefer teachers who are willing to cede some control in the power dynamics in favour of students' activeness. Favourable responses would indicate that students value educators who provide them with chances to actively participate in their learning in contrast to the ones who assume full control. Item 17 examined the sentiments of students towards instructors who go beyond simply delivering course material and actively support their skills development. Proficient SCL teachers prioritise the cultivation of learning skills, providing students with the necessary opportunities to foster self-reliance and self-regulation in their learning journey. Answers to this question may indicate if students appreciate teachers whose main focus is not merely to impart knowledge but also actively assist students in cultivating critical thinking, analysis, and other crucial lifelong learning abilities, which are vital to the successful implementation of SCL.

Item 18 investigated student inclinations towards teachers who focus on developing a nurturing, risk-free and inclusive classroom atmosphere, considering that SCL flourishes in such an environment. Positive reactions to this item may signify that students appreciate educators who establish a secure environment where they can freely express themselves, inquire, and communicate their viewpoints without apprehension of criticism. Item 19 focused on examining students' valuation of teachers who pay attention to their comfort level in expressing their own ideas in the classroom. Considering that SCL prioritises student voice and participation in a conducive environment, positive responses to this item may emphasise that students appreciate teachers who establish an environment where they feel secure in sharing their distinct viewpoints and actively contributing to class discussions, thereby promoting a more cooperative student-centred atmosphere.

Item 20 examined the perceptions of students regarding the importance of the teacher to assume the role of motivator. SCL demands that educators go beyond

the mere transmission of information to actively instigate and stimulate students to acquire knowledge autonomously. The responses may reveal the extent to which students appreciate teachers who cultivate a passion for learning and motivate them to assume responsibility for their educational path. Item 21 offered students the opportunity to articulate their perspectives on the roles of teachers in the classroom. Examining the responses can unveil a more extensive spectrum of students' viewpoints that might not be reflected by the closed-ended questions. The yielded data can provide valuable insights into the precise traits and roles that students prioritise in their teachers, which would allow to compare those expectations with SCL requirements.

Through the analysis of the combined replies in this section, the research can obtain significant information into how students perceive the roles of teachers in the context of implementing SCL. Positive answers to these items would indicate that students are in accordance with the concepts of SCL, wherein teachers transition from a conventional role of imparting knowledge to that of facilitators, developers of skills, and motivational mentors. The use of the open-ended question enables for more comprehensive understanding of the specific qualities and roles that students find most important in their teachers within the learning environment.

- **Section 5: Responsibility for Learning**

This section attempts to assess students' perspectives regarding their newly assumed roles put forward by SCL and how they perceive their sense of responsibility for their learning. Item 22 investigated students' inclination towards active engagement in the classroom. The concepts of SCL prioritise active involvement in the process of acquiring knowledge. As such, this item investigated the extent to which students prefer active engagement in their learning process rather than only taking information passively, which would reflect a preference towards TCL practices. Item 23 investigated student inclination towards self-directed learning since SCL promotes student autonomy in learning and fosters the cultivation of self-directed research skills. Responses can show whether students appreciate the chance to independently explore material, which promotes a more

profound comprehension and intellectual curiosity, or rather be given information to be taken for granted. Item 24 examined the level of student involvement in self-directed investigation beyond their class time. SCL cultivates a deep sense of autonomy and passion for acquiring knowledge that goes beyond the boundaries of the classroom. Responses to this item would reveal if students are inclined to explore further course material on their own, showcasing their eagerness for independent learning and readiness for taking responsibility. Item 25 attempted to evaluate the level of confidence and student self-assurance in effectively taking charge of their educational journey. SCL advocates for students to assume responsibility for their education and develop the skills to direct their own learning. Favourable responses would signify that students believe that they possess the ability to accurately identify their needs, establish objectives, efficiently manage their time and resources, and actively engage in learning endeavours. This would reveal if students are ready to take accountability and switch from teacher-led instruction to student-centred ownership, which is a crucial element of the implementation of SCL.

In analysing the combined item responses, significant insights can be obtained into how students perceive their roles and responsibilities within the learning environment and the extent of their commitment to some of the main SCL practices. Answers to these questions can indicate whether students are in accordance with the principles of student agency, wherein they actively engage in their learning, assume a more autonomous role in their learning process, and have an inclination for independent investigation. They may also reveal if students are ready to assume responsibility for their learning or if they are always more comfortable with the teacher taking over the whole process.

- **Section 6: Role of the Assessment**

Students' viewpoints regarding assessment and its importance in the learning process are addressed in Section 6. Gaining insight into students' viewpoints on assessment is essential, as successful assessment in SCL learning extends beyond only summative grades, and instead, it prioritises providing

constructive feedback and encouraging formative assessment for more effective and everlasting results.

Item 26 and Item 27 investigated the extent to which students depend on external incentives, such as grades, to motivate themselves to learn and work hard. Conventional classrooms frequently depend on grades as the principal and sometimes only incentive for learning, while SCL places a strong emphasis on intrinsic motivation, whereby students are motivated by their own desire to learn and comprehend the subject matter. Responses to both these questions can help in understanding the extent to which students are affected by summative grades. Item 28 evaluates students' inclination towards alternative assessment methods. As SCL promotes breaking away from solely relying on summative assessment, it advocates the use of evaluation methods that foster a sense of cooperation and ownership over learning in addition to self-reflection. The responses to this item may reveal if students are ready to accept the change in accountability for their educational progression, particularly in terms of evaluation with strategies such as peer and self-assessment. Item 29 examines the extent to which students are aware of their own learning advancement and their ability to evaluate their own progress. SCL promotes metacognition, which is the capacity to analyse and supervise one's own learning process. Students who possess strong self-monitoring skills are able to accurately identify specific areas in which they require additional practice and improvement, and may subsequently alter their learning strategies accordingly. Answers to the present item can indicate whether students possess a sense of assurance in evaluating their own comprehension, which is a prominent component of SCL.

The analysis of this section's responses may reveal valuable insights into students' perceptions of assessment. Responses to items 27 and 28 may answer the question if there is a grade focused view of learning that contradicts with SCL principles among students. While items 28 and 29 can unravel if there is an acceptance of student-centred assessment techniques and whether there is an alignment with SCL principles of self-directed learning and ownership.

- **Section7: Student-Centred Learning**

Section 7 tried to delve into students' inclinations, general opinions, and understanding of SCL. This section is important for comprehending students' readiness for, and receptiveness to a shift towards a more student-centred environment.

Item 30 aimed to evaluate students' understanding and awareness of the concept of SCL. Considering that the students major in didactics of the English language, which suggests that they do often cover major learning theories and strategies, the item aimed to check whether students have encountered the concept, or if there was no prior exposure to it. For the ones who reported that they are familiar with the term, they were invited in the follow-up item 31 to articulate their comprehension of SCL using their own words. This would provide valuable insights into how students perceive the core tenets of the approach.

Item 32 investigated students' beliefs regarding the efficacy of SCL in their learning process. This would reflect students' perceptions of whether they regard the approach as advantageous for their educational progress or just a trend. Item 33 being an open-ended follow-up question invited students who believe in SCL efficacy to elaborate on its perceived benefits. Analysing these responses can reveal students' understanding of how practices like discussions, activities, and collaboration within SCL can enhance language acquisition. It can also provide valuable insights into how students connect SCL principles to their language learning goals.

Item 34 sought students to indicate their personal preferred approach between SCL and TCL. The responses would provide valuable information about students' overall perceptions of and preferences regarding their learning approach. Item 35 requested students to indicate the potential issues that may arise when adopting SCL. Examining answers to this item may allow us to anticipate and address possible obstacles to the effective implementation of SCL, especially as it is coming from students who are at the heart of the approach. Item 36 grants students the opportunity to choose their desired learning activities from a

comprehensive list that encompasses both teacher-centred and student-centred learning strategies. Students' replies might offer additional understanding and a better view of the type of activities which they prefer, whether being student-centred or teacher-centred.

It is worth noting that while most of the items dealt mainly with students' perceptions, several items sit at the perceptions-practices interface. For instance, items 22, 28, 29, and 36 attempted to investigate practices of active engagement, self-direction, self and peer assessment, and self-monitoring; yet through perceived tendencies and stating preferences. By contrast, items 24 and 26 clearly capture self-reported practices.

2.4.2.2 Teachers' Questionnaires

Similar to the one administered to students, the questionnaire distributed to teachers aimed to elicit their comprehension and perspectives on SCL and report their practices accordingly. This survey was also designed based on Weimer's (2002) fundamental principles of student-centredness, covered in chapter one (see .p 36-46)

- **Section 1: Personal Information**

Section one sought to collect background information and present a general overview of the educators' profiles to offer additional context for analysing teachers' responses. Item 1 asked for the names of participants for coding purposes. It is worth noting that teachers' privacy is ensured, and all real names are being anonymised. Item 2 inquired about the educational qualifications of instructors. Although teaching approaches are not directly correlated to the degree held by the teacher, higher qualifications often come with higher experience in research and greater access to professional development opportunities. This in turn might affect teachers' readiness and receptiveness to new approaches such as SCL. Item 3 aimed to uncover the instructors' area of specialisation, which may determine whether their pedagogical background influences their teaching philosophy. Item 4 aimed to reveal the years of experience that each instructor had

and how that may impact their receptiveness to change. Additionally, it sought to determine whether there is a relationship between the age reflected in their experience and the teaching approach adopted.

- **Section 2 : Power-Sharing**

Section 2 of the teachers' questionnaire focuses on power-sharing in the classroom, which is a cornerstone principle in Weimer's five tenets of SCL. Here, the goal is to assess the level of student involvement in decision-making processes from the perspectives of educators. Moreover, this section aims to address the distribution of authority among teachers and students. Understanding power dynamics within the classroom is essential for creating an environment where students feel empowered to take ownership of their learning.

Item 5 inquired if teachers allow their students to contribute and share their own knowledge in the course. Positive replies would show that educators actively promote student contributions and appreciate their current knowledge base, which aligns with the fundamental principle of SCL that regards students as active participants in the construction of knowledge rather than passive users of information. Conversely, negative replies would suggest that teachers see their duty as only transmitting information and maintaining complete control in the classroom. Item 6 explored whether teachers encourage their students to present alternative perspectives and opinions when suitable. This question delves into teachers' degrees of comfort when faced with students' opinions that may be potentially challenging and different from theirs. SCL cultivates deep analysis and critical thinking, promoting independence and intellectual autonomy among students. Favourable responses in this context would indicate that teachers perceive themselves as guides in navigating multiple viewpoints, rather than as the only authoritative figures in the classroom.

Item 7 addressed whether teachers encourage their students and make them feel comfortable sharing their opinions, beliefs, and feelings regarding different aspects of the learning process. The aim behind it is to explore the teachers' responsibility in establishing a safe and accepting atmosphere. SCL flourishes by

empowering students to express their opinions and take action in the framework of their learning. Positive responses may indicate teachers who comprehend the significance of psychological, and providing an environment where all students feel at ease in expressing themselves without apprehension of criticism. Item 8 investigated whether teachers consult their students on various aspects of the learning process. The item explores the degree to which instructors engage students in decision-making processes that pertain to their educational experience. Favourable answers indicate that teachers regard students as active participants in their own learning and are open to relinquishing some control over some parts of the classroom experience. Furthermore, they suggest that teachers put value on students' contributions regarding them as actors rather than mere passive consumers of knowledge. Follow-up Item 9 explored, if the response to item 8 was affirmative, what specific aspects of learning teachers consult their students on. By analysing the particular aspects that instructors consult students on, insights can be gained about the sorts of choices that teachers believe students are capable of handling.

- **Section 3: Role of the Content**

Section 3 of the teachers' questionnaire delves into the role of content within the context of SCL. It explores teachers' choices regarding course content, to determine whether instructors place more emphasis on imparting information or on prioritising the development of their students' critical thinking and inquiry abilities within the field.

Item 10 investigated whether the content and curriculum of the course enable students to practice inquiry or engage in the module's deep ways of thinking. The item assesses whether instructors provide students with opportunities to develop critical thinking and learning skills through the content they provide. Favourable answers suggest that the teachers perceive the content as a catalyst for student investigation, which falls in line with the principles of SCL. Item 11 inquired whether teachers consistently ensure that the goals and objectives of their course are clearly stated. While clarity in learning objectives is important for any

teaching approach, it is particularly important for students to always be aware and take ownership of their learning objectives. In a SCL, fostering students' understanding of learning goals can empower them to take an active role in their learning journey; thus, this item attempted to investigate the extent to which teachers pay attention to articulating the learning goals to their students.

Item 12 explored whether teachers present content that encourages students to build on their prior knowledge and experiences to construct their own understanding. Underpinned by the constructivist theory, SCL prioritises using students' existing knowledge and promoting their active construction of understanding. Favourable answers to this item would indicate that teachers give importance to the students' background knowledge, trying to integrate them through content that accommodates this factor into their teaching approach. Item 13 investigated whether teachers design activities that enable students to actively interact with both the teacher and their peers. This item examines the teachers' use of activities that foster student involvement and interaction. SCL flourishes through active involvement and cooperation among students. Positive answers would indicate that the instructors attempt to create activities that promote interaction, participation, and dialogue, therefore cultivating a student-centred environment.

Item 14 examined whether teachers attempt to design activities that reflect real-life situations and present content that enables students to develop their analytical and problem-solving skills whenever possible. This item attempted to reveal the extent of the teachers' reliance on practicality in designing their course content. SCL prioritises the integration of course material with practical situations, promoting a more profound comprehension and the development of skills that may be used in real-life contexts. Positive responses in this context would indicate a teacher who places importance on ensuring that the subject is relevant and captivating for students while preparing them for work life. Item 15 aimed to explore whether teachers design their content with sufficient emphasis on fostering analytical and problem-solving skills in their students. As SCL goes beyond simply

delivering content for information acquisition, the item seeks to understand how effectively teachers integrate skill development into their content design.

- **Section 4: Role of the Teacher**

Section 4 of the questionnaire inquired about the roles that teachers perceive themselves playing in the classroom. The findings can help in discerning whether they adhere to the conventional TCL roles or if they demonstrate practices tendencies towards student-centredness.

Item 16 explored whether teachers consistently strive to create an active learning environment in their classrooms. The question examines the extent of teachers' commitment to promoting students' engagement, which is a prominent feature of SCL. Item 17 investigated whether teachers often attempt to create a motivating classroom environment for their students. While TCL may prioritise extrinsic motivators, primarily grades; SCL places emphasis on intrinsic incentives such as nurturing curiosity, healthy rivalry, and relevance and importance to students' lives. Item 18 investigated whether teachers feel that they create an environment that fosters student learning. This broad statement aimed to assess teachers' level of content with whichever approach they are adopting.

Item 19 explored whether teachers consistently listen to their students' personal problems and complaints. The aim of the question was to evaluate the extent to which teachers are willing to handle students' concerns and complaints. A teacher who is open and attempts to listens to students' personal issues when it's fitting, is more likely to be aware of their individual needs and overall well being, and that is a key aspect of SCL humanistic foundation. Item 20 explored whether teachers make students feel at ease in sharing their opinions. One fundamental tenet of SCL is to promote student voice and cultivate an open and safe environment that accepts different viewpoints. When instructors create an atmosphere where students feel comfortable expressing their thoughts, it indicates that they prioritise student involvement, value individual perspectives, and encourage a dynamic and collaborative environment. Item 21 asked teachers to describe their role in the classroom. This open-ended question provides instructors

with the opportunity to articulate their own understanding of their work. Their answer might indicate a preference for either knowledge transfer (TCL) or promoting student learning (SCL).

- **Section 5: Responsibility for Learning**

Section 5 deals with the responsibility for learning and investigates whether educators adequately provide their students with ample opportunities to assume responsibility and exercise autonomy.

Item 22 explored whether teachers think that the majority of their students take an active role in their classrooms. Positive responses may suggest that teachers see students as active participants, who do engage in active discussions collaborate with peers, and take responsibility for their learning, being in an environment is consistent with the core principles of SCL. Conversely, if teachers perceive low student participation, it may signal perceived barriers that prevent students from being autonomous. Item 23 explored whether teachers urge and assist students in taking and accepting responsibility for their own learning. Through evaluating their responses, teachers who support this item are likely to prioritise empowering students to actively engage in their learning process, exercise autonomy in decision-making, and play an active role in establishing objectives, all of which are important elements of SCL.

Item 24 explored whether teachers believe that the majority of their students are capable of taking responsibility for their learning. Positive replies would indicate that teachers have confidence and put faith in students' abilities and skills to take charge of some of the aspects of learning. In other words, it would imply that they have confidence in student's ability to actively participate in their learning, make informed choices, and take responsibility for achieving their own educational goals. Such beliefs coincide with SCL which supports and demand teachers to have faith in and nurture student independence, analytical thinking potential, and self-directed learning. Item 25 explored whether teachers encourage students to explore content beyond what was presented in class. This statement examines the teacher's initiatives to foster student autonomy and self-guided

education. Their promotion of students' exploration of content outside the classroom displays a commitment to nurturing independence and curiosity, in addition to analytical thinking, and deeper engagement with the subject matter. Such practices help establishing an atmosphere in which students actively search for information on their own, establish connections, and build their own understanding, which are other fundamental aspects of SCL.

Item 26 explored whether teachers create an environment in which students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning. This general statement seeks to evaluate the teachers' efforts to foster students' autonomy and responsibility. Teachers who express agreement with this item are likely assumed to work for prioritising creating a classroom atmosphere where students feel empowered to take charge of their learning. Item 27 examined whether teachers and their students mutually agree upon and take responsibility for achieving learning goals. Teachers who agree with this statement are likely to embrace SCL principles by emphasising shared responsibility with the students and let them participation in the learning process. This can be manifested through engaging students in the process of setting goals, fostering a sense of mutual accountability among them, and cultivating a feeling of ownership over their educational achievements.

Item 28 investigated whether teachers urge and coach their students to become self-directed, lifelong learners with strong self-efficacy skills. Teachers who express support for this statement are likely to prioritise the developments of necessary skills that empower students to independently manage their own learning, seek information outside the classroom, and have confidence in their ability to achieve success. This is consistent with the SCL approach, which requires the development of self-directed and lifelong learning as they are considered crucial for both students' educational and professional pursuits. Item 29 investigated whether teachers attempt to make their students confident and aware of their own potential and abilities to learn and develop independently. Teachers who support this statement are likely to prioritise fostering a positive self-awareness in their students, thereby motivating them to acknowledge and have

confidence in their abilities to be responsible for their learning. This is consistent with the ideas of SCL, which prioritise student autonomy, belief in one's own abilities, and individual development.

- **Section 6: Role of the Assessment**

Section 6 investigates the role of assessment within the educational context, specifically focusing on the perceptions of teachers and their utilisation of assessment practises during their instructional experience.

Item 30 investigated whether teachers integrate formative assessment within the learning processes of their course. Teachers who regularly integrate formative evaluations indicate that they are more likely to prioritise continuous feedback and adapt their lessons depending on students' needs and progress. This is in accordance with the concept of SCL which prioritises personalised instruction and continuous feedback instead of basing the assessment upon summative examinations. Following on the same stream of thoughts, Item 31 investigated whether the teachers who utilise formative assessment rely on it as a basis to adapt to their students' needs and improve their instructional strategies. One of the main aims of formative evaluations is to adjust the instructions to meet the individual needs of the students in a demonstration of responsive teaching practices reflected in student-centredness.

Item 32 explored whether teachers constantly provide their students with constructive feedback. By making sure to furnish such feedback, teachers place a high priority on the continuous progress of their students. This is consistent with the concept of SCL, which highlights the need to provide relevant feedback to facilitate student growth and self-evaluation. Item 33 investigated whether teachers present their students with opportunities to engage in peer assessment and self-assessment in their course. Teachers who rely on alternative assessment methods, which align with SCL, encourage students to take an active role, develop critical thinking skills, and reflect on their own progress. This would promote students' autonomy, collaborative learning, and self-regulation.

Item 34 investigated whether teachers always try to implement real-life situation tasks whenever possible in the assessment of their students. Integrating real-life situations seeks to make assessments more relevant and applicable to students' lives. Doing so would incorporate SCL principles, which promote meaningful learning experiences and the application of knowledge in practical contexts. Real-life tasks enable students to recognise the value and relevance of their learning, improve their problem-solving skills, and foster a more profound connection with the subject matter.

- **Section 7: Student-Centred Learning**

Section 7 of the questionnaire deals with the SCL notion, with a specific focus on the comprehension of teachers regarding what it entails, the extent to which they incorporate it into their instructional practises, and their perceptions of its efficacy. Moreover, the section invites teachers to share their subjective viewpoints regarding their students' perceptions of SCL and to elucidate the various obstacles that hinder the successful implementation of this approach.

Item 35 asked teachers whether they were familiar with SCL. The aim was to understand the extent of the awareness and familiarity of teachers with the concept. Considering that educators come from different backgrounds and speciality fields, and in addition to the possible lack of training on the subject, making an estimate of their familiarity with the concept can be useful, particularly when reflecting on their choices to adopt the approach or not. Item 36 is a follow-up question that asked teachers who reported their acquaintance with SCL to briefly provide a short explanation of the concept according to their understanding. The aim was to elicit teachers' in-depth comprehension regarding the approach and assess the clarity and accuracy of their knowledge. Moreover, teachers' explanations can reveal how they grasp the core principles of SCL. This insight is essential for identifying potential misunderstandings, areas requiring further professional development, and the overall readiness of teachers to implement SCL effectively. Item 37 asked teachers whether they think that SCL has a positive effect on the success of the students. This inquiry aims to get insight into teachers'

perspectives on the effectiveness of the approach. Such perceptions can reflect teachers' willingness to adopt and integrate SCL in their instructional process.

Item 38 is a follow-up question that asked teachers who believe in the positive effects of SCL to describe the benefits of implementing the approach. By elaborating on the advantages, educators may provide perspectives on how they believe SCL enhances the learning experience and outcomes for students. Understanding these perceived benefits can highlight the strengths of SCL from the teachers' perspectives, providing more support for the promotion of SCL. Item 39 inquired whether teachers have received any training in SCL. The item helps to understand the level of formal preparation that teachers have had in the approach. Training in SCL is key for providing teachers with the necessary knowledge and strategies to effectively implement student-centredness in their classrooms while clarifying any misconceptions. A possible reported lack of training might indicate potential barriers to adopting SCL, thus emphasising a need for more professional development training. Item 40 asked the sample to indicate teachers' level of agreement with the statement of whether they love to adopt SCL in their classroom. This inquiry allows to have an idea about the level of enthusiasm and willingness to adopt SCL through the lenses of the teachers, whose answers can give an overall estimate of whether they prefer TCL or SCL.

Item 41 explored whether teachers implement SCL in their classrooms whenever they have the chance. The aim of this statement is to reflect teachers' commitments and efforts to integrate student-centredness in their classrooms. It also indicates the extent to which educators are able to implement the approach in their instructional practices across different settings. Item 42 explores teachers' beliefs about whether their students prefer SCL. Educators' understanding of their students' preferences can inform decisions about instructional design and implementation strategies which they think better align with students' needs and interests. Item 43 assesses whether teachers feel confident in their ability to apply SCL. This can indicate their self-perceived confidence in their skills and knowledge regarding the process of designing student-centred courses. Item 44

asked teachers about the obstacles and challenges of integrating SCL into their classes. This inquiry aids in comprehending the precise obstacles that instructors encounter while applying SCL. By providing a platform for teachers to voice their concerns, targeted strategies could be established to support educators in their teaching experience.

It is to note that while items from 1 to 4 captured background information regarding the participants. Items 18, 21, 22, 24, from 35 to 40, and from 42 to 44 dealt with the teachers' perceptions, while the rest of the items addressed their reported practices.

While both questionnaires provided extensive data, that were predominantly quantitative and helped in identifying trends and patterns regarding participants' perceptions and practices of SCL; additional tools were necessary to delve deeper into the nuanced, personal experiences and perspectives that could not be fully captured through closed-ended items. For that reason, interviews and focus groups were designed to explore these themes in greater depth.

2.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Maccoby and Maccoby (1954, p. 449) define an interview as an “interchange in which one person... attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinion or belief from another person or persons”. It is one of the most commonly used tools in qualitative research, that permits the researcher to verify the accuracy of the findings that were collected through observation which would allow to verify or refute its results (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Relying on interviews can also induce answers to in-depth questions related to specific teaching practices in addition to gaining perspective on perceptions, beliefs, opinions and potentially unexpected findings (Creswell, 2013).

For the purpose of this research, a semi-structured interview (SSI) was designated to be undertaken with the teachers. Newcomer et al. (2015, p. 494) explained that “in mixed methods research, SSIs can be useful as an adjunct to supplement and add depth to other approaches”. SSIs allow the interviewer to be

flexible in conducting the interview by altering the guidelines depending on the interviewees' interactions and responses (Wellington, 2015). Moreover, the interviewer possesses the ability to elicit extensive information from participants through self-arising and supplementary inquiries (Sikes, 2001). Therefore, it can be inferred that while SSI possesses a certain level of control, it allows for a sufficient degree of flexibility to guide the course of the interaction.

The interview aimed to unravel the intricate details of teachers' understanding of SCL, offering valuable conceptual perspectives on their interpretations of the approach. Thereafter, it inquired about whether teachers depend on SCL or exhibit a preference for the conventional approach to teaching and the reasons behind their choices, uncovering the diverse strategies employed by those who actively incorporate this method in their teaching practices. The educators were subsequently queried regarding their perceived roles and expectations of their students, followed by an inquiry into the potential obstacles that could impede the successful implementation of SCL. During the course of the interview, the researchers opted for additional inquiries that were contingent upon the participants' answers, and depending on their relevance and alignment with the objectives of the study.

Question 1 gauged teachers' understanding of SCL. This question aimed to elicit a more detailed and in-depth understanding of SCL. Thus, it allowed instructors to expand upon their own definitions and interpretations of the approach, providing more detailed perspectives. Question 2 asked teachers whether they adopt SCL or TCL, while providing their arguments. By exploring which approach educators lean towards and understanding their reasons, insights into the factors influencing these preferences can be gained. Question 3 asked teachers who claimed that they adopt SCL how they implement it in their classrooms. Comprehending the teachers' practical applications of the approach offers useful perspectives on the diverse practices that they consider to be student-centred. The data would help in understanding how SCL principles are translated into classroom teaching, providing a richer and important context in the midst of

the vagueness usually attributed to SCL implementation. Question 4 aimed to capture educators' preferences between SCL and TCL, along with their reasoning. The findings would shed light on teachers' beliefs about what constitutes effective teaching and learning, considering that these perceptions play a vital role in influencing teachers' classroom practices. Furthermore, by exploring the arguments teachers provide for their preferences, key factors that further influence the selected instructional approaches can be identified.

The subsequent question 5 sought to gather teachers' insights into both the advantages and disadvantages of SCL, providing a balanced view of their perceptions. By asking teachers to articulate both the benefits and drawbacks of SCL, this study can identify traits of SCL that teachers find most valuable, while simultaneously helping to understand the challenges they face during the implementation of the approach. Question 6 asked teachers how they perceive their roles within the educational classroom. Understanding educators' self-perceived roles would help identify alignments or gaps between their beliefs and practices. Moreover, the reported practices can reveal whether teachers are inclined more towards student-centred practices or teacher-centred methods. Question 7 sought to question the teachers about the expectations and behaviours they want from their students. These expectations often mirror the teaching approach used by instructors, precisely whether putting emphasis on student autonomy and responsibility or adhering to structured teacher-centred methods.

Question 8 aimed to assess whether teachers have confidence in their students' abilities to take responsibility for their own learning. The extent and degree of these beliefs can influence the teachers' instructional approach. If instructors believe that their students are capable of self-directed learning and being autonomous, they are more likely to implement SCL methods. Conversely, if teachers doubt students' abilities in this regard, they may TCL which grant greater structure and control. Question 9 aimed to investigate teachers' assessment practices and their purposes, providing insights into whether their use of assessments is mainly focused on summative grading or for advancing continuous

learning. The findings would be valuable in comprehending the alignment between teachers' assessment procedures and the principles of SCL, which prioritise continuous feedback and reflection. Question 10 aimed to elicit challenges and issues teachers encounter while adopting SCL in their classrooms. In the importance of the answers reside in their valuable role in developing strategies that can help teachers to better implement the approach; identifying the different issues associated with SCL can provide a basis for recommending changes that may lead to a better implementation.

Additional questions in the interviews were asked during the conversation depending on the teachers' responses. This allowed for a more flexible and dynamic to data collection procedures. For instance, when teachers expressed concerns about students' readiness for self-directed learning, additional questions were asked like, "in your opinion, what factors hinder students from taking more responsibility for their learning?"; or when discussing challenges in adopting SCL, teachers were asked "how do you deal with these issues when trying to apply SCL?". These types of questions enriched the data by enabling participants to elaborate on their experiences, providing a deeper understanding of their perceptions and practices.

Even though some questions overlapped with the ones asked in the questionnaires, the interviews served a dual purpose. Firstly, they provided a means for triangulation, enhancing the validity of the data by comparing and cross-verifying information gathered through multiple methods. Secondly, the interviews offered a deeper platform for teachers to elaborate on their answers, which enabled the collection of richer data. While questionnaires may limit responses to predefined categories, interviews allow participants to clarify their thoughts, provide examples, and explore the reasoning behind their practices and perceptions in greater detail. This approach not only complements the quantitative data but also enriches the understanding of teachers' experiences, challenges, and attitudes toward SCL in a more contextualised and comprehensive manner.

2.4.4 Focus Groups

According to Denscombe (2007, p.115), “focus group consists of a small group of people, usually between six and nine in number, who are brought together by a trained moderator (the researcher) to explore attitudes and perceptions, feelings and ideas about a topic”. Aube (1994) asserts that the focus group usually takes the form of a semi-structured discussion, which means that it is not as rigidly controlled, but neither is it an unstructured conversation. It can be an effective tool that provides information about the different thoughts that people hold regarding a particular topic, as well as highlighting the various opinions among groups of individuals (Rabiee, 2004).

This study employed two focus groups that aspired to yield in-depth perspectives on students’ understanding of SCL and to explore what views students deem about implementing it. The participants were selected from the two distinctive academic groups that underwent the observation. Each focus group comprised eight students. The selection of the group size was for the purpose of keeping an active and dynamic discussions while guaranteeing equal opportunities for all participants to express their viewpoints. The focus group sessions were led by the moderator whose primary role was guiding and facilitating the discussions, asking probing questions, and ensuring equal opportunities for all participants to articulate their perspectives, all in an unbiased and open atmosphere.

Prior to starting the focus groups, participants received a concise explanation for the objectives of the sessions. The moderator started by introducing the guidelines and rules in order to ensure a constructive and beneficial interaction. Subsequently, the participants were presented with a series of open-ended questions that met with the research aims. The interactions were audio-recorded after acquiring the agreement of the participants which enabled a better and accurate documentation and analysis of the collected data. The duration of the focus group ranged between 45 and 90 min, thus granting enough time for comprehensive dialogues. Scheduling was kept flexible to accommodate both the

participants' and the moderator's availability. The sessions were conducted in empty classrooms that offered quiet, comfortable setting, thereby fostering a conducive atmosphere for the exchange of different perspectives.

The purpose of the focus group sessions with students was to get supplementary information regarding SCL, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding and expand on the data gathered from the surveys. Whereas the questionnaires offered a general overview of students' perceptions and experiences with SCL, the focus groups aimed to gather more detailed and in-depth responses. These sessions provided students with the opportunity to express their opinions, share their personal experiences, and discuss specific issues in more detail, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of their perceptions. Additionally, the focus groups provided an opportunity to explore further aspects of SCL, such as the teacher-student interactions and dynamics, the effectiveness of various SCL strategies, and the challenges faced by students in a student-centred classroom, etc. By engaging directly with students, a more comprehensive and holistic picture of SCL implementation can be captured, ultimately highlighting areas for improvement and identifying best practices from the learners' perspectives.

Question 1 attempted to elicit students' understanding of SCL. This time, providing a platform to gain richer insight into students' perception and understanding of SCL. That can offer valuable information on the level of their awareness and understanding of the approach's principles. Furthermore, the definitions provided by students might provide insight into which specific features of SCL are more emphasised or seen as most valuable from their perspectives. Additionally, this inquiry helps detecting any misunderstandings or gaps in students' understanding. These data may guide future educational strategies and interventions that aim at improving SCL practices. The second question explored students' preferences between SCL and TCL, while asking them to provide the reasons behind their answers. Answers can reveal which approach students feel most comfortable with, revealing reasons behind their choices. The question

further helps in assessing the alignment between students' preferences and the teaching practices they experience in their classrooms. Question 3 investigated students' opinions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of SCL. This question provides an evaluation of SCL from the students' viewpoint, highlighting both its strengths and drawbacks, and contributing to a richer understanding of the approach from those who are involved.

Question 4 aimed to explore what roles students expect their teachers to adopt. Answers to this question can provide a clearer picture and elaborated descriptions of the qualities and behaviours that students value and find supportive in their teachers. Furthermore, the question can clarify any disparities between the perceived roles of the teachers and students' expectations. This may provide insights for future development among teachers regarding their practices and strategies. Question 5 investigated students' perceptions of the roles they believe their teachers expect them to fulfil. These perceptions can significantly influence students' behaviours and engagement in the classroom. Gaining a deeper understanding of the perceived roles of students can provide an idea of how well they understand their responsibilities and the expectations placed upon them. Moreover, the findings of this question can be key for evaluating the alignment between teachers' expectations and students' awareness of these roles, which can impact the effectiveness of SCL practices. Question 6 asked students about how SCL can be implemented in the classroom. This can help determine the specific learning methods that students think subscribe to student-centredness. Doing so would offer valuable perspectives on the most effective methods for implementing the approach according to them. Gaining insight into students' recommendations and experiences may inspire effective learning strategies, therefore informing educators on more effective student-centred practices. Question 7 investigated whether students are confident in taking responsibility for their own learning. Answers would provide an auto-assessment of students' levels of self-efficacy and readiness to embrace autonomy which is a central principle in SCL. Additionally, understanding students' confidence levels can reflect their perceived capabilities

and readiness to engage in SCL practices, which rely heavily on student agency and independence.

Question 8 inquired about students' opinions regarding the support given to SCL in the educational setting. Answers to this question would provide an estimate of the extent to which teachers and Algiers 2 University institution in general, promote and facilitate SCL practices; thus, identifying the presence or absence of supportive policies, resources, and classroom strategies that foster the integration of the approach. Question 9 requested students to identify the issues and obstacles they perceive in the implementation of SCL. Participants were asked to expand on the challenges which would be used as valuable insights that allow the development of strategies and remedies that ensure a successful SCL environment. Question 10 asked students to reflect on all the modules they are studying and try to identify whether each one is more student-centred or more teacher-centred. This would give a snapshot of students' points of view about the prevailing adopted approaches, providing insights into the factors and practices that designate a given module to be student-centred or teacher-centred.

It is worth mentioning that throughout the focus groups, additional follow-up questions arose from the discussion, prompted by the students' responses and comments. For instance, upon questioning students about their roles and their perceptions regarding responsibility, a follow-up inquiry emerged questioning them about their comfort level in confronting their educators with alternative viewpoints. Similar to the teachers' interviews, including these additional questions plays a valuable role in gaining a deeper understanding of the students' perspectives and attitudes, furnishing deeper insights that complement the data yielded from the questionnaires, in addition to being a means of triangulation that fostered the robustness and validity of the findings.

2.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedure was designed to ensure a comprehensive and systematic exploration of the research questions. Given the mixed-methods approach of the study, multiple data collection tools were employed to capture both

quantitative and qualitative insights. Each step of the data collection procedures was carefully constructed to attempt to gather thorough and high-quality data that reflect the implementation and perceptions of SCL with maximum accuracy.

2.5.1 Piloting

Before initiating the data collection procedures, a piloting process was undertaken to encompass the various research tools. This was conducted with the purpose of identifying any potential issues or limitations in the research tools.

Starting with the observation, a duration of eight hours was dedicated to piloting this research tool. Based on the pilot process, a transition in the observation procedure, wherein the initial structured scheme, intended for the completion of predetermined SCL indicators, was transformed into an open-ended format, enabling a more descriptive and informative holistic perspective on classroom behaviours. While certain strategies such as students debates or collaborative activities can be assigned under the SCL umbrella, the approach itself implies recognising the subtle nuances that may differ based on the particular learning setting, module and objectives. Thus, a rigid and predetermined scheme may be short-sighted as it can fail to consider these crucial elements. A more open format can allow to collect the bigger picture, as it could be interpreted in relation to other variables. For instance, in the initial scheme, one of the parameters was implying active learning strategies such as debates, roleplays, presentations, etc. Yet, if we consider the fact that certain modules in their nature allow for their use more frequently (e.g., oral), applying the same metric to other modules which are mostly knowledge-based oriented would be illogical.

In relation to the questionnaires, the student questionnaire underwent a pilot test with a sample size of 44 participants, which revealed certain items that were deemed unclear, necessitating alterations in their formulation. For instance, multiple students kept asking to elaborate on the meaning of item 8, which was initially phrased as “Do you value chances to share thoughts on learning?”. Based on these comments, the question was rephrased for more clarity to be: “Do you like to be granted the opportunity to share your ideas and feelings regarding the

process of learning?”. In another case within the students’ questionnaire, an item was initially phrased: “I like to study by myself”. Participants as such found it to be vague as some interpreted it as studying while being alone rather than taking responsibility or being self-directed; as such, it was altered to “I prefer finding information by myself rather than it being given to me by teachers” for more clarity.

As for the teacher questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted with a sample size of 5 teachers, leading to similar minor adjustments in the wording of certain items to enhance comprehension. For example, in an item that was supposed to check if teachers present opportunities for their students to express alternative opinions than theirs, the question was initially as follows: “I support students in expressing diverse opinions”. Upon receiving feedback, teachers’ understanding was that they support students to express alternative ideas among each other and not towards the teacher. The item was thus adjusted to be “I urge my students to express alternative perspectives and opinions to mine when appropriate”.

Regarding the interviews conducted with teachers and the focus groups conducted with students, a pilot study was undertaken involving a sample of four teachers for the interviews and two focus groups, each consisting of four students. This pilot study served to enhance the comprehensiveness and richness of the research tools by incorporating additional items for discussion based on the participants’ responses.

2.5.2 Classroom Observation

Prior to starting the study, a thorough and systematic planning during which the researcher referred to the designated time schedule was conducted in order to determine the optimal timeframe for the research process.

The research process was initiated by embarking upon the classroom observations phase, wherein the researcher engaged in a non-participatory observation across two classes. Both classes studied the same 10 modules. Each module was observed once per week for one hour over a total period of four weeks,

making it four observations per module. Over the course of the study, the total observation time amounted to 80 hours, covering all modules across both classrooms.

The observation was conducted during the academic year 2022-2023 and spanned a duration of three months, specifically from April to June. Two groups of third-year students were selected for observation based on a convenience assessment of their timetables. It was ensured that the selected groups did not have any overlapping schedules, which was deemed fitting for the purpose of the observation.

It is noteworthy that certain educators may instruct a given module in one group while teaching a different module in another group. This presents an intriguing case for examining how varying modules influence pedagogical approaches.

During the observations, the researcher took a seat at the back of each classroom in each module and employed note-taking as a technique for recording data. Observing from the rear of the classroom allowed for a thorough inspection and a holistic view of most of the interactions and behaviours taking place in the classroom while minimising the potential observant influence on student behaviours as the research is taking a more discreet position. Taking notes proved to be a successful technique for documenting significant details, including student involvement, teachers' practices and behaviours, in addition to noteworthy observations of patterns or trends across the courses.

Throughout the course of the observations, prominent behaviours displayed by both students and teachers were documented. Moreover, the diverse interactions and pedagogical activities that transpired within the educational setting were also noted. Through this documentation, the present study aimed to comprehensively capture diverse facets that are indicative of the pedagogical approach implemented within the educational setting. The choice of carrying out the classroom observation first was made so that the questionnaires and interviews would not inform the participants about the content of the research and therefore threaten the

validity of the research by influencing their practices in the classroom more than it usually is.

The following table presents details of the classroom observation schedule:

Date	Day	Time	Group	Module
16 April 2022	Saturday	08:00-09:00	G1	Sociolinguistics
		09:00-10:00	G1	Methodology
		10:00-11:00	G2	Sociolinguistics
		11:00-12:00	G2	Cognitive Psychology
17 April 2022	Sunday	08:00-09:00	G2	Civilization
		09:00-10:00	G2	Oral
		10:00-11:00	G2	Methodology
		11:00-12:00	G2	ESP
18 April 2022	Monday	08:00-09:00	G1	Didactics
		09:00-10:00	G1	Translation
		10:00-11:00	G1	Cognitive Psychology
		11:00-12:00	G1	Oral
19 April 2022	Tuesday	08:00-09:00	G1	Civilization
		09:00-10:00	G1	Written
		10:00-11:00	G1	Literature
20 April 2022	Wednesday	08:00-09:00	G2	Didactics
		09:00-10:00	G2	Literature
21 April 2022	Thursday	08:00-09:00	G1	ESP
		09:00-10:00	G2	Translation
		10:00-11:00	G2	Written

Table 4- Classroom observations schedule.

This schedule is repeated for the weeks of:

- 30 April - 05 May 2022
- 14 May - 19 May 2022
- 28 May - 02 June 2022

2.5.3 Students' Questionnaires

Upon the conclusion of the observational phase, questionnaires were distributed to an array of third-year undergraduate students from different groups, including the ones who had participated in the observations. We arranged for students to fill out the questionnaires in the week following the observations, at times and locations convenient to them, often during their designated break period between classes.

In order facilitate the completion of the process and enhance the validity of the data, the questionnaires were distributed on-site, allowing students to fill them out in a familiar setting and submit them on time without external interferences. The researcher was present during this process to supervise and provide immediate assistance, addressing any questions or ambiguities that arose. This guidance helped clarify any potentially confusing statements, ensuring that students fully understood the questions and that the data collected reflected their true perceptions and experiences. This minimised response errors and helped maintain the integrity and reliability of the data.

2.5.4 Focus Group

Following the completion of the questionnaires, students were invited to participate in focus group discussions that aimed provide richer data and expand on the ones gathered through the questionnaires. The focus group sample comprised 16 students, with eight students from each group, consisting of participants who had previously been involved in both the classroom observations and survey phases.

To accommodate students' schedules, a mutually convenient time and location were arranged for each focus group session. The sessions were held in an empty classroom at the university. These discussions took place during the week following the completion of the questionnaires, from the 11th to the 16th of June, 2022, and lasted between 45 and 90 minutes per session. The researcher assumed the role of a moderator after explaining the objective of the discussions, thus facilitating the flow of the conversation, making sure that everyone within the group added input to the discussion, and asking follow-up questions that aimed to add major points regarding the topic at hand.

2.5.5 Teachers' Questionnaires

The subsequent stage of the research involved the administration of questionnaires to the teachers. It is noteworthy to mention that this phase started after the completion of the student phase, and by then it was time for a semestrial vacation. Consequently, a decision was made to transition from a paper-based questionnaire to an electronic format. Thus, an online Google Form questionnaire, aiming to yield teachers' perceptions and report their practices with reference to SCL, was designed and distributed via link to the emails of 38 third-year teachers starting during the first week of July 2022. Among these educators, a subset of 17 teachers had already participated in the classroom observations. 22 teachers out of the 38 filled out the questionnaires and electronically submitted their answers, ensuring efficient data collection despite the holiday period.

2.5.6 Teachers' Interviews

Following the period of vacation, and after teachers went back to university, a total of seven interviews were conducted on-site with seven different teachers who had completed the questionnaires. The interviews were conducted in a face-to-face format during the first two weeks of September 2022, with a duration ranging from 40 to 90 minutes for each interview. The scheduling of these interviews was based on a mutual agreement between the participants and the

researcher, ensuring a time and place that accommodated the availability of the teachers.

2.6 Data Analysis Procedures

The present research relied on a multi-level analysis of the acquired data. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), in research where there is a combination of open-ended and close-ended data, close-ended responses are analysed statistically, while the open-ended responses are content analysed. Dörnyei (2007, p.45) asserts that “we can gain a better understanding of a complex phenomenon by converging numeric trends from quantitative data and specific details from qualitative data”. On the one hand, open-ended data have undergone content analysis in which they have been coded and sorted out into categories after drawing out the emerging patterns and themes within. On the other hand, closed-ended items were appointed statistical values, then, they were analysed using descriptive and analytical methods.

2.6.1 Observation

The data collected from the observations underwent descriptive analysis. This involved multiple rounds of coding, followed by a review of the consistency of the codes across different sessions. Each classroom’s practices were compared against the theoretical framework of SCL to determine adherence to its principles. A coding scheme majorly influenced by Weimer’s (2002) tenets of SCL and prominent research on student-centredness (e.g., Klemençic, 2020, Hoidn, 2017) was developed to identify emerging codes and patterns in classroom interactions and practices.

To illustrate with an example, one theme of this scheme sought to identify the presence or absence of instances related to “Power Sharing” by observing the frequency and nature of interactions between teachers and students and noting instances where students are involved in decision-making. The observed patterns allowed to identify comprehensive emerging codes valuable to the study.

Overall interactions and dynamics between teachers and students were also systematically coded to assess the nature and frequency of teacher-student exchanges. As an example, instances where students played an active role in discussions, or conversely, the classroom was dominated by the teacher-led lecturing and interactions were coded, representing each module's overall practices and tendencies.

Thus, the accumulated four-hour duration of observations per module was subjected to an examination which allowed to have a snapshot of the actual practices related to students and teachers and determine practices which adhere to the tenets of SCL or TCL.

2.6.2 Questionnaires

In the current investigation, the data collected from questionnaires underwent statistical descriptive analysis. The questionnaire contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions, requiring a multi-step approach to analyze both the quantitative and qualitative data. Upon receipt of all the questionnaires, the quantitative data acquired were subjected to classification and subsequently underwent conversion into either percentages or means. In contrast, the responses provided by participants to open-ended questions were subjected to a process of content analysis. The answers were systematically arranged based on their shared key concepts in order to ultimately generate a comprehensive understanding of the given proposition.

2.6.2.1 Quantitative Analysis of the Questionnaires data

The quantitative analysis of the questionnaires data provided a general overview of trends in teachers' and students' perceptions and reported practices regarding SCL. Responses to yes/no questions were calculated and converted into percentages, allowing for a clear representation of trends. As for the Lickert-scale questions, a mean score was calculated for each item to represent the overall agreement level of the participants with the statements. The mean scores were then categorised accordingly while presenting the analysis to interpret the results clearly.

For this purpose, a proposed agreement scale that was adapted from Al Humaidi (2015) has been presented in the subsequent table (table 5).

The rationale for employing this scale lies in its effectiveness in capturing the intensity of participants' perceptions in a structured and measurable way. By assigning numerical values to the responses, the scale facilitates statistical analysis of the data. Furthermore, the adaptation of an existing, validated scale gave more reliability and consistency in the measurement process.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Mean	1 - 1.75	1.75 – 2.5	2.5 – 3.25	3.25 – 4

Table 5- Agreement scales means.

It is worth noting that the study included visual charts to present the data to enhance the clarity and comprehensibility of the findings.

2.6.2.2 Qualitative Analysis of the Questionnaires Data

In addition to the quantitative analysis, the open-ended responses from the questionnaire were analysed using qualitative content analysis. This allowed for the identification of key themes and patterns emerging from participants' descriptive answers to open-ended questions. This analysis followed a coding process where the researcher systematically read through the open-ended responses and assigned codes to significant and reoccurring ideas.

2.6.3 Interviews

After repeatedly listening to the interviews many times to optimise familiarity and comprehensiveness, the obtained data were orthographically transcribed. They then underwent a coding process after reading the interview corpus line-by-line. This process involved identifying and examining keywords, expressions, and emerging themes related to the research objectives.

To elaborate, the teachers' responses that shared common themes were systematically organised and assigned specific codes under the appropriate corresponding themes. These themes were tied to key aspects of SCL, such as

understanding of SCL, teachers' implementations of SCL, teachers' roles, etc. Moreover, actual excerpts from their responses were presented to provide authentic and concrete illustrations of these themes. This process of coding and categorising data allowed for the systematic identification of patterns within the participants' narratives. By doing so, the researcher was able to discover common themes and subtle variations in teachers' perspectives and practices. These variations provided deeper insights into how individual experiences and contextual factors shaped their views on SCL.

2.6.4 Focus Groups

The data acquired from the focus group recordings was also subjected to orthographical transcription as a first step, capturing all verbal exchanges to ensure accurate data analysis process. Afterwards, the data was thoroughly examined to uncover meaningful insights from the discussions.

The first phase of analysis involved a comprehensive review of the transcripts while paying attention to recurring themes, patterns, and points that were emphasised repeatedly across participants. As such, a careful line-by-line reading was undertaken, noting key ideas and making analytic notes regarding the relevance, frequency of appearance, and significance of specific SCL related aspects.

The next step in the process was to organise the data into thematic categories. This was achieved through a thematic analysis approach, which involved systematically grouping similar responses and identifying shared themes that were consistent across different focus groups

In selecting quotes to illustrate these themes, the researchers prioritised statements based on their relevance to the goals of the investigation and the frequency with which similar remarks were made during the discussions. This ensured that the selected excerpts were both representative of the broader discussions and reflective of the critical points emphasised by the participants.

2.7 Discussing the Validity, Reliability and Trustworthiness of the Research

IN the scientific research field, each work aspires to generate valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical way. Doing so would provide a trustworthy foundation for making well-informed decisions and reforms in any respective field (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Reliable and valid research findings are considered a basis upon which effective interventions, policies, and practices can be undertaken. For instance in academic field, by offering sound and trustworthy evidence, the research enables teachers, policymakers, and practitioners to refine and evolve their approaches, thereby resulting in satisfactory outcomes. That is to say that scientific studies that respect the principles of validity, reliability, and ethics not only contribute to the body of knowledge in a more impactful and efficient manner but also bring reliable and evidence-based improvements in practice.

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument or study accurately measures what it is supposed to measure (Creswell, 2014; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). It reflects the accuracy, relevance, and appropriateness of the inferences drawn from the data. Validity ensures that the results and conclusions of the study genuinely represent the phenomenon under investigation.

Reliability refers to the consistency, stability, and repeatability of the measurement process (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014). It indicates whether the research instrument produces the same results under the same conditions. A reliable instrument reduces measurement errors and ensures that findings are not due to chance or external factors.

Trustworthiness is a key concept in qualitative research, addressing the rigor and quality of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It represents the degree of confidence that the research findings accurately reflect participants' experiences and realities.

While various strategies may be used to enhance trustworthiness, validity, and reliability, each depends on the research's unique nature; the following approaches were selected to optimally correspond with the study's objectives:

2.7.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is a methodological approach used in research to enhance the credibility, validity, and reliability of findings by integrating multiple sources, methods, or perspectives (Denzin, 1978). In scientific research, triangulation helps to cross verify data and minimise biases. That would help ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 1999).

There are several types of triangulation, including methodological triangulation, which involves using different data collection techniques (e.g., observations, surveys, and interviews); data triangulation, which refers to gathering information from multiple participants or sources; and investigator triangulation, where multiple researchers analyse the data independently to reduce subjectivity (Cohen et al, 2018).

One of the key strategies that allowed to improve the internal validity of the present research findings was triangulation as it ensured that the results were not reliant on solely a single method, source, or tool. According to Zohrabi (2013, p. 254), “it is believed that using different types of procedures for collecting data and obtaining that information through different sources (learners, teachers, program staff, etc.) can augment the validity and reliability of the data and their interpretation”.

In this research, triangulation was undertaken in several forms with the goal of enhancing the validity of the findings. Methodological triangulation was achieved by incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches, through relying on structured close-ended data from questionnaires with more open-ended data that could also be found in the questionnaires, and gathered through interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations. This combination allowed

for a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the perceptions and practices of the participants.

Moreover, the use of the multiple research tools ensured instrument triangulation, ensuring that data on SCL were gathered from multiple angles and formats. This can provide richer insights into the phenomena under investigation. Additionally, data source triangulation constituted another significant element that gave the floor for capturing the perspectives of both teachers and students. This made sure that the perceptions revolving around SCL were not unidimensional and captured from one angle. Rather, the research tried to even take a snapshot of the classroom dynamics by observing both teacher and student practices in real time.

Relying on multiple data sources, methods, and instruments, the research allowed for a deeper, more credible and reliable understanding of the SCL perceptions and practices, playing an important role in cross-checking data from multiple angles and minimising potential biases, ultimately leading to enhancing the study's overall internal validity.

2.7.2 Theoretical Alignment

Content validity represents the accuracy of the research tool in yielding measurements. This can be achieved by ensuring that the instruments include all relevant aspects of the construct. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), aligning the research tools with the theoretical framework of a given study would allow researchers to better capture the constructs they intend to measure in a more accurate way. This would also boost the chance that the research instruments not only cover the relevant aspects of the phenomenon being studied but also diminish the risk of measurement errors, leading to an enhanced internal validity.

Taking into consideration that the current study addresses SCL, content validity was pursued through aspiring for theoretical alignment as the design of the questionnaires, interviews and focus groups was rigorously grounded on a strong theoretical foundation, namely Weimer's (2002) five key tenets of SCL majorly (see pages 36-46).

2.7.3 Pilot Testing

According to DeVellis (2017), pilot testing helps improve and refine the research tools, making them more reliable in accurately capturing the constructs of the study. This would significantly enhance both content and construct validity.

In this study, pilot testing was undertaken with both students and teachers, mainly covering the questionnaires and interviews, which helped improve the validity of the research. The mentioned instruments were piloted with smaller samples to identify and address any unclear or confusing items. Feedback from the pilot tests allowed for the revisions that improved the clarity and comprehensiveness of the instruments.

2.7.4 Thick Description

Thick description in research, according to Geertz (1973), refers to the detailed, in-depth, and contextually rich depiction of social phenomena. It goes beyond mere factual reporting by including interpretations, meanings, and contextual insights into the description, allowing readers to fully grasp the complexity of a given case. In educational research, thick description plays a crucial role in capturing the nuances of classroom interactions, participant behaviours, and institutional settings, making findings more meaningful and relatable to other contexts.

In order to address the transferability of the study findings, which refers to the extent to which the study's findings can be applied to other contexts, detailed descriptions of the research context were provided, comprising the specifics of the setting, thorough information on the participants, and rich report on the classroom dynamics, which allow future readers to determine whether the findings can be applied to similar contexts, making it easier to evaluate the transferability.

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 125) state that the best way to ensure the possibility of transferability is to provide a “thick description of the sending context so that someone in a potential receiving context may assess the similarity between them and . . . the study.” Merriam & Tisdell (2015) also confirmed that

presenting a thick description that is highly descriptive, with a detailed presentation of the setting is the most common and effective way to address transferability.

2.7.5 Member Checking

Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicated that one of the most effective techniques in establishing validity in research is member checking. It presents the participants with the opportunity to verify the accuracy of their input and clarify the collected data, therefore, boosting the trustworthiness and internal validity of the study.

After the completion of the focus groups and the data transcriptions, four students (S1, S4, S13, S14) were invited to review the transcripts of their responses to which they confirmed the accuracy of the data. This process allowed to reinforce, to a certain degree, that the findings truly reflect participants' perspectives. A similar process was intended with teachers regarding the interview they undertook, nevertheless, the tight timetable they had did not allow so.

2.7.6 Prolonged Engagement

Prolonged engagement in research is a strategy that involves sustained interaction between the researcher and the study setting over an extended period to enhance the depth and credibility of the findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) define prolonged engagement as the investment of sufficient time in the research environment to develop trust, gain deeper insights, and reduce potential distortions or misinterpretations. This approach helps researchers move beyond the potential superficial observations and uncover patterns, consistencies, and nuances in participants' behaviours and responses.

Creswell (2013) highlights that, by allowing the researcher to observe behaviours over a sufficient amount of time, prolonged engagement plays an important role in improving internal validity, reducing the potential for surface-level information gathering or situational biases. The researcher as such can verify the consistency in participants' responses and get a better representation of their behaviours through this sustained interaction, thus providing more reliable data.

The researcher in this study engaged with participants over a relatively extended period during classroom observations, accumulating 80 hours across several weeks. This would ensure a deeper understanding and more accurate depiction of the classroom dynamics and practices related to SCL. This long-term involvement adds to the credibility of the findings.

2.7.7 Reflexivity

Reflexivity stands for the continuous process undertaken by researchers through reflecting on their own potential biases and the influence that they can bring to the study. Finlay (2002) states that internal validity can be strengthened through reflexive thinking by inspiring enhanced transparency regarding the researcher's decision-making and interpretation of data, thereby minimising the impact of subjective biases. Reflexivity is also accredited to enhancing confirmability since it ensures that the findings are the sole product of the participants' responses rather than the researcher's perspectives and preconceptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The researcher in this study ensured to a significant extent maintaining his awareness of the role he is bound to undertake in the research process. Continuous reflection was maintained on how the assumptions, beliefs, and interactions held by the researcher might shape the data collection and analysis. Furthermore, by remaining objective and withdrawing from any showing visible reaction to the participants' responses, the researcher aimed to reduce any unintended influence.

2.8 Limitations of the Study

Although this research attempted to rigorously employ the methodological framework to capture accurate and comprehensive insights into the perceptions and practices of students and teachers regarding SCL, some limitations may have impacted the study's outcomes and prevented some intended procedures. These limitations should be acknowledged and taken into account when interpreting the data.

2.8.1 The Effects of COVID-19 on Classroom Practices

The COVID-19 pandemic constituted a significant limitation of this study since an important part of it was conducted during the outbreak. Some of the regular classroom practices, especially when involving collaborative work, were restricted or altered as a safety measurement. Those decisions may have affected the accurate and normal representation of the actions and behaviours of students and teachers within the classroom. The pandemic also imposed hybrid learning, rendering a certain amount of sessions to be held online. This may have an influence on the extent of students' engagement and learning behaviours.

2.8.2 Disruption of Intended On-Site Teachers' Questionnaires

The original intention of the research design was to distribute printed versions of the teachers' questionnaires to be filled out on-site. However, due to time restrictions posed by the pandemic, the distribution had to be adapted to an online format since the academic year came to an end and most teachers were not available on the spot by that time. This alteration may have introduced some limitations to the validity of the study, as teachers had more time to submit the questionnaires, potentially formulating their answers in their perceived optimal way, which can be different from their initial thoughts about the given subject.

2.8.3 Challenges in Teacher Responsiveness

Another limitation that emerged while conducting the research was the teachers' participation and responsiveness. Despite the attempts to include a diverse and sufficiently representative number of teachers in the study, some educators have shown a lack of collaboration and responsiveness towards the participation requests. Consequently, the sample size for participation was limited, and the research could not get hold of the follow-up procedures of some of the teachers who participated in the observation, which limited the perspectives captured in the study.

2.8.4 Sample Size and Generalisability

Although this study involved a larger number of participants than many previous significant studies on the same topic, it fell short of the intended sample size, especially regarding teacher participation. This limitation may affect the generalisability of the findings. The insights yielded from such study, with a relatively constrained sample, might not capture and reflect the wide range of SCL perspectives and practices across different higher educational institutes.

2.8.5 Timing and Longitudinal Effects

The present investigation was carried out within a specific timeframe that allowed only for four hours of observation in each module to capture snapshots of how students and teachers engage in the learning process. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that that classroom practices are not static; teachers' and students' practices could evolve and change as time progresses. Therefore, the study's inability to effectively monitor longitudinal changes may limit the investigation of the whole practical procedures within the classroom and the evolution of teachers' and students' practices over the whole academic year.

2.8.6 Self-Reporting Bias

The use of self-reporting methods such as surveys and interviews may potentially create biases. Participants may try to portray themselves in a more positive and favourable manner, which can result in an inflated perception of the effectiveness of their practices. Such bias may compromise the accuracy and validity of the data that has been gathered.

2.9 Ethical Considerations

In academic research, it is essential that researchers adhere to principles of academic rigour, exhibit honesty, maintain integrity, and demonstrate professionalism. These principles are fundamental to not only ensuring the credibility and reliability of the research process, but also to reflecting the integrity of the researcher and the trustworthiness and quality of the study.

Prior to the data collecting process, teachers were supplied with permission forms, which served to yield their agreement regarding their participation and explaining that their participation is voluntary and it is within their right to withdraw from the study at any point. The participants were provided with the opportunity to seek further clarification on any aspects that were not well understood by them. Furthermore, assurance was granted to the participants that their identities would remain undisclosed and that any data gathered throughout the course of the investigation would be treated with utmost confidentiality and anonymity. Additionally, it was necessary to provide reassurance to the participants that the process of collecting data was not intended for the purpose of evaluating or judging their performance. In addition, the significance of providing honest responses in surveys and interviews was emphasised to the participants in order to ensure the validity of the study (Verma & Mallick, 1999).

On another note, measures were taken to ensure that the study is free from any form of plagiarism or fabrication. The integrity of the data was upheld through accurate representation and authenticity in data collection, analysis, and reporting. Moreover, the researcher ensured that all sources were properly cited, and that no data was manipulated or misrepresented. These ethical considerations aspired to meet ethical standards and guarantee the transparency and trustworthiness of the study, in accordance with best practices in academic research.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the methodological framework of the present study, presenting the employed strategies to meet the research objectives and design blueprint to answer the research questions concerning the perceptions and practices of SCL among teachers and students. The study aimed to comprehensively explore SCL from the perspectives of both third-year undergraduate students and their educators at the University of Algiers 2. This included delving into their perceptions regarding SCL, as well as the specific practices and strategies they employed in implementing this approach within their academic context.

To achieve these objectives, the chapter proceeded to explain the choice of the design, being an exploratory mixed-method case study, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The rationale behind this choice was also explained, emphasising how the combination of methods allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the research questions by capturing the depth of participants' experiences. The setting of the study was the English department at Algiers 2 University, and included third-year undergraduate EFL students and teachers. The sampling strategy ensured the inclusion of the main actors in the learning process in a way the best served the objectives, providing diverse perspectives on SCL.

Thereafter, the chapter presented the data collection tools, including questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations. This triangulation of methods ensured a deep and thorough investigation of the research questions, as data could be cross-verified across different sources and using different instruments, providing rich and extensive data as well as enhancing both the reliability and validity of the study. The approach to analysing different data gathered from the research tools was dealt with, ensuring that the data were systematically processed, enhancing the rigour and comprehensiveness of the research findings.

The chapter also discussed the trustworthiness of the research, outlining the strategies used to ensure the validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of the findings. Member checking, prolonged engagement, and reflexivity were employed to minimise biases and ensure that the data accurately reflected participants' views. Furthermore, pilot testing of research instruments and the repeated coding verification of qualitative data helped to enhance the consistency and rigour of the research.

Finally, the chapter addressed the limitations of the study. These included time constraints that affected the ability to conduct a full round of member checking for teachers, as well as potential biases introduced by the researcher's role during classroom observations. Additionally, the study was limited to a single

university, which may restrict the generalisability of the findings to other educational contexts. However, the use of detailed descriptions and triangulated data collection methods helped mitigate some of these limitations.

In summary, this chapter provided a comprehensive overview of the research design and methodology, outlining the processes used to collect, analyse, and validate data while ensuring the reliability and trustworthiness of the findings. These methodological decisions supported the study's goal of providing valuable insights into the implementation and perception of SCL practices in higher education.

CHAPTER THREE:
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF
RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected through the various research tools of the study. It is organised into three main sections; the first section focuses on the data gathered from students, the second presents the findings from teachers, and the third section is dedicated to the analysis of classroom observations, offering a combined perspective on the dynamics between both teachers and students. Together, these sections allow for a clear and comprehensive view of the study's findings by combining insights from both self-reported data and real-time classroom practices.

The chapter aims to provide a thorough descriptive overview of the data, which would serve as a foundation for interpreting and drawing meaningful conclusions in the next chapter. By breaking down the data into its core components, the chapter seeks to highlight and identify patterns, insights, and key themes that emerge from the different research tools. In particular, the chapter presents both quantitative and qualitative data from students and teachers, which were gathered through questionnaires, focus groups, and interviews, as well as observational data that depicts the application of SCL practices in classroom settings. By relying on multiple sources of data, this chapter attempts to provide a holistic analysis of the findings and offer a general understanding of the implementation and impact of SCL in the educational setting.

The results presented here lay the groundwork for the subsequent discussion of implications and conclusions, helping to draw meaningful insights from the different perspectives captured throughout the study.

3.1 Students' Perceptions and Practices

The analysis of students' perceptions regarding SCL was mainly conducted using two research instruments, namely questionnaires and focus groups. Each tool was designed to explore different dimensions of student-centredness in order to

provide a comprehensive understanding of how students perceive and engage with the approach in their learning experience. The questionnaires included both quantitative (Likert-scale, multiple choice, and yes/no items) and qualitative (open-ended questions) items to gather perspective on how students view SCL. The focus group discussions played as a complementary instrument, allowing for deeper exploration on students' understanding, attitudes, perspectives, challenges, and expectations regarding student centredness.

The questionnaires were distributed to a sample of 220 third-year EFL students enrolled in the English department Algiers 2 University. Participants were given the opportunity to complete the surveys with the researcher present to clarify any ambiguities or problems. Following the questionnaire phase, focus group discussions were conducted with a selected sample of 16 students to expand on key themes related to SCL. The focus groups provided an interactive platform where students could reflect on their learning experiences, share different perspectives, and discuss challenges and barriers that face SCL implementation.

The data collected through questionnaires was subjected to descriptive statistical analysis, where percentages, means, and frequencies were calculated for closed-ended questions. Thematic content analysis was used to examine open-ended questionnaire responses as well as for the focus group discussions, allowing for the identification of recurring themes, attitudes, and concerns related to SCL.

3.1.1 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaires

3.1.1.1 Personal Information

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to gather demographic data and personal information from the students, with the aim of obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the participants' profiles.

Categories	Stratum	N (total = 220)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	179	81
	Male	41	19
Age	19-21	161	73
	22-25	53	24
	25	6	3
Motivation level	Low	12	5
	Neutral	154	70
	High	54	25
Reasons for studying English	Love for the language	96	44
	To get a job	98	45
	Choice of the parents	8	4
	Others	18	7

Table 6- Personal information of student participants.

The majority of students who participated in the interviews were females and constituted 81% of the sample, whereas 19% were males. In terms of age distribution, 73% of the students' sample fell within the age range of 19 to 21 years, while 24% were between the ages of 22 and 25, and the remaining 3% were above the age of 25.

When asked about their degree of motivation, data collected from students revealed that a mere 5% of respondents indicated having a low level of motivation. In contrast, a substantial majority of 70% reported having a neutral level of motivation, suggesting a lack of strong drive or enthusiasm. Conversely, a noteworthy 25% of participants asserted possessing a high level of motivation, indicating a strong sense of purpose and determination in their academic pursuits.

The participants were also asked about the factors influencing their decision to pursue English studies. The survey participants exhibited a relatively equitable distribution of responses between displaying a fondness and love for the language with 44% and expressing desires of securing employment within the related field with 45%. Few students 4% explicitly acknowledged that their choice of the field of study was primarily influenced by their parents, rather than being a personal decision. Conversely, 5% of the participants exhibited a lack of awareness regarding the factors that drove them towards pursuing the English language as an academic domain.

3.1.1.2 Power Sharing

The current section endeavours to explore the perceptions of students in relation to decision-making and their potential to assume increased responsibility within the classroom setting.

Item number	Question	Yes	No
Item 06	Do you like to offer your own knowledge and contribution to the content of the course?	191 (87%)	29 (13%)
Item 07	Do you like to question and challenge the ideas of the teacher and offer an alternative perspective when you feel it is appropriate?	159 (72%)	59 (28%)
Item 08	Do you like to be granted the opportunity to share your ideas and feelings regarding the process of learning?	181 (83%)	36 (17%)
Item 09	Do you like to be consulted on different aspects of learning?	183 (84%)	35 (16%)

Table 7- Results of students' responses related to power sharing.

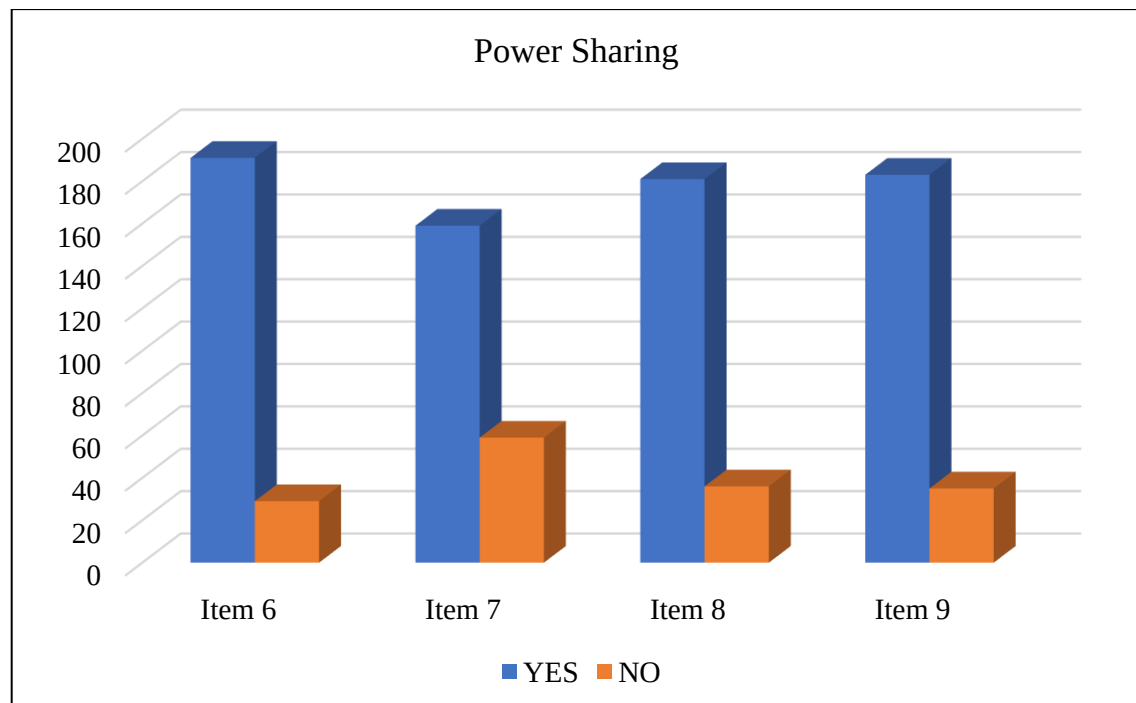


Figure 7- Bar chart illustrating students' perceptions of power sharing.

In response to item 6, which sought to determine student preferences regarding the inclusion of their own contributions to the course content, the

significant majority with 87% of the participants exhibited a tendency towards actively providing their own inputs to the course, while only 13% expressed a preference for refraining from making their own contributions. The findings of Item 7 indicate that a considerable proportion of students, specifically 72%, exhibited a willingness to challenge the ideas presented by their teachers when they perceive it to be necessary. Conversely, 28% of the sample prefer not to question the ideas put forth by their teachers or provide alternative perspectives, even in situations where they believe it to be suitable.

On another note, according to data obtained from the responses to item 8, the majority of students with 83% exhibited a positive inclination towards the provision of opportunities to express their feelings regarding the course. Conversely, 17% of the students seemed to prefer maintaining their viewpoints to themselves. In accordance with the findings obtained from the responses to item 9, it has been revealed that a significant proportion of students (84%) have expressed their appreciation for being consulted on certain aspects of their educational journey. Conversely, a minority of students, comprising 16% of the total sample, indicated a preference for abstaining from providing any suggestions or recommendations in this regard.

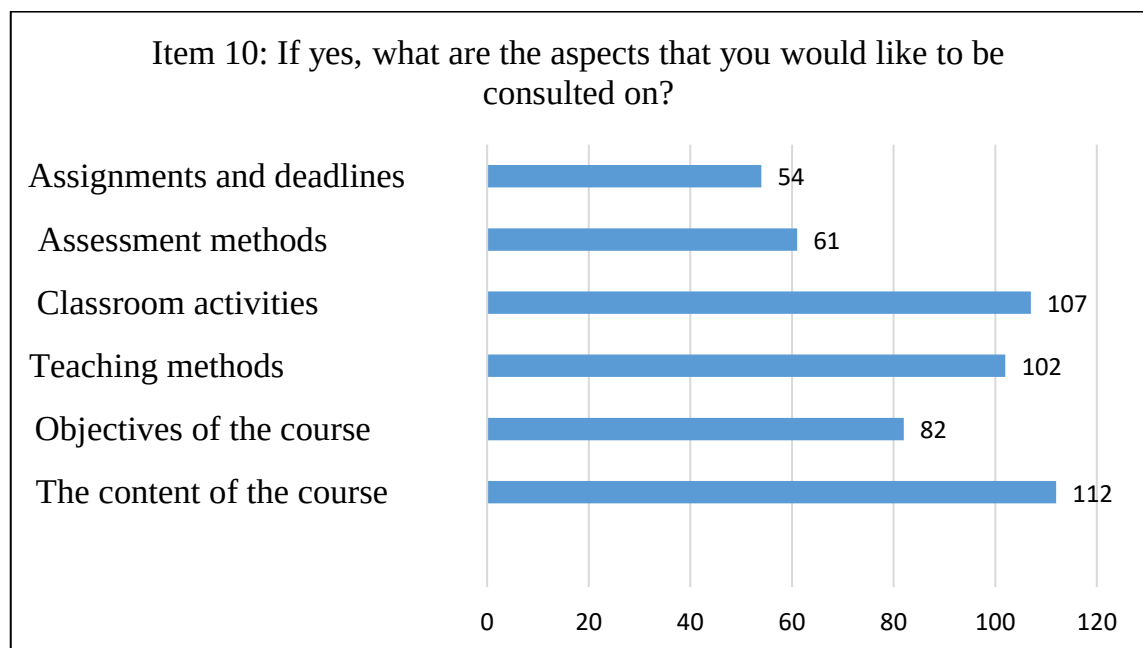


Figure 8- Graphical representation of aspects students wish to be consulted on (Item 10).

In a follow-up question to item 9, item 10 presented participants with a multiple-choice format, in which they were tasked with selecting aspects they would like to be consulted on. The majority of students, as indicated by 112 responses, expressed that they would appreciate being consulted on the content of the course. The types of classroom activities obtained the second highest number of responses with a total of 107, while teaching methods received 102 responses, ranking third in terms of frequency. Setting the objectives of the course came as the subsequent element with a total of 82 responses, followed by the assessment methods with a total of 61 responses. Lastly, the assignments and deadlines were the least selected aspects by only 54 students.

3.1.1.3 Role of the Content

This section illustrates the perspectives of students regarding the nature of the content they are exposed to within their educational environment. The analysis reflects students' preferences for content that promotes critical thinking, constructivist learning, and problem-solving, which are key elements of SCL.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 11	I prefer courses that make me build knowledge through inquiry and critical thinking instead of memorization.	3.33	0.78
Item 12	I learn better when I understand the goals and objectives of my course.	3.49	0.68
Item 13	I enjoy building new knowledge by critically comparing new information to my prior experiences and knowledge.	3.18	0.67
Item 14	I prefer a curriculum that provides opportunities to interact and apply information in real-life situations.	3.51	0.64
Item 15	I prefer content that allows me to learn how to solve real problems in the discipline.	3.53	0.62

Table 8- Results of students' responses related to the role of the teacher.

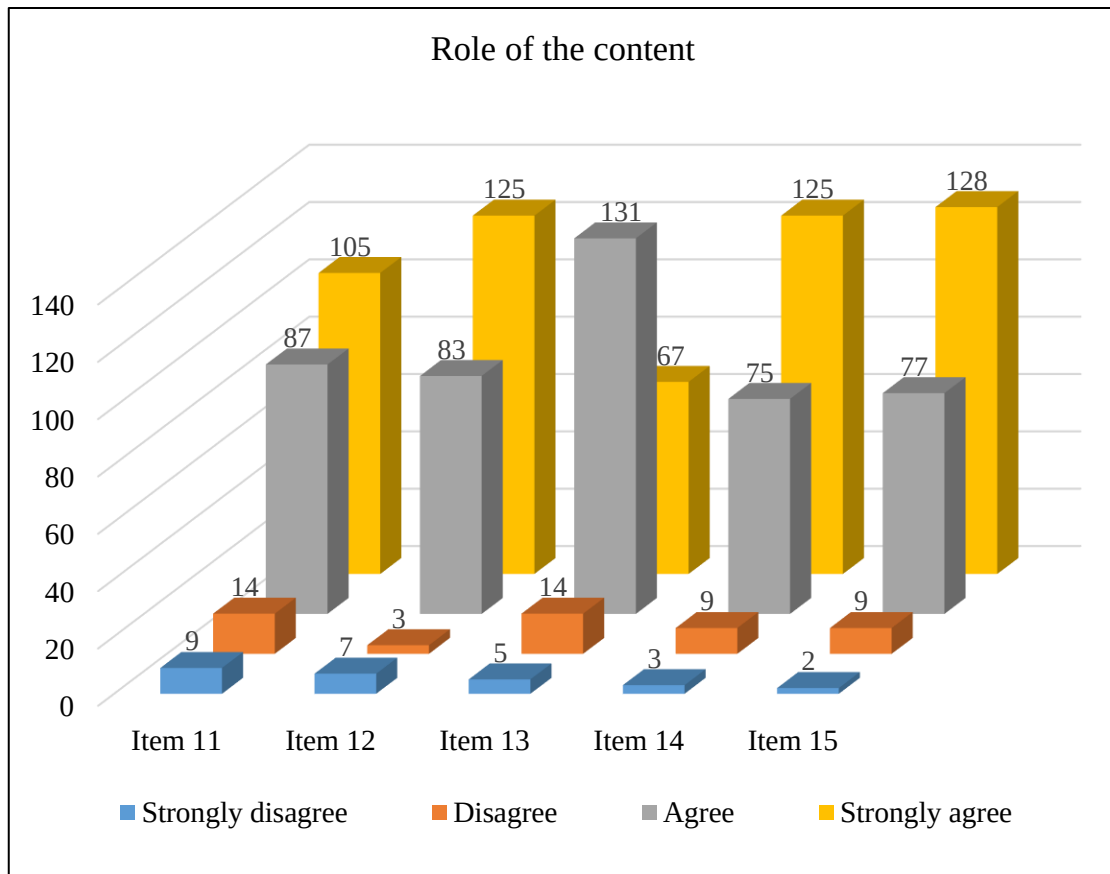


Figure 9- Graphical representation of student responses on the role of content.

Data presented in Table 8 indicate that answers to item 11 show there exists a strong inclination towards content that fosters inquiry and critical thinking, as opposed to mere memorisation. The majority of students further voiced, according to item 12, a strong agreement with the notion that stating, highlighting and emphasising the objectives of the course play a major role in facilitating their learning process.

The findings revealed in item 13 indicate that a majority of students exhibit a preference for the constructivist educational philosophy, since they expressed their enjoyment of the process of comparing and establishing connections between new information and their pre-existing knowledge to construct new understanding. Results of item 14 reveal a prevailing consensus among the students, wherein the majority express a strong agreement with the notion of participating in an educational curriculum that provides opportunities for active engagement and

imitates authentic real-world situations. Furthermore, the majority of participants expressed a clear preference and exhibited a strong level of agreement towards the inclusion of content that provides opportunities to learn how to resolve context-specific and real-life issues, as evidenced by the responses obtained from students in relation to item 15.

3.1.1.4 Role of the Teacher

The present section examines students' perceptions of the roles assumed by teachers in the learning process, as well as their preferences regarding teachers' classroom practices. It aims to understand how students view their teachers' responsibilities, behaviours, and examines the preferred traits that the teachers displays within the learning journey.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 16	I like teachers who encourage me to play an active role in the class rather than the ones who act as the sole knowledge holders.	3.35	0.69
Item 17	I like teachers who help me develop learning skills (e.g., critical thinking, analysing).	3.62	0.54
Item 18	I like teachers who are open-minded and listen to my problems.	3.24	0.72
Item 19	I like teachers who make me feel comfortable sharing my opinion.	3.72	0.54
Item 20	I want my lecturer to continuously motivate me to study.	3.38	0.61

Table 9- Results of students' responses related to the role of the teacher.

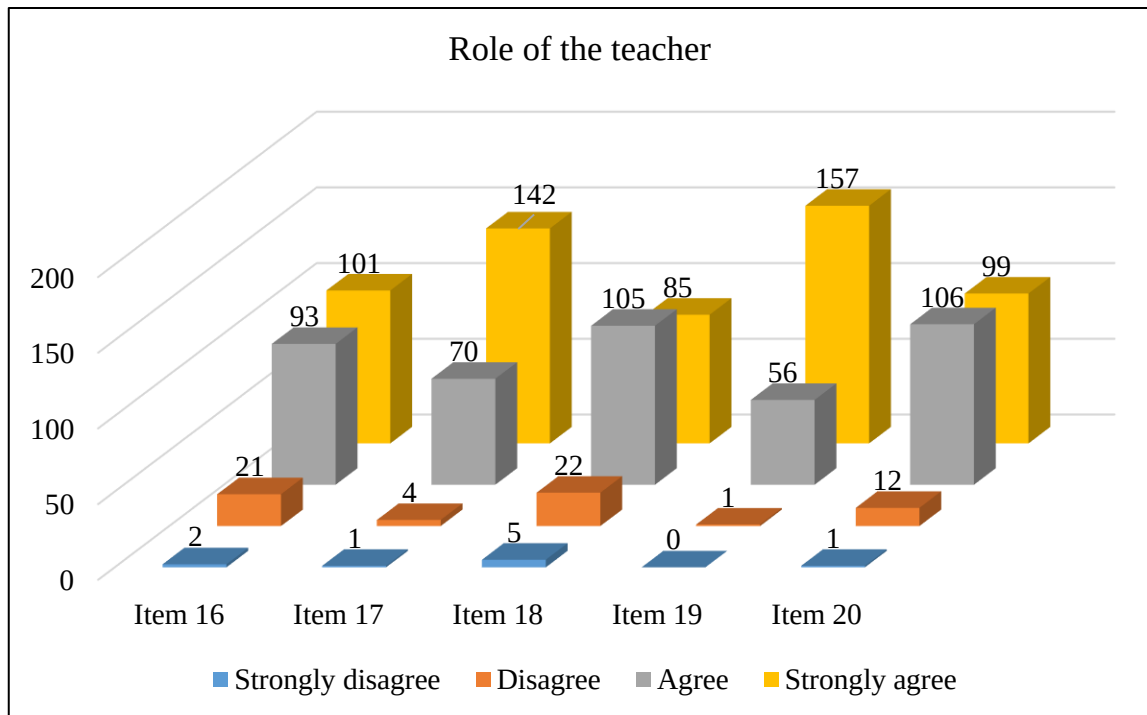


Figure 10- Graphical representation of student responses on the role of the teacher.

According to the findings presented in Table 9, answers to item 16 indicate a notable agreement among students regarding their preference for teachers who foster an active learning environment, as opposed to those who adopt a dominant instructional approach and assume the role of the sole master of knowledge. Furthermore, as deduced from the data collected in item 17, the majority of students exhibit high appreciation towards educators who actively contribute to the enhancement of students' cognitive abilities and learning skills.

The findings derived from the analysis of item 18 revealed that the participants expressed a strong agreement on valuing educators who demonstrate genuine concern for their students' emotional well-being and listen to their students' personal issues. The analysis of data yielded from item 19 showed that students place a high value on teachers who foster an environment conducive to sharing their beliefs and opinions. The findings of item 20 indicate a strong agreement among participants regarding the desire of students to receive ongoing motivation and support from their teachers throughout their educational journey.

Teacher Profile	Key Expectations	Number of Responses	Example Responses
Student-centred teacher (Facilitator, guide, motivator)	Guidance and mentorship	26	“Guide us in analysing lessons,” “Teach us how to search,” “Help us in our development and learning process.”
	Encouragement and motivation	36	“Motivate us to check other sources,” “Encourage us to research,” “Make us want to learn everywhere.”
	Creating a positive learning atmosphere	12	“Be a good listener,” “Understand students,” “Make students comfortable to express themselves.”
	Respecting students’ autonomy	06	“Respect students’ opinions,” “Encourage us to express ourselves,” “Be flexible.”
	Creating an interactive and engaging classroom	05	“Do less talking,” “Be a facilitator instead of a controller,” “Make learning active and fun.”
	Advising and providing life skills	03	“Advise us beyond class,” “Teach us skills for real life.”
	Challenging and encouraging growth	07	“Push to think critically,” “Challenge our understanding.”
Teacher-centred teacher (Knowledge provider, controller, assessor)	Knowledge transmission	18	“Explain lessons clearly,” “Provide key points,” “Illustrate examples.”
	Control over the classroom	06	“Control the class,” “Make students disciplined.”
	Assessment and exam preparation	09	“Tell us what will be in the exams,” “Provide frequent feedback on our progress.”
	Strictness and discipline	03	“Be severe with absences.”

Table 10- Responses of item 21: students’ perceptions regarding teachers’ roles and responsibilities.

Finally, students were prompted in item 21 to articulate their perceptions regarding the expected responsibilities and roles of their educators. Thematic analysis of the keywords and role description passages provided by students allowed the identification of two profiles: a predominantly student-centred profile and a more traditional teacher-centred profile.

The first and more dominant profile reflects a clear inclination toward a student-centred teacher identity, with responses portraying the teacher as a facilitator, motivator, and mentor who supports both academic and personal development.

The second profile reflected more traditional expectations, as responses indicated that, for certain students, teachers who demonstrate clarity, authority, and structured guidance are valued and remain important factors in effective teaching.

3.1.1.5 Responsibility for Learning

This section aims to examine the perceptions of students regarding their level of involvement and sense of responsibility in the learning process.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 22	I like taking an active role in the classroom.	2.80	0.74
Item 23	I prefer finding information by myself rather than it being given to me by the teacher.	2.59	0.87
Item 24	I explore content beyond what was reviewed in class.	3.04	0.61
Item 25	I am confident that I can take charge of my own learning (e.g., knowing how to manage my own learning needs, activities, time, resources, and goals).	2.98	0.75

Table 11- Results of students' responses related to the responsibility for learning.

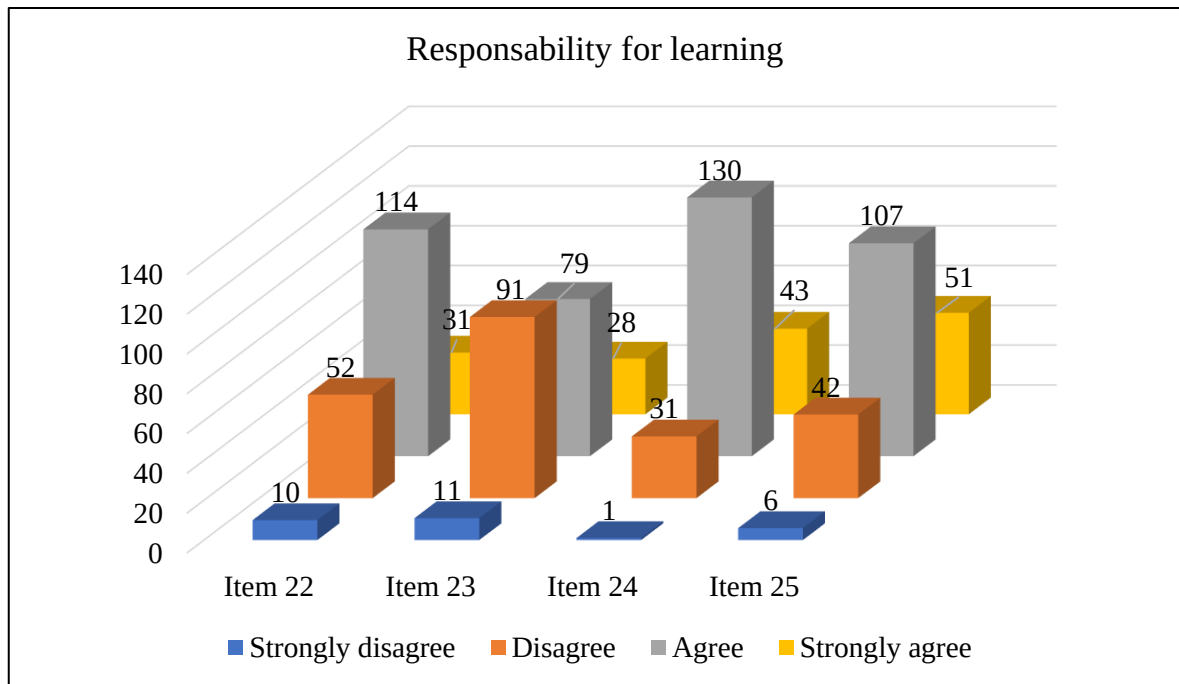


Figure 11- Graphical representation of student responses on the responsibility for learning.

As table 11 displays, the responses to item 22 indicate an agreement among the majority of students regarding their inclination towards assuming an active role in the classroom. Similarly, item 23 showed a predominant preference for autonomous information seeking, with most students indicating a desire for independent learning over exclusive reliance on teachers' instructions. On a related note, according to responses to item 24, the majority of students claimed that they do seek extra information about the subject outside of their classrooms. Moreover, the responses relating to item 25 revealed that the majority of students hold convictions regarding their ability to be responsible for, effectively regulate, and oversee their own educational experience.

3.1.1.6 Role of the Assessment

This section focuses on the perceptions of students regarding the assessment process, as shown by the findings presented in Table 12. It provides insights into how students view the role of grades, alternative assessment methods, and their own capacity for self-assessment within the educational context.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 26	I only work on my exercises if they will be rewarded with grades.	2.55	0.84
Item 27	Exams are what motivate me to learn hard.	2.36	0.87
Item 28	I like to engage in self and peer assessment.	2.77	0.60
Item 29	I can monitor my own learning and development.	2.95	0.68

Table 12- Results of students' responses related to the role of the assessment.

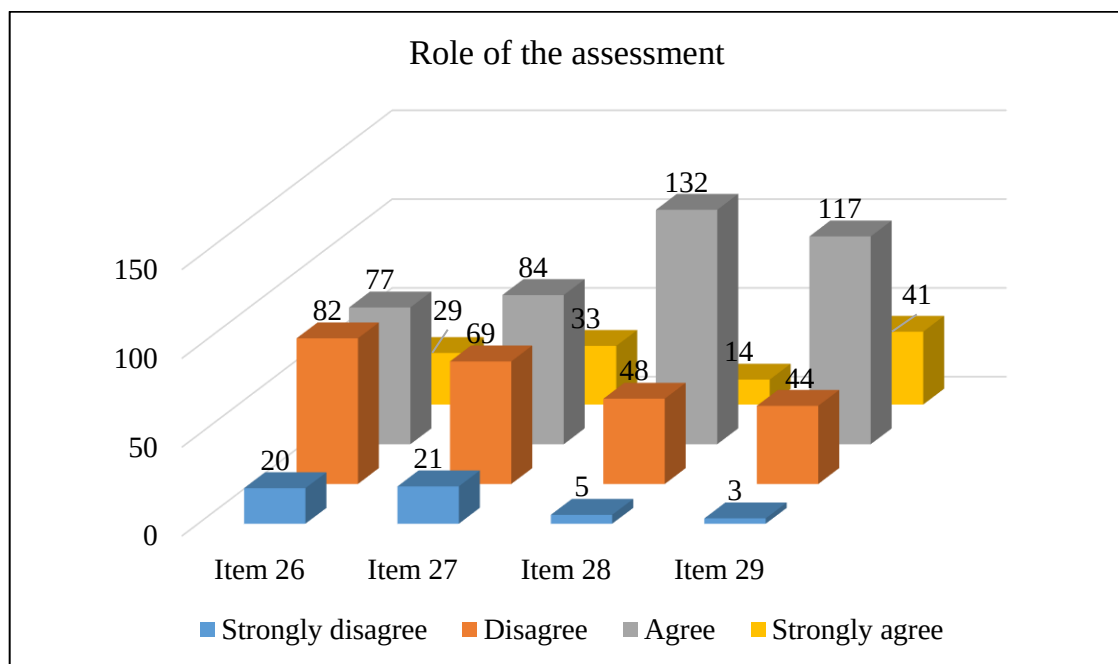


Figure 12- Graphical representation of student responses on the role of the assessment.

The findings from item 26 indicate that students are primarily motivated to do their assignments due to extrinsic benefits, mainly in the form of grades. Similarly, responses to item 27 revealed that the majority consider that exams serve as a main motivator, suggesting that assessment remains an important driver for academic effort. The objective of the subsequent item 28 was to gather

students' perspectives on alternative assessment methods. The findings revealed that the majority expressed a positive view towards participating in self and peer-assessment procedures. Finally, responses to item 29 indicate that the majority of the students possess a belief in their capacity to engage in self-monitoring of their learning progress.

3.1.1.7 Student-Centred Learning

The following section examines the various perspectives and levels of understanding that students hold regarding SCL. According to Item 30, a significant proportion of students possess knowledge about the SCL concept, as more than half of the participants reported being familiar with it. This familiarity with SCL suggests that students may have been exposed to the terminology through their course of learning in the didactics of the English language module, as it is a reoccurring, prominent and trendy subject within its syllabus.

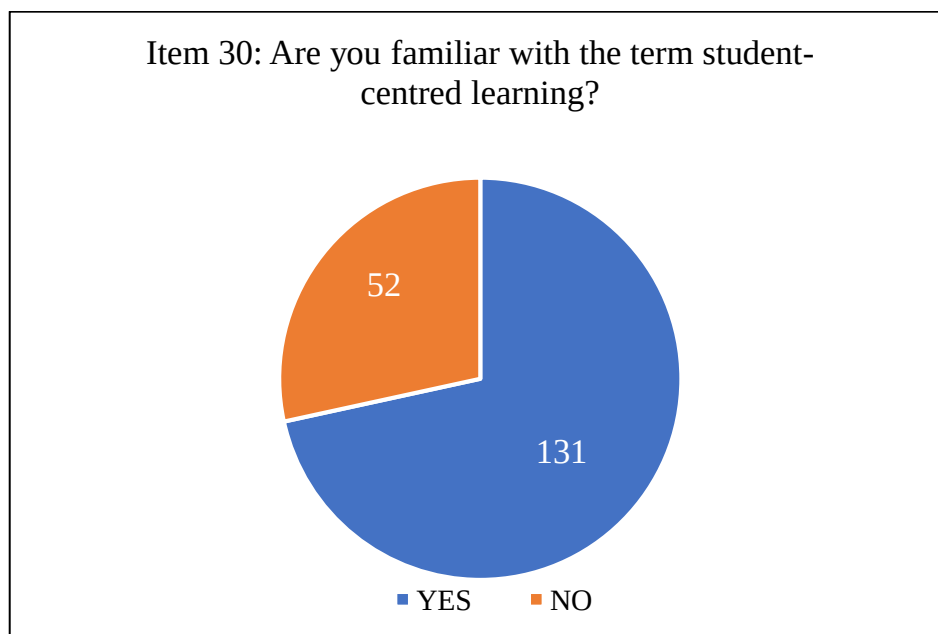


Figure 13- Pie chart illustrating students' self-reported familiarity with SCL.

In the subsequent item 31, students were given the opportunity to articulate their understanding of SCL, thereby revealing several perspectives and offering varied premises regarding the fundamental characteristics and expectations associated with this approach. These perspectives are summarised as follows:

SCL Perspectives	Number of responses
SCL positions students at the centre of the learning process granting them focus and priority.	22
SCL focuses on meeting students' needs, taking into consideration their goals and weaknesses.	38
SCL requires higher responsibility and self-reliance on the part of students, driving them to do their own research, bring their own information and be in charge of different aspects of learning.	39
It grants students control over some of the decisions regarding their learning and allows them more freedom in expressing their opinions and ideas.	15
It deems students to be active agents engaged in deep discussions and critical thinking. It also demands more interactions between students and teachers and among students themselves in collaborative work.	19
Students are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with information, they learn through building information based on prior knowledge and skills.	6
SCL is an educational approach that shifts the focus from the teacher to the student.	13
Teaching promotes autonomy and respects students' abilities and opinions.	10
Teachers have limited roles and less talking time.	9

Table 13- Thematic categorisation of student perspectives on SCL (item 31).

Table 13 shows excerpts from student responses that illustrate their perspectives on SCL and upon which the statements in the precedent table were founded:

- **SCL as active engagement and interaction:** *“It is about doing research, engaging in deep discussions, and interacting more with teachers and classmates”;*
- **SCL is an educational approach which shifts the focus from the teacher to the student:** *“in SCL an approach the focus goes from the teacher to the students, where they take more responsibility for their own learning and more important role”;*
- **SCL focuses on meeting students’ needs, taking into consideration their goals and weaknesses:** *“the approach focuses on our individual needs, interests, and what we need to improve”.*

The responses to item 32 indicate that students widely acknowledge the advantages of SCL, emphasising the positive impact it has on both the learning experience and academic outcomes.

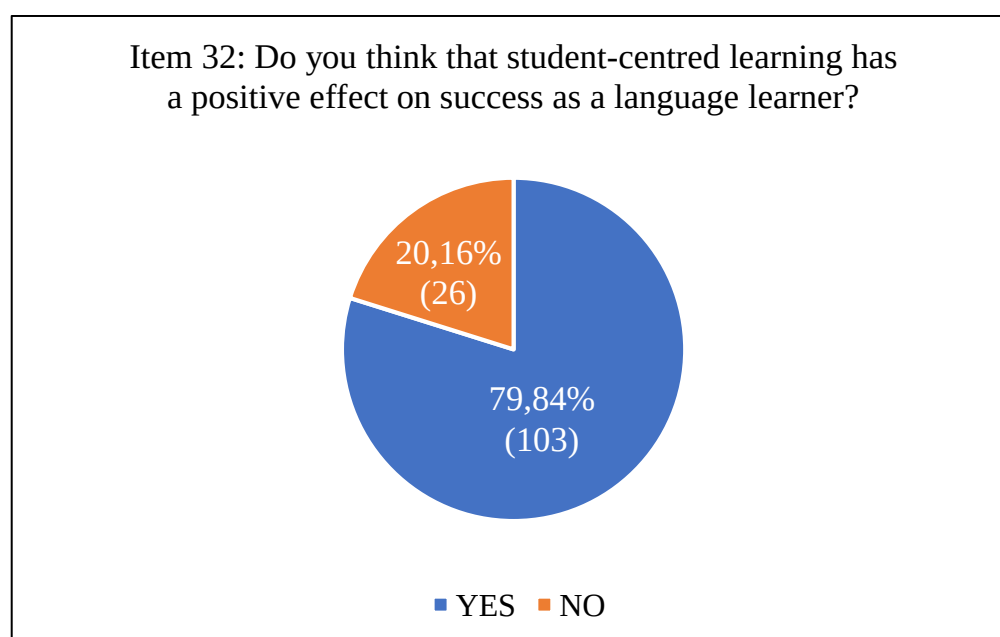


Figure 14- Pie chart illustrating students’ views on the positive effect of the impact of SCL on language learning success.

The responses to item 32 indicate that that a substantial majority of students acknowledge the advantages of SCL, emphasising the positive impact it has on both the learning experience and academic outcomes, while only 20.16% expressed a negative view.

The arguments presented by participants in item 33 outline a comprehensive understanding of the various ways in which SCL benefits are manifested; the identified key points are as follows:

- SCL meets students' needs and helps them to set and achieve their goals;
- It boosts students' learning and helps them get better achievements and grades;
- It allows for better and deeper understanding in a supportive atmosphere and ensures that students remember and grasp information more effectively;
- It motivates students to learn and makes the learning process innovative, enjoyable and interesting;
- It drives students to be independent, responsible, self-reliant, and autonomous;
- It makes students engaged, active, self-disciplined, hard workers, and risk-takers with an increased participation rate;
- It trains students to be patient and self-aware through constant assessment of their strengths and weaknesses and the quality of information they encounter;
- It develops students' self-confidence and makes them feel important and valued in addition to helping them build their identity as students;
- It makes students comfortable to share their own ideas and knowledge and drives them to build their own understanding;
- It equips students with a set of new skills and prepares them for professional life namely, students' critical thinking, cognitive abilities, teamwork, problem-solving skills, interactive skills, and creativity;
- It develops lecturers' levels and reduces pressure on them.

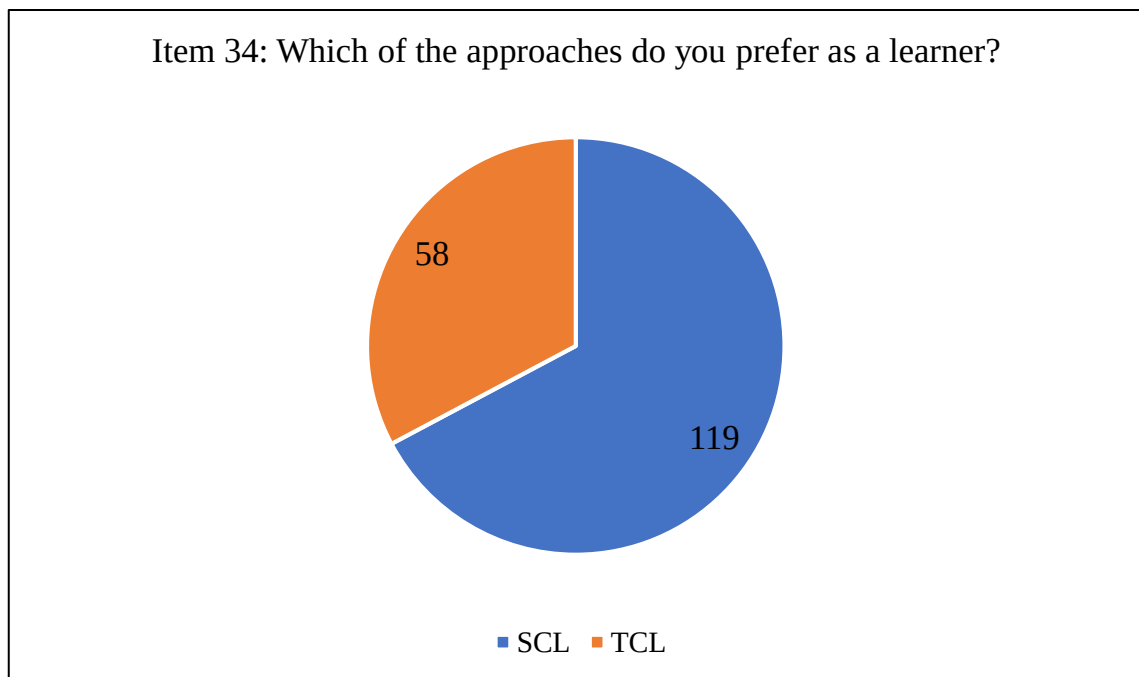


Figure 15- Pie chart illustrating students' preferences between SCL and TCL.

In item 34, students were asked to indicate their preferred approach between SCL and TCL. The findings reveal an overall strong preference for SCL, which reflects students' desire for autonomy, engagement, and active participation in their learning process.

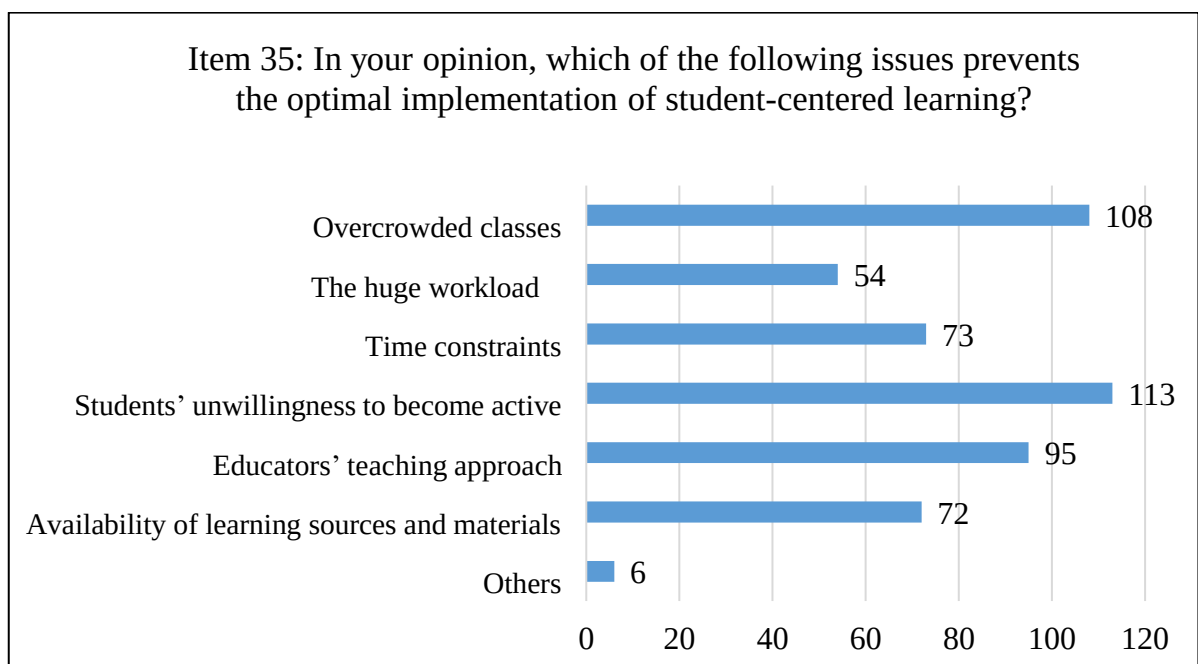


Figure 16- Visual summary of perceived obstacles to SCL implementation as identified by participants.

Item 35 investigated students' perspectives regarding the various factors that could potentially impede the successful implementation of SCL. The predominant factor identified by participants as the primary reason was student unwillingness to engage in SCL, indicating the potential presence of a resistance towards accepting this instructional approach. The following reason was the presence of a large number of students, exceeding 60 per class, which poses significant difficulties for teachers. In such an environment, the effective implementation of SCL becomes particularly challenging. The resilient choice of the teaching methods implemented by teachers came as a third reason arguing that their philosophy would not allow for active and engaging activities. Time constraints came as the next reason as students perceived that one-hour sessions may not adequately accommodate the incorporation of student-centredness, while the availability of proper material appeared as a subsequent element that may impede the implementation of certain SCL strategies. Additionally, it has been asserted by students that significant workloads may stand in the way of learning being student-centred. Finally, some students stated that the lack of experienced teachers who can truly implement student-centredness in addition to unwilling administrative policies may also be among the limitations.

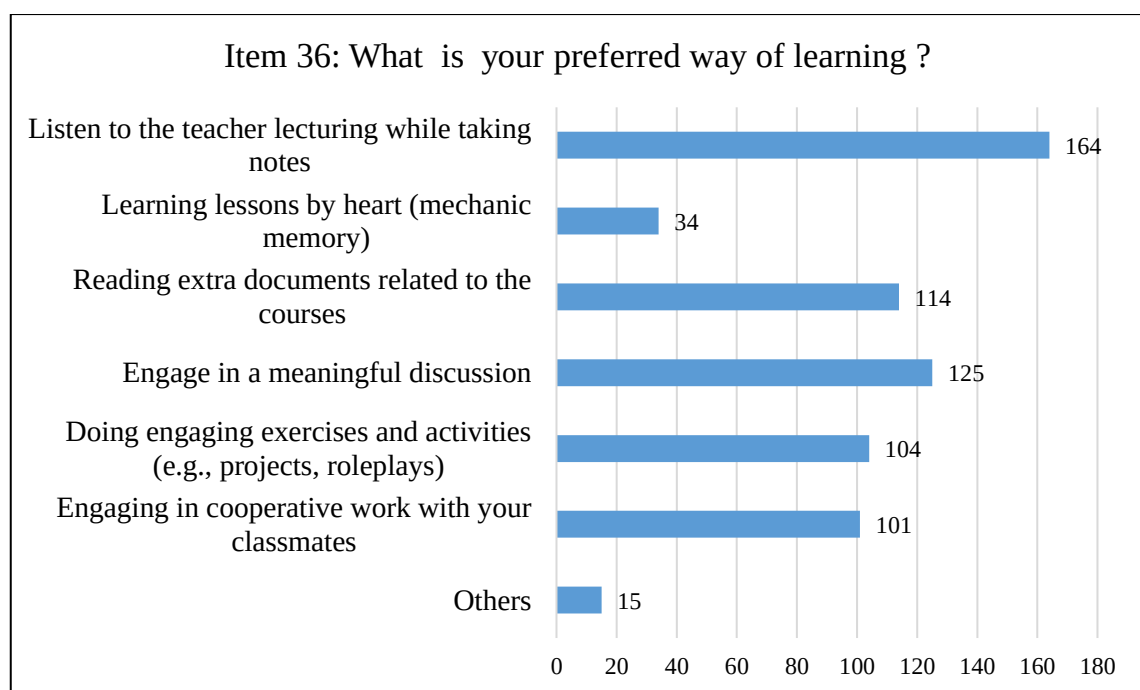


Figure 17- Visual Summary of students' preferred learning methods (Item 36).

The final item 36 attempted to gather information regarding students' preferred strategies of learning. A slight majority of students expressed a preference for listening to the teacher's presentation while simultaneously taking notes, whereas multiple other student-centred strategies were notably referred to among a significant number of participants as the preferred method of learning. For instance, engaging in meaningful discussions with teachers and colleagues in addition to reading extra course-related material outside the classroom to reinforce their knowledge were valued strategies among participants. Cooperative learning in addition to engaging exercises and activities, such as role plays and projects, etc., were also highly appreciated. Finally, rote learning was found to be the least favoured strategy for learning among students.

3.1.2 Focus Groups Interviews Results

In order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate viewpoints held by students, and as a means of triangulating the data for strengthened overall research findings, this study included two focus group sessions after to distribution of questionnaires and classroom observations. These focus groups played an important role in gaining a more profound understanding of students' viewpoints, experiences, and insights regarding SCL.

3.1.2.1 Understanding of SCL

Following the distribution of the questionnaires, we opted to delve deeper into the students' grasp of SCL by inviting them to provide more detailed insights during the focus group discussions through asking: how do you understand or define SCL? It was noted that the majority of students wanted to share their understanding of the subject matter.

➤ An Approach Tailored to Students' Needs and Interests

The prevailing belief among students was that SCL is an approach where learning should be tailored according to students' needs rather than the teachers' desires. The following comments illustrate that:

- S2: *“I think that in SCL the lesson should be designed according to the student's needs while considering the best method that the teacher can use to fulfil those needs and the learning styles of students”*
- S5: *“SCL should be focused on the interest of the learners, what they want to learn and how; sometimes we get information and we accept and understand only what seems interesting for us”*

Another emerging belief held that in SCL the teachers must, before designing the lesson, reflect on what may be interesting to the students. This could be done by asking their learners *“why do you study English, what do you want, what do you need? So then the teaching would be centred on the student, not the teacher”* (S11).

➤ **Increased autonomy and responsibility**

Another tenet highlighted by the students' comments is that SCL entails students being autonomous and placing greater responsibility on themselves regarding their learning decisions.

- S9: *“... it (SCL) concerns those students who focus and try to learn alone, rather than relying on the teacher in everything”.*
- S6: *“SCL means that students must start relying on themselves a lot, doing a lot of research by themselves, adding more information to the information given by the teacher”.*

➤ **Contrasting to TCL**

Some students built their answers on defining SCL by making distinctions between TCL and SCL, noting the different expectations that both approaches entail, and pointing out the active and engaging role that SCL grants to students, which is absent in TCL.

- S2: *“it's the opposite of the TCL where the teacher is giving all information and never expecting anything back; but in SCL, students can take part in debates, can interact, can have a different point of view from the teacher.”*

3.1.2.2 Preferences

The second question of the focus groups was designed to investigate students' preferences regarding instructional approaches by asking: *“Do you prefer SCL or TCL? Why?”* This question aimed to elicit students' personal inclinations towards either approach, encouraging them to reflect on their learning experiences and articulate the reasons behind their preferences.

➤ **Dissatisfaction with Traditional Methods (TCL)**

The focus group discussions confirmed that most participants lean towards SCL. The issues encountered in TCL were emphasised, specifically the lack of interaction and the assumed role of passive receipt of information, which often hinder students' ability to reflect and think critically. Students argued that the conventional TCL methods are dull and do not align with the current needs of students. Moreover, it they reported that it fails to inspire creativity and motivation, unlike SCL. For instance, one of the students said:

- S11: *“constant lecturing is not for our generation, it’s too boring and it doesn’t fit our current mentality; I mean if a teacher comes and just starts lecturing, in most cases after some time we’re not even understanding or focused”.*
- S1: *“if you mention the traditional way, the teachers tend to give the whole lecture and by the end of the course, they give small space to students to tackle questions about it. I was one of the students who did not know how to ask questions to be honest; not in the matter of construction, when you are given too much information without background like in civilisation module, I don’t have enough information to question here and give critical good questions.”*
- S3 *“Yes, what she was talking about (S1) happened to me, like in cognitive psych teacher; when she is explaining the lesson, I stop; my mind goes blank; I say when I go home I read better by myself and understand better and that’s when the questions come, but when she explains a lot, I just stop”*

Additionally, it was noted that teachers who are more teacher-centred may usually overlook students' actual questions and only respond based on their own assumptions, e.g.: S13 *“Yeah, sometimes they respond to the questions that are in their head not ours”*. These points highlight why students perceive SCL as more beneficial.

➤ **Recognition of the pros of SCL**

Some students from the focus groups emphasised that after being introduced to SCL in certain modules throughout their learning experience at university, they found it to be more advantageous as it instils a sense of responsibility and urgency in taking control of their learning. They also reported that it encourages them to conduct additional research and embark on a journey of self-discovery, leading to a greater awareness of their abilities and motivating them

to acquire new skills. Some students even argued that it should be introduced at earlier stages to prevent students from becoming overly dependent on their teachers. Additionally, students appeared to value the autonomy and freedom associated with this method.

- S6: *“I discovered this approach (SCL) during the coronavirus, I used to rely on the information of my teacher and I didn’t do any research. I was lazy nothing. But during the corona I found myself having to do some research in order to progress and understand the course. So, I like it a lot because I discovered new skills and some aspects of intelligence in myself”.*
- S4: *“for me as well I think it is beneficial, I just want to highlight something; it needs to be taught at an early stage. For us the majority of the time we are not really fully aware of the approach because we are so used to the traditional way of teaching, like even when doing assignments, we think what’s the teacher idea and what he wants? so it’s really good but I think it should be from an early age before university”*
- S8: *“I agree, like from middle school the student could be taught through doing projects like training them to give their opinions on the course to express themselves”*

➤ **Preferences for TCL**

Despite the positive attitudes towards SCL, certain students appeared to favour the conventional approach due to their habits and familiarity with it, considering it a safer option. They believed it matched their personality as introverts, providing a safe environment from the challenges. They also argued that it allows students the time to think and take notes rather than being placed in high-pressure situations that demand immediate contribution. It is worth noting that one of the students proposed the idea of finding a balance between teacher support and student independence.

- S15 *“I prefer the teacher to give me the lesson, I am used to it this way; and I am a little shy and introvert so I do not like to participate a lot”*

3.1.2.3 Advantages and Disadvantages

The next question in the focus group discussions asked: “what do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of SCL?” This question aimed to explore students’ perceptions of both the strengths and potential drawbacks associated with SCL. By encouraging participants to reflect on their experiences and viewpoints,

the question sought to uncover a balanced understanding of how SCL impacts their learning process.

➤ **Advantages**

The initial feedback from the focus group highlighted the benefits of creating a profile of a knowledgeable, responsible, and self-reflective individual. Furthermore, it was widely believed among the participants that SCL is more motivating and allows for open discussion and free speech. Students also pointed out that the approach promotes deep understanding and critical thinking as students actively engage with information, analyse it, and develop their own perspectives which encourage a more profound and efficient comprehension unlike the traditional TCL. Additionally, the enthusiasm and motivation generated by the approach were further highlighted as it is believed to foster a sense of curiosity among students. Another perspective proposes that SCL changes the way of learning into a lifestyle where students constantly build knowledge inside and outside the classroom and to develop the necessary skills to advance in their personal lives.

- S12: *“I think SCL makes it easier for students to understand information. It could make them nervous but it gives them freedom. Because if the students stick only to what the teacher is saying he would be a blind follower. If you as a teacher give them the freedom to express themselves and discuss their understanding, it would be easier for them to consume information.”*
- S15: *“I think SCL makes students motivated and confident when speaking; they give their opinions freely and express their feelings without thinking. Also, I think it raises our critical thinking; if we are given information and we think about it them actively, it raises our critical thinking, ah! and we can give arguments without filter. I don’t think there are a lot of disadvantages for the approach”.*

➤ **Disadvantages**

Conversely, some students mentioned that there are a few disadvantages that SCL might hold, stressing that improper application of the approach could hinder students’ progress. Several students expressed their concern that the approach may not be appropriate for every level; it can be difficult for students with lower levels or weak study skills as they might face challenges with self-

direction and locating relevant information. Furthermore, individuals with low self-esteem may struggle to navigate the independence provided by SCL.

Additionally, they noted that a potential drawback is that SCL may leave you feeling confused and unsure if you are searching for pertinent information as they pointed out that sometimes the information you provide may not match what the instructor is looking for. By the same token, assessment can be problematic when applying the SCL approach; some students felt that they could be penalised for thinking creatively or critically in a way that differs from what the teacher anticipates.

- S11: *“the problem with SCL is that middle-level students they can feel detached and they probably won’t understand.” “I agree with her it doesn’t suit all levels”*
- S10: *“my main problem with SCL is being alone, sharing and discussing ideas with other students make it easier for me; even asking the teacher and asking him to make things clearer for me would help”*
- S5: *“sometimes we are not sure if this is what we are looking for or not, maybe the topic is not specifically what the teacher wants; it can be relative but not the exact aim of the teacher”*
- S1: *“yeah because in exams, teachers want only what they are expecting and what they want us to give; yes, even if your answer is creative and reflects your own point of view, but the teachers still wants you to give her the response that she’s already waiting for, otherwise it’s automatically wrong or short. Because it doesn’t resonate with the teacher’s personal way of thinking”*

3.1.2.4 Expected Role of the Teacher

The following question aimed to further explore students’ perspectives on the expected role of the teacher by asking: what roles do you expect your teacher to play in your learning process? Once again, students highlighted the significant role of being a guide. When asked about the specifics, they mentioned the importance of being directed on how to search for information and determining its validity as they voiced their fear of being misguided if they were to take full responsibility for their learning. They also noted that it is important to encourage individuals to discover solutions independently before delivering the correct information. That plays a crucial and interconnected role, highly valued by students, which is providing feedback. Students emphasised the importance of receiving feedback from teachers to ensure they are progressing correctly, despite

valuing their independence and responsibility. Moreover, providing feedback is highlighted as a crucial element in enhancing students' performance.

- S14 *“If we have questions, do not answer completely but guide us towards the answer; like in literature and civilization last year we had a teacher, whenever we finished the lesson, she gave us questions that made us analyse so she guided us towards analysing and that’s amazing”*
- S2: *“I expect the teacher to be a guide; it is like when the teacher guides the students to reach the wanted result, but letting the students do most of or all the work and give feedback”*
- S1: *“yeah and also give feedback because it’s so important and some do not give us feedback.”*

As the approach demands additional dedication and commitment from both teachers and learners, teachers may find it challenging as well since SCL requires substantial support and direction from instructors. Students specified that educators should ensure they communicate expectations clearly, offer support, and provide a structured environment. Teachers must create resources and engage in tasks, while learners should strive for greater autonomy and initiative.

3.1.2.5 Expected Role from the Students

The following question aimed to capture students’ perceptions of their roles in a student-centred environment. Through giving answers to the question: “What roles do you believe your teacher expects you to fulfil as a student?”, students emphasised the importance of proactive participation in learning by researching topics beforehand to facilitate classroom discussions in addition to asking meaningful questions to deepen their understanding. Another important aspect involves carrying out independent research on different topics to enhance the knowledge acquired in the classroom.

- S10: *“before the class, I must have a general idea about the subject, like in the session of ESP, we prepare the lesson for the teacher in advanced and when we come we explain and discuss it while she gives more information”*

It was also evident from the students’ responses that they understand the value of active participation and engagement in the learning process over passively receiving information. For instance, students emphasised the significance of actively participating in discussions by sharing their viewpoints and arguments

whenever they could. They also emphasised the importance of expressing differing opinions in a well-supported, constructive, and respectful manner.

- S2: *“Ask questions; most students are so scared of asking questions it’s like the teachers give us the information and that’s it. I have teachers I always speak up in their classes I never shut up, I share my opinion I discuss I comment, I also like to discuss and comment on other students”*

Another role pointed out by students is their role in taking charge of their own learning and practising self-regulated learning. According to the responses, this could be done through effectively managing their time and ensuring they are well prepared with a basic understanding of the topics before heading to class. They also mentioned that it is their responsibility to take charge of conducting research and enhancing their skills.

- S7: *“We must be responsible; you have duties as a student, to actually attempt to learn and pay attention; some students come and just wait for the teacher to give them everything”.*
- S5: *“one of the things is to impose yourself, you are a student so be prepared and get ready to take more initiatives, if you are really wanting to adopt this approach you are willing to be responsible, do your own research and develop other skills rather than just absorbing information”.*

3.1.2.6 SCL Implementation

In an attempt to clarify the ambiguity surrounding the actual implementation of SCL in the classroom, students were asked for their opinions and suggestions on how it may be realised in practice through the question: “how do you think SCL can be effectively implemented in the classroom?” This inquiry aimed to gather student’ perspectives on practical practices and strategies that foster a more active, participatory, and student-focused environment.

➤ Active and Engaging Activities

Several students believed that it is important for SCL classrooms to move away from the traditional method of transmitting the lessons and instead incorporate a range of engaging, enjoyable, and stimulating activities. For example, an educational experience like field trips to museums and libraries could be an appreciated option for modules like history or literature. This adds practical relevance and enhances the learning experience of the related subjects. Furthermore, another suggestion was to organise study days where guest speakers,

such as experts, authors, or professionals in different fields, could be invited to discuss and debate relevant topics. This can ignite student curiosity and provide diverse viewpoints.

- S16 *“Maybe not limiting studying only to the classroom. I mean take them (students) to trips or museums for civilization and literature. They will be more interested and invested in what they learn”*
- S12 *“You invite some doctors and professors in many fields in order to make it more interesting as well.”*

➤ **Structured Group Work and Collaboration**

Students have indicated that a key method for incorporating SCL is through the use of cooperative and collaborative learning. This is particularly effective when students are given the opportunity to choose their own group members, as it enhances compatibility and comfort levels. The participants re-emphasised the importance of the educator’s role in arranging and assigning responsibilities to each group member to guarantee optimal contribution in collaborative learning, thereby ensuring effective SCL implementation.

- S2: *“ I think collaborative work in the classroom is one of the best ways to use SCL”*
- S3: *“Yes, that’s true. And it is better when the teacher gives the freedom to choose the topic during collaborative work or choose their teammates. Collaborative work helps students learn from each other and be engaged in the lesson”*

➤ **Learning Environment**

The participants said that the implementation of SCL is dependent on the creation of a conducive and risk-free classroom environment. Participants reported that the classroom should take into account the diverse demands and learning styles of students. Therefore, the process of differentiating education involves tailoring the teaching methods to accommodate the unique learning preferences of students. According to the responses, the educational setting should foster autonomy and encourage risk-taking by giving students control over their learning and affording them some degree of choice in the learning process. In order to provide a safe space for questions and perspectives, it is important to establish a supportive and

inclusive classroom climate where students feel at ease to ask questions, voice their opinions, and learn from their errors.

- S12: *“I think that this approach (SCL) is about creating a classroom where students do not feel judged or nervous to share their ideas. Basically, make them comfortable to participate more or talk more and also, take their needs into consideration when designing your lessons”*
- S2: *“we can implement it (SCL) by creating an environment where students have some freedom and can suggest new things on how to learn or things like that...”*

3.1.2.7 SCL Adoption

In response to an additional question “do you think SCL is encouraged and supported in your university experience?”, students provided valuable insights into their perceptions of the actual implementation of SCL throughout their educational journey. This question aimed to explore whether students felt that their learning environment actively promoted the principles of SCL, such as autonomy, active engagement, collaboration, and shared responsibility for learning.

➤ Lack of Scaffolding in Transitioning to SCL

Multiple students highlighted a sudden shift towards SCL, particularly during the 3rd year, without any prior training, instruction or support in developing independent study skills. The responses implied a disparity in the pedagogical approaches employed from one year to another.

- S1: *“The problem is we were not guided on how to study independently; all of a sudden we are 3rd-year students and we need to become active and independent”*
- S8: *“I think that teachers want us to be independent and autonomous and all of that but they did not show us how during the previous years. They expect us to learn it by some magic while they did not really give us any tips in this subject”*

➤ Focus on Rote Learning

Responses from students suggested that during the two initial instructional years, a significant emphasis was placed on rote memorisation, thereby failing to adequately prepare students for the subsequent demands of independent inquiry and critical thinking.

- S1: *“in the first and second years, most of the modules required learning by heart and that’s it”*
- S4: *“I think throughout all the years the system taught us to be passive with the exception of some teachers who made us look for information for ourselves and made sure that we work as a team”*

➤ **Teachers Shifting the Blame**

When students tried to be independent and attempted to contribute their own ideas, some professors attributed their attempts which fell short to students’ shortcomings without adequately addressing potential pedagogical concerns. Students perceived that they were required to conform to the teacher’s expectations without any prior understanding of how to accomplish this. They also expressed their concerns regarding the perceived lack of preparedness of teachers in facilitating independent learning or addressing the challenges faced by students. Moreover, some students considered that teachers’ replies are sometimes harsh, demotivating and could even be personal, which hinders students’ initiatives to be active in the classroom.

- S4: *“okay when we started learning and after the exams, teachers started saying we were merciful and you have no level they did not see that we worked so hard to get these marks and they were like you don’t have the level and you shouldn’t be in the 3rd year and that’s destroying me”*
- S1: *“the teachers always complain about our levels and our marks but when we tried to explain the problem or the issues that lead to this level they say I don’t know”*
- S14: *“one of the teachers, I asked her about something and she said ohh really you don’t know this and I was embarrassed. She could not explain it this is why she reacted like this, I am sure. And she started waiting for someone to save her. If I knew it why would I ask you and that was so embarrassing”.*

➤ **Inconsistent Approaches among Teachers**

While a few students had favourable encounters with some SCL techniques in the early years, such as PJBL and collaborative learning, such approach was not uniformly used by all teachers, which was disappointing for some students.

- S3: *“I don’t know if it’s the case for everyone here but since I started university I’ve done only one project, like in 1st year he (the teacher) guided us on how to do research on civilization, but from that day I have never found a teacher who says you need to do that project, go and search for this. And when he gave us the research it was not easy to bring from*

Google, can you imagine; first-year students writing project by ourselves? I remember contacting people abroad to complete my project, but I really enjoyed it. It was hard but it was a challenge I wanted. Since then no project.”

3.1.2.8 Students’ Willingness to Challenge

In the course of answering questions about student-teacher dynamics in SCL, a follow-up question emerged to investigate students’ willingness to challenge their teachers’ perspectives, being “Do you feel comfortable challenging your teacher’s viewpoints or expressing an alternative perspective in class?”. This question aimed to explore the extent to which students feel comfortable engaging in critical discussions and expressing alternative views within the classroom setting, especially in situations where their perspectives may differ from those presented by the teacher.

➤ Hesitation

The replies of students indicated that sometimes they exhibit hesitancy in challenging the teacher for various reasons. Several students expressed concerns regarding the teacher’s judgement and potential harsh response. They elaborated on their reasons by citing their prior experiences and blaming the tyrannical power dynamics of certain teachers. They proposed that their willingness to provide responses is contingent upon the teachers and their openness and demeanours. Several other students expressed apprehension towards confrontation and a lack of self-assurance in their abilities to advocate for a particular perspective when it is being ferociously defended by teachers.

- S2: *“they (teachers) will not give you that ability (to give alternative opinions), they even feel offended sometimes if you suggest something that contradicts what they say. I had a teacher in an exam and there was something wrong with an answer in the formal correction grade she used. I went to her for an explanation but she did not want to take it. I told her that the answer was illogical and did not make sense. She was like no, it is the formal correction I won’t have any discussion. So she didn’t even consider reviewing my suggestions and what the mistake was”*
- S15: *“it depends on the teacher, I sometimes do and it causes me a lot of problems with teachers”*
- S5: *“for me, I don’t give alternative perspectives, not because I don’t have enough arguments, but it’s for my self-protection, because there are some*

teachers who would take that as personal (attack) as if contradicting your essence as a person”

- S3: *“yes, I can relate 100% (with S5); why? because there are teachers who do not accept students' criticism; do you know what the replies are? I have a Ph.D. degree, or I have been teaching for 13 years so I know better”*

➤ **Positive Experiences**

Conversely, several students have reported positive experiences when engaging in challenging interactions with their teachers, highlighting that such discussions usually result in effective and constructive conversations, provided that the teacher is open and responsive. Additionally, some of the responses suggested that this approach is quite advantageous for enhancing comprehension. Moreover, such acceptance of interactions from the teachers allows for a better effective feedback experience as students reported finding such instances satisfying and beneficial in understanding their weaknesses, especially in exams.

- S4: *“yes, but sometimes the students are in the wrong, I got a bad mark in linguistics and my first impression was that I did better than the mark the teacher gave me, but after choosing the teacher I knew it wasn't true; when I reflected it wasn't that good”*
- S6: *“some teachers are just great though, they do not take it personally. And you know when we exchange ideas this way we understand better; convince me and I convince you and we build the lesson together”*
- S7: *“Yeah, discussing is so good, in one module I wasn't satisfied with my own mark but after discussion, I was convinced that it was the mark I deserved; and in the second time I went to the teacher saying I am not here to argue about the mark I want to know what you want and what do you expect from me next time?”*

➤ **Strategies for Effective Challenge**

Several students proposed a few strategies to conquer the fear of confrontation, including being mindful of the appropriate timing for confronting the teacher and refraining from interrupting the teacher's discourse. It is imperative for students to adopt a courteous demeanour and approach their challenges with evidence-based reasoning, substantiated by arguments, illustrations, or logical reasoning.

- S7: *“Sometimes you know when you should contradict the teacher, like not while he is in the middle of explaining something important and you*

interrupt him, like this can be rude. Wait for him to finish or when the class is over and go”

- S10: “... and even the way you say that opinion and challenge the teacher, do it in a respectful manner not like I know better, you are wrong and be disrespectful, of course they will not accept your opinion that way”
- S6: “if you want to argue with the teacher, then bring arguments not argue for the sake of arguing and showing yourself to others. Try to formulate strong arguments and use reason”

3.1.2.9 Students’ Confidence in Taking Responsibility for their Learning

The interview further sought to explore students’ perspectives regarding their confidence in taking responsibility for their own learning by asking: “do you feel confident in taking responsibility for your own learning? Why or why not?”. By examining how students perceive their ability to manage their educational journeys, the interview aimed to uncover insights into their self-efficacy, motivation, and readiness to engage in self-directed learning.

➤ High Confidence

Some students expressed a strong sense of self-reliance and confidence in their capacity to learn on their own. They credited their confidence to the shifts they experienced during the pandemic, which forced them to take on greater responsibility, particularly through online learning. The students have expressed their ability to assess and make informed choices about their own learning path.

- S14: “Since I could learn online alone for two years already, I think I would be able to continue and be a self-centred learner. And now since I tried it and experienced it I can say that I would support it, and I have confidence in my ability to learn on my own.”
- S15: “I agree when we were obliged to rely on ourselves during COVID-19, I realised that I could rely on myself to learn.”

➤ Moderate Confidence

Another portion of the students’ sample recognised the possibility and benefits of engaging in self-directed learning and reported that they assumed responsibility for some aspects of their education. Nevertheless, they have expressed some concerns and reservations. They expressed a greater sense of ease in taking responsibility during familiar modules, although they often needed assistance, particularly when encountering novel ideas. Conversely, they

expressed their preference for dependence on the teacher when engaging in new, challenging, and unfamiliar modules.

- S15: *“it depends; in some modules that I am not familiar with the topic, so I am not that confident; if I learn it alone, I need the teacher's assistance. In others, I think I can manage my own.”*

➤ **Low Confidence**

Some students expressed a strong preference for teacher-centred instruction in which they assume little to no responsibility. This stems from the fear of learning incorrect information and a lack of knowledge on how to search for accurate information. These students value the teacher's role of providing direction and transmitting information.

- S16: *“Honestly, no I am not that confident, I want the teacher to show me the way because I am afraid that I learn the wrong things and believe them to be right.”*

3.1.2.10 Issues

Another inquiry posed during the interview was to project the challenges associated with the implementation of SCL from the students' viewpoints by asking: “what challenges prevent the successful implementation of SCL?”. The purpose was to get a comprehensive report on obstacles that may enhance the implementation of student-centredness by resolving those hurdles.

➤ **Technological Issues**

The majority of students noted that technical issues, namely unreliable internet connection and bugged learning platforms can disrupt online learning experiences, thus compromising the implementation of SCL. Difficulty accessing online platforms like Zoom or Google Classroom often led to cancelling online sessions in which students were supposed to search and prepare the lessons.

- S8: *“Maybe technical problems online, for example, the Zoom meetings or the Google Classroom that we are supposed to do, there is always an obstacle whether with the connection or time.”*

➤ **Student Motivation and Engagement**

Another emergent theme was the recognition that some students may lack the motivation to actively engage in their studies, which would disrupt the student-centred atmosphere.

- *T3: “I think that there are some students who are just not interested in some modules so they do not make efforts to be student-centred, they do not take initiative, try to be active or be responsible for learning. This makes the teacher’s job difficult... I mean how can he maintain SCL if the student doesn’t want to”*

➤ **Time Management**

The majority of students expressed concerns about the insufficiency of time within the typical class to effectively implement SCL activities. They deemed that the approach requires more activities and engagement, thereby rendering the one-hour course too short.

- *S9: “I don’t think that the time allows for SCL in the classroom. A debate for example can take more than two hours if everyone is involved”*
- *S5: “The timing depends on the approach; if the teacher discusses the information in an interactive way, he needs from one hour and a half to two hours at least, but if the teacher is just lecturing, most likely one hour would be enough”*

➤ **Teacher Training and Skillset**

Few students indicated their concerns that some teachers might not have adequate training or experience in adopting an SCL approach. They pointed out that engaging in complex activities requires a demanding instructional skill set, which not all educators may possess.

- *S4: “I think sometimes students are not aware of the approach and so are the teachers, they don’t know how to implement it and show it to the students.”*

3.1.2.11 Students’ Opinions Regarding Different Modules

Finally, students were asked to share their opinions on various modules to assess whether they perceived them as more aligned with SCL or TCL. By addressing their perspectives, students reported their views on the teaching and learning dynamics within each module.

- **Group 1**

Writing (T6): the teacher was predominately considered by the majority (S1, S3, S4, S5, S6, S8) of students as being student-centred due to their observation of her efforts to engage students in ongoing learning activities. In addition, they valued the teacher's consistent efforts to assess students' work and progress, offering ongoing feedback and identifying areas where they needed improvement.

ESP (T1): According to most students (S1, S2, S3, S4, S6, S8) the instructor was first teacher-centred, focusing mainly on lecturing and transmitting information. Thereafter, she primarily adopted a student-centred approach. She began to structure her classroom around the students' preparations for the lessons, which are then discussed to synthesise new information. All of the students expressed satisfaction with her new approach.

Methodology (T8): The approach used by the instructor is seen by students (S9, S10, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16) as a combination of SCL and TCL, with a greater inclination towards being teacher-centred. They justified this based on the fact that the module is new to them and requires frequent explanations of novel concepts. Students have expressed that the instructor often wants to include activities to apply their knowledge to the curriculum. However, the limited one-hour-per-week timeframe is not effective and does not allow for such activities. Students (S13, S14, S15) further expressed a desire for this module to be introduced to them at an earlier level as they regarded it to be important for later stages in their academic endeavours.

Didactics (T2): The instructor was mostly seen by the majority (S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6) of students as being student-centred due to their observation of her efforts to engage students in ongoing activities. In addition, they valued the teacher's consistent efforts to assess students' work and progress, offering ongoing feedback and identifying areas where they needed improvement.

Cognitive psychology (T3): students (S6, S3, S4, S1, S7, S8) deemed that she employs a combination of student-centred and teacher-centred approaches. Although she often delivered her lessons in a lecture format, she usually encouraged students to engage in active thinking and critical analysis of the

information she presented. Alternatively, several students (S5, S2, S4) saw the instructor as being teacher-centred since she often conveyed information to students by explaining complex concepts during most of her lessons.

Civilisation (T4): most students (S10, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16) regard the instructor to be teacher-centred since he mostly lectures in most of the sessions, yet they acknowledge that the responsibility for that is shared with the students. They admitted that he often invites students to prepare the lessons, which they seldom did. A fruitful and engaging conversation was reported to be rare during the module.

Sociolinguistics (T10): the majority of students (S6, S4, S1, S2, S3, S8) considered the teacher's approach to be a combination of SCL and TCL, but more inclined to be teacher-centred. Students have indicated that the teacher, while furnishing information in lecture format in the large majority of the time, she also attempted to engage students in discussions and reflections. Students also pointed out the significant age difference can be a challenging factor since it hinders the teacher's understanding of the students and their needs.

Translation (T7): students (S1, S2, S3, S5, S7, S8) consider the teacher to be student-centred as he constantly provided activities and feedback while listening to students' attempts and commenting on them. They appreciated the teacher's active engagement with their translation attempts, listening attentively and offering individualized comments and corrections. Some other students (S4, S6) described the approach as a mixture of SCL and TCL; this indicates that while the teacher retained control over content selection and assessment, students still played an active role in the learning process.

Oral (T5): regarded by all students to be highly student-centred. They expressed positive attitudes towards the freedom of choice provided for them to choose their topics, in addition to being engaged in various types of activities, especially debates and presentations. Students highlighted the autonomy they were given in shaping the learning experience, noting that the teacher's role was more of a facilitator than a traditional instructor

Literature (T9): all students recognized that this module is highly student-centred, with the teacher allowing them the freedom to discuss novels that interest

them personally. All students reported that the educator acts as a moderator and guide, encouraging students to lead the discussion and engage in debates and deep meaningful conversations, while she provides feedback at the end of each session. Students also noted that she makes a deliberate effort to engage each student, driving them to participate actively in the discussion.

- **Group 2**

Writing (T2): the majority of students (S9, S10, S12, S13, S14, S15) indicated that the teacher employs a mixture of student-centredness and teacher-centredness. They reported that the lessons combined lecturing with practical activities, allowing for both the transmission of theoretical knowledge and practical application. Additionally, the teacher provided feedback throughout the sessions, which students found beneficial for improving their writing skills.

Cognitive psychology (T10): all students perceive the instructor to be majorly teacher-centred. They explained that the module is too theoretical and contains an overwhelming amount of information to comprehend and remember. Additionally, they observed that the way the module is being taught in a way that stimulates rote memorization and the transmission of knowledge. Students also felt that their input is minimal and that learning was based only on what the teacher perceives.

Civilisation (T12): the students noted that her approach was a blend of SCL and TCL approaches. On the one hand, they perceived the teaching approach as teacher-centred due to the lecture-style setting of the session in an amphitheatre (S9, S10, S11, S12, S15). On the other hand, the student-centredness (S13, S14, S16) was reflected in the teacher utilising PowerPoint slides to explain concepts, supplemented with visual aids and reference sources for further exploration coupled with active discussion based on students' own research.

Methodology (T15): seen by students (S1, S3, S5, S6) as teacher-centred, with classes largely conducted in lecture format, where the lecturer assumes the major part of speaking time and students taking a passive role. They said that on some occasions, they are unable to take notes due to their lack of comprehension. Furthermore, they perceive a lack of connection between themselves and the instructor. Conversely, other students (S4, S2, S7, S8) deemed his approach to be

a mixture of SCL and TCL due to the long-term research project he assigned to students, and which was supposed to mimic an authentic thesis. Those students acknowledged that the teacher guides them when they ask for assistance with their work and his method allowed them to apply the learned knowledge.

Sociolinguistics: students (S12, S13, S14, S15) see the module as a combination of SCL and TCL as they consider that its nature enables students to self-reflect about how the subject relates to their everyday lives, giving them the chance to participate in meaningful conversations. Conversely, students (S9, S10, S11, S16) recognised more the TCL part as the teacher still provides the lessons in lecture format when she explains key concepts.

Translation: all students considered the teacher's approach to be a mixture. The reason for that according to them is that she usually introduced theories regarding translation in lecture format then she invited students to practice with some engaging exercises while providing feedback. Students appreciated the practical side through which they translate actual texts and the teacher inviting them to look for more details. However, one student noted that upon attending with another group, she was surprised that the delivery of the content was slightly different and more practical.

Didactics: Students (S9, S10, S12, S13, S14, S15) reported that the instructor relies on a combination of both approaches, but mostly focused on SCL. Although they recognised that the module requires lecturing, they observed that the teacher's approach does not just include providing information directly. Instead, it encourages students to arrive at conclusions independently and fosters frequent interactive engagement, justifying their indication of being student-centred.

ESP (T11): all students saw the module as mostly teacher-centred. They expressed dissatisfaction with the content, noting the excessive similarity of its content to that of the didactics, which further diminished their interest in the module. Moreover, the majority of students indicated that the instructor only imparts information with few opportunities for students' involvement. Students also expressed dissatisfaction with the mostly theoretical and irrelevant content, emphasising their preference for practical instruction on how to teach ESP.

Oral (T13): the consensus among all students was that the module is mostly student-centred. They noted that the teacher organises different stimulating activities that enable students to engage and practice. Students deemed the teacher as an organiser and a guide. This is mainly through guiding the conversation, assigning turns, and keeping students organised. Students also appreciated receiving feedback from the teacher.

Literature (T16): most students (S9, S10, S11, S12, S13, S15) saw the teaching style as being teacher-centred because of the excessive amount of explanation provided by the instructor. They described the module as tedious, as the heavy reliance on teacher-led explanations limited their engagement and active participation. Students (S14 and S16) held a contrasting perspective, emphasising that the discussion-based approach used by the teacher in some sessions aligned with SCL principles. These students appreciated the interactive elements incorporated into some of the courses, such as class discussions that encouraged active participation.

3.2 Teachers' Perceptions and Practices

To examine teachers' perceptions regarding SCL, the study employed two primary research instruments, namely questionnaires and interviews. Each tool was carefully designed to explore various dimensions of student-centredness from the teachers' perspective, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of how educators at Algiers 2 University conceptualise and implement SCL principles in their teaching practices.

The questionnaires incorporated both quantitative and qualitative questions to capture a large spectrum of perspectives. Likert-scale items, multiple-choice questions, and yes or no items were used to generate quantitative data of attitudes and practices regarding SCL, while open-ended responses allowed them to elaborate on their experiences and challenges. The questionnaire was initially distributed to 38 third-year EFL teachers, 22 of which have responded. This ensures that data was collected from a diverse group of educators with varied teaching experiences and disciplinary backgrounds.

In addition to the questionnaire findings, SSIs were conducted with a selected sample of teachers who provided further depth and insight into their perceptions of SCL implementation, its challenges, and its feasibility within the AHE system. The interviews allowed for a more nuanced exploration of teachers' viewpoints, including their understanding of their evolving roles, the extent to which they embrace power-sharing with students, and their attitudes towards shifting from traditional methods to more interactive, student-centred strategies.

The data collected through the questionnaires was subjected to descriptive statistical analysis, where percentages, means, and frequencies were calculated for closed-ended questions. Thematic content analysis was applied to open-ended responses and interview transcripts to identify recurring themes, attitudes, and concerns related to SCL adoption.

3.2.1 Questionnaires Results

3.2.1.1 Personal Information

Categories	Stratum	N (total = 220)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	18	82%
	Male	4	18%
Degree	PHD	11	50%
	Magister	11	50%
Field of specialty	Didactics	6	30%
	Literature and civilisation	7	35%
	Linguistics	6	30%
	Translation	1	5%
Experience in teaching English	1-5 years	4	18.2%
	5-10 years	5	22.7%
	10-15 years	8	36.4%
	15-20 years	1	04.5%
	+20 years	04	18.2%

Table 14- Demographic and professional profile of teacher participants.

Section 1 gathered personal and professional information from the participants, being a total of 22 EFL teachers instructing various modules at the third year undergraduate level. Among the educators, 11 hold a PhD degree, while the remaining 11 have a Magister degree. The areas of specialisation within the group are diverse, with eight teachers focusing on literature and civilisation, seven in didactics, six in linguistics, and one in translation. In terms of teaching experience, the data reveals a wide range among the participants; four teachers have been teaching for more than 20 years (18.2%), 1 between 15-20 (4.5%), 8 from 10-15 (36.4%), 5 between 5 and 10 years (22.7), and 4 between 1 and 4 years (18.2).

3.2.1.2 Power Sharing

In this section, data was gathered to understand how educators view and implement power-sharing practices, from embracing student input on course content to consulting them on decisions affecting classroom activities. These findings shed light on the extent to which teachers are prepared to delegate responsibility and encourage collaboration, ultimately aiming to enhance student engagement, ownership, and motivation within the learning environment.

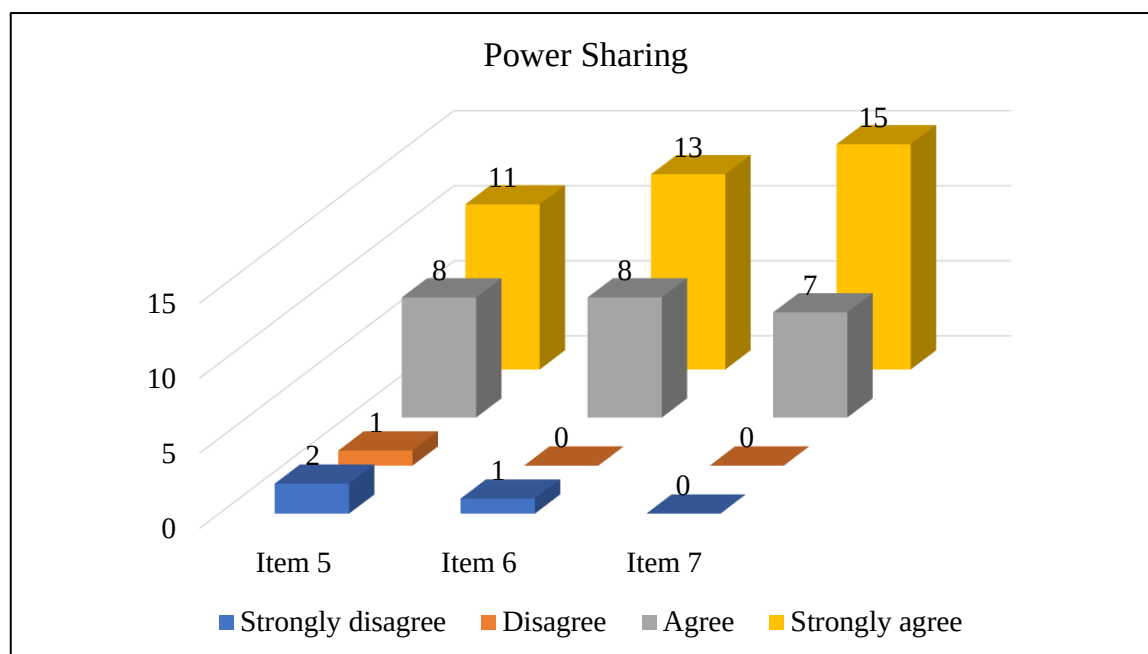


Figure 18- Graphical representation of teachers' responses on power sharing.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 5	I allow my students to contribute and offer their own knowledge to my course.	3.27	0.91
Item 6	I urge my students to express alternative perspectives and opinions to mine when appropriate.	3.50	0.72
Item 7	I encourage my students and make them feel comfortable to share their opinions, beliefs and feelings regarding different aspects of the learning process.	3.68	0.46

Table 15- Results of teachers' responses related to power sharing.

Based on the findings presented in item 5, it can be inferred that the majority of educators expressed a willingness to embrace the incorporation of additional knowledge from students beyond that which is imparted by the instructors within their respective instructional environments. In the subsequent item 6, it was ascertained that the majority of teachers invite students to grant alternative viewpoints and opinions regarding the courses, provided that such contributions are deemed appropriate within the pedagogical context. Item 7's findings show that the significant proportion of teachers assert their commitment to cultivating a welcoming atmosphere that encourages students to openly express their perspectives, beliefs, and feelings regarding their educational journey.

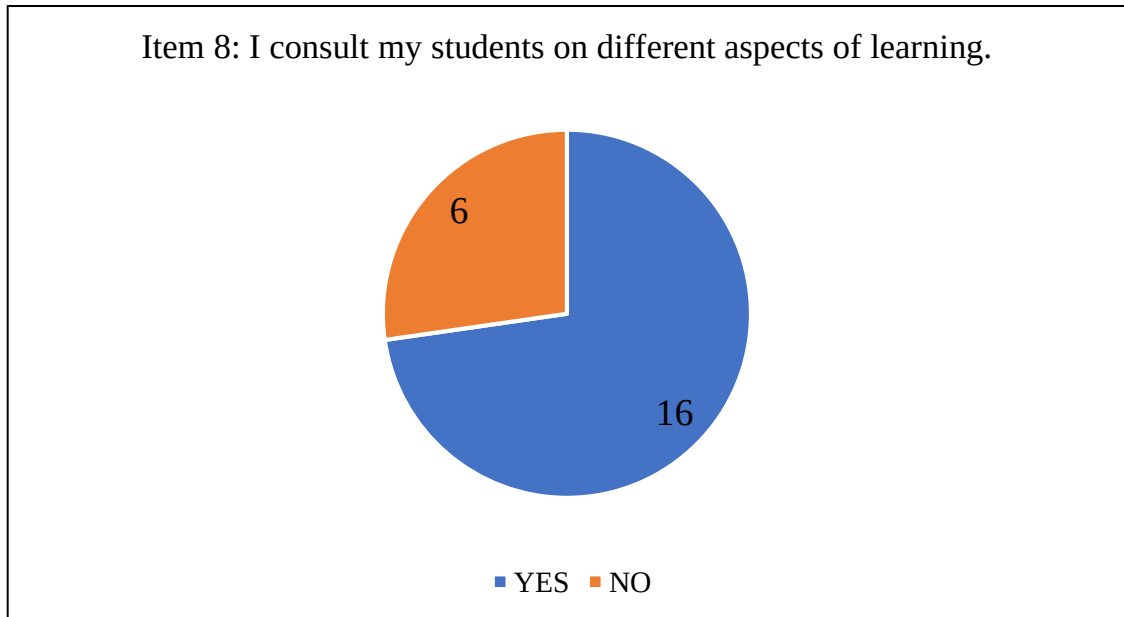


Figure 19- Pie chart illustrating teachers' engagement in consulting students on different aspects of learning (Item 8).

Item 8 attempted to investigate whether teachers engage in consulting their students on various dimensions of the learning process. It was found that a majority of educators, being 72%, reported that they indeed consult their students. Conversely, the remaining 28% of teachers said that they do not engage in such consultations.

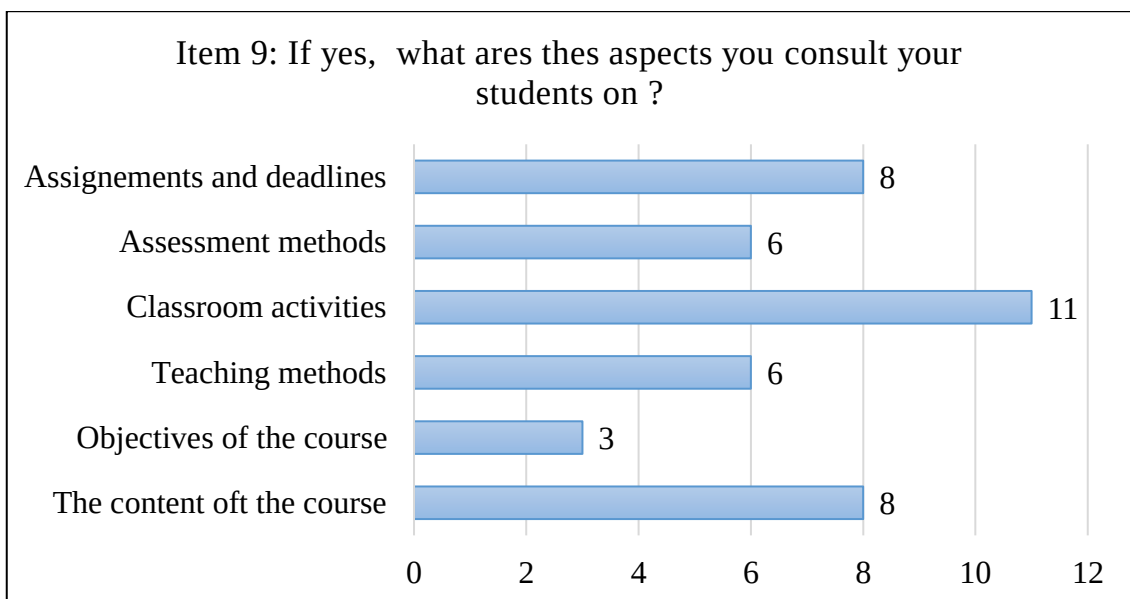


Figure 20- Graphical representation of aspects on which teachers consult their students.

The follow-up item 9 was a multiple-choice question that asked teachers who claimed that they consult their students to determine the aspects on which they solicit the opinions and perspectives of their students about. The primary aspect that educators reportedly sought consultation of was the selection of classroom activities since half of the teachers (11) claimed to ask for inputs regarding this area. The subsequent aspects that emerged in the findings were the content of the course, as well as the assignments and deadlines, both of which were selected 8 times. After that, both teaching methods and assessment methods were noted as the following aspects since each garnered 6 selections. The area least subject to student consultation was course objectives, with only 3 teachers indicating they seek student input on this foundational aspect. No additional areas for consultation were suggested by the sample.

3.2.1.3 Role of the Content

This section aims to provide insight into educators' perspectives on the function of content in their instructional practices. The goal is to understand the extent to which teachers focus on designing courses that promote critical thinking, engagement, and real-world application, moving beyond traditional rote memorization to foster a more dynamic and interactive learning environment.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 10	The content/curriculum of my course allows students to practice using inquiry or ways of thinking in the discipline.	3.18	0.57
Item 11	I always make sure that the goals and objectives of my course are clearly stated.	3.66	0.47
Item 12	I present content that drives students to build on their prior knowledge and experiences to construct their own understanding of the subject.	3.59	0.57
Item 13	I design activities that allow my students to actively interact with the teacher and with each other.	3.40	0.57
Item 14	I try to design activities that reflect real-life situations whenever possible.	3.36	0.71
Item 15	I present content that allows students to develop analytical and problem-solving skills whenever possible.	3.31	0.55

Table 16- Results of teachers' responses related to role of the content.

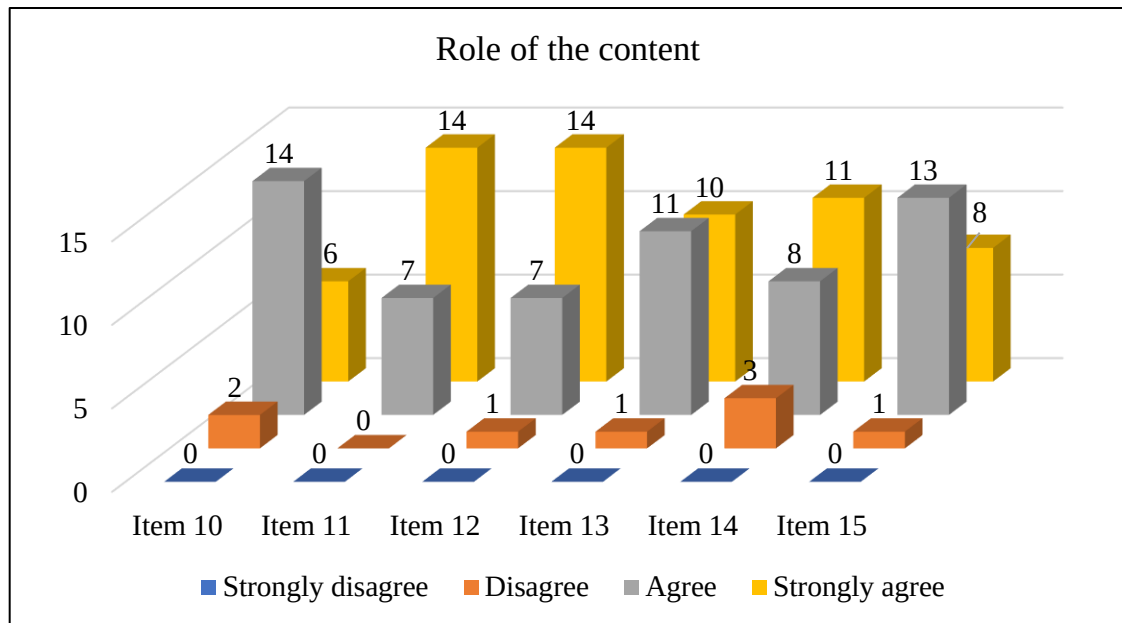


Figure 21- Graphical representation of teachers' responses on role of the content.

The responses to item 10 indicate that the majority of educators assert that their instructional design enables students to engage in inquiry-based learning and drives them to actively think within the specific discipline, rather than solely focusing on rote memorization of information. According to Item 11, the prevalent conviction among educators is that they consistently make sure of the explicit articulation of the course's goals and objectives for their students. The major proportion of teachers, according to item 12, further asserted that their pedagogical approach involves delivering content that encourages students to leverage their pre-existing knowledge and personal experiences in order to independently construct their understanding of the subject matter. Furthermore, a large proportion of educators also indicated that their instructional strategies implement activities reflecting active engagement and collaborative and cooperative work between students and the teacher, as well as among students themselves according to item 13. The majority also indicated their reliance on activities that simulate real-life scenarios whenever it is feasible as seen in the findings of item 14. Finally, the substantial percentage of educators assert that whenever possible, they design content which affords students the opportunity to cultivate their analytical and problem-solving skills as shown in the findings of item 15.

3.2.1.4 Role of the Teacher

This section examines the instructors' perceptions regarding their roles in the classroom. The goal is to understand how educators perceive their responsibility and the extent to which they focus on creating a classroom atmosphere where students feel motivated, valued, and comfortable expressing their views.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 16	I always try to create an active learning environment in my classroom.	3.45	0.72
Item 17	I always try to create a motivating classroom environment for my students.	3.40	0.71
Item 18	I feel like I create an environment that fosters student learning.	3.22	0.66
Item 19	I always listen to my students' personal problems and complaints.	3.27	0.96
Item 20	I make students feel at ease in sharing their opinions.	3.45	0.72

Table 17- Results of teachers' responses related to role of the teacher.

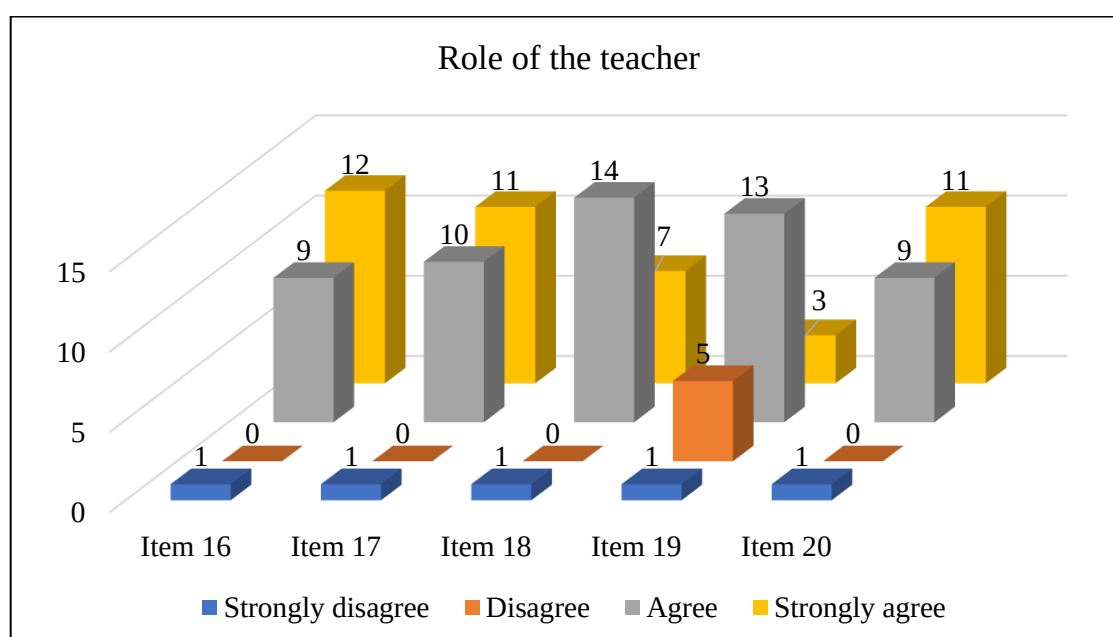


Figure 22- Graphical representation of teachers' responses on role of the teacher.

According to the data presented in Table 17, the majority of teachers reported that they strive to create a learning environment that is both engaging and inspiring. This is evident by the responses provided for item 16 and item 17, which indicate a strong emphasis on their roles in fostering an atmosphere that is respectively both active and motivating. Item 18 exhibits teachers' convictions regarding the efficacy of their instructional settings, with the majority stating that they forge and cultivate a conducive learning atmosphere for students. Item 19 indicates that the majority of educators hold the belief that it is within their obligation to listen to students' personal issues and complaints. Furthermore, the majority of teachers claimed that they ensure that their students feel comfortable expressing their viewpoints inside the classroom setting as inferred from the results of item 20. The subsequent item 21 sought to gather educators' perspectives on their roles within the instructional setting, resulting in the emergence of the following premises:

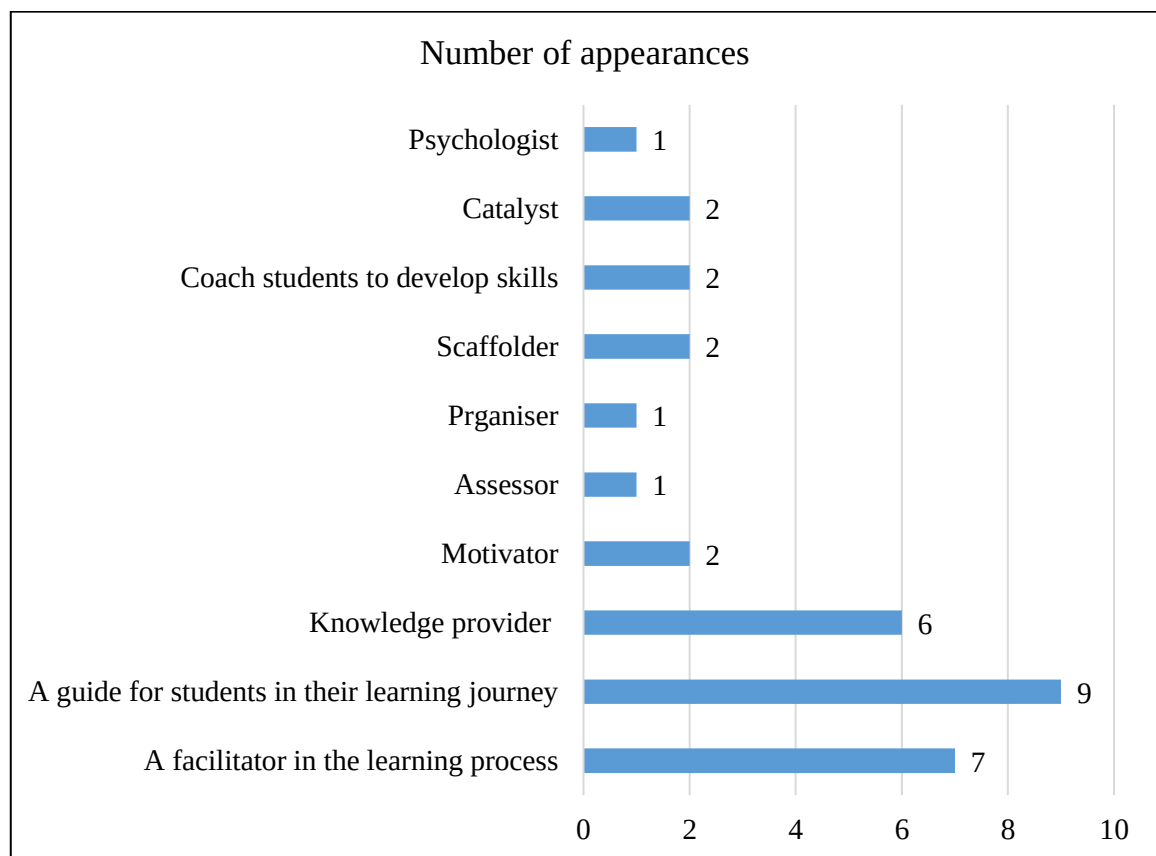


Figure 23- Graphical representation of educators' perceptions of their instructional roles (Item 21).

The results indicate the diverse perspectives held by educators regarding their roles within the instructional setting. The most frequently cited roles emphasize a student-centred approach, with 9 educators viewing themselves as guides in students' learning journeys, and 7 educators identifying as facilitators in the learning process. Alternatively, 6 teachers still consider themselves as knowledge providers, which suggests that some educators maintain a more traditional, teacher-centred view of their role. Additionally, some teachers identified with more dynamic and supportive roles, such as scaffolder (2), motivator (2), catalyst (2), and coach (2), all of which emphasize student development, critical thinking, and self-directed learning. The less frequent mentions of roles such as psychologist (1), assessor (1) and organizer (1) suggest that while some educators acknowledge the affective and managerial aspects of teaching, these are not necessarily their primary self-perceived responsibilities.

Overall, these findings indicate a gradual but uneven shift towards SCL in higher education. While a majority of teachers align with facilitative and guiding roles, a significant portion still retains traditional views of knowledge transmission. It is noteworthy that some teachers picked selected multiple roles that span both teacher-centred and student-centred orientations, indicating a hybrid understanding of their pedagogical responsibilities that incorporates elements of both instructional paradigms.

3.2.1.5 Responsibility for Learning

This section aims to explore teachers' views on the distribution of responsibility within the learning process, particularly how they perceive and support student autonomy, accountability, engagement, and overall abilities to take charge of their learning.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 22	The majority of my students take an active role in my course.	2.54	0.65
Item 23	I urge and help students to take and accept responsibility for their own learning.	3.18	0.48
Item 24	I believe that the majority of my students are capable of taking responsibility for their learning.	2.40	0.57
Item 25	I encourage students to explore content beyond what was presented by the teacher in the class.	3.45	0.65
Item 26	I create an environment in which students are encouraged to take ownership of their own learning.	3.13	0.45
Item 27	My students and I both agree and take responsibility for achieving learning goals.	2.95	0.63
Item 28	I urge and coach my students to be self-directed and life-long learners with self-efficacy skills.	3.22	0.51
Item 29	I try to make my students confident and aware of their own potential and abilities to learn and develop on their own.	3.40	0.49

Table 18- Results of teachers' responses related to responsibility for learning.

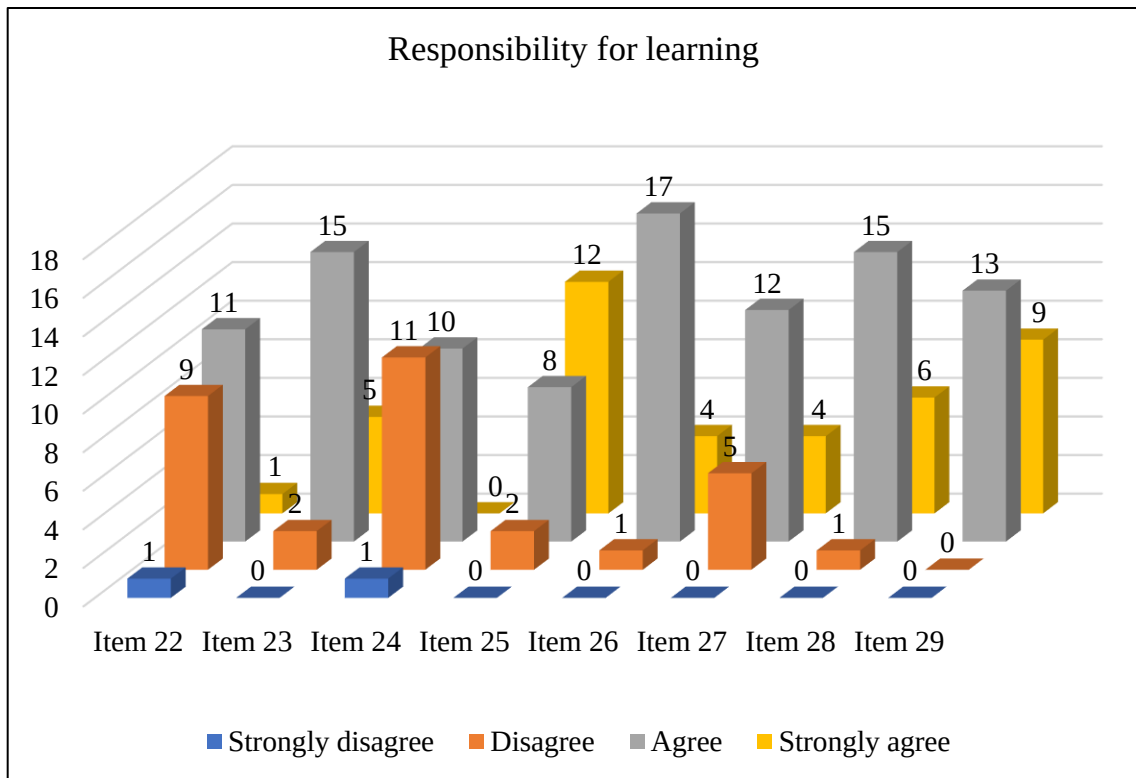


Figure 24- Graphical representation of teachers' responses on responsibility for learning.

In light of the results of item 22, it can be inferred that a slight majority of educators perceive that most of their students assume an active role in the classroom. Additionally, item 23 shows that the significant proportion of educators claimed that they encourage their students to assume accountability for their own learning. Nevertheless, item 24 revealed that a slim majority of the sample expressed scepticism regarding the capacity of their students to assume responsibility for their own educational progress.

According to the findings of Item 25, the majority of educators reported that they strive to actively engage their students in the learning experience by urging them to explore supplementary materials beyond what is presented in the classroom. The results of item 26 indicate that the significant majority of teachers reported that their classroom setting and environment foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among students towards their own learning, while the results obtained from item 27 show that a significant number of teachers stated that they try to attain mutual agreement with their students on the learning objectives, thus

indicating the presence of a cooperative commitment and shared accountability between teachers and students in this context. According to the responses provided for item 28, over half of teachers reported that they provide guidance to their students in order to develop essential learning skills, including self-efficacy and self-directed learning. Furthermore, as indicated by item 29, the majority of educators stated that they play a role in enhancing the confidence of their students and fostering their recognition of their own potential and capabilities.

3.2.1.6 Role of the assessment

This section addresses how teachers approach assessment within their classrooms, exploring the extent to which they rely on formative assessments, constructive feedback, and alternative assessment to support students' individual growth and development, which align with the fundamentals of SCL.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 30	I integrate formative assessment within the learning processes of my course.	3.22	0.79
Item 31	I utilise formative assessment to adapt to my students' needs and improve my instructional strategies.	3.18	0.71
Item 32	I always try to provide my students with constructive feedback.	3.50	0.50
Item 33	I present my students with the opportunity to engage in peer assessment and self-assessment in my course.	2.81	0.64
Item 34	I always try to implement real-life situation tasks whenever possible in the assessment of my students.	2.95	0.70

Table 19- Results of teachers' responses related to role of the assessment.

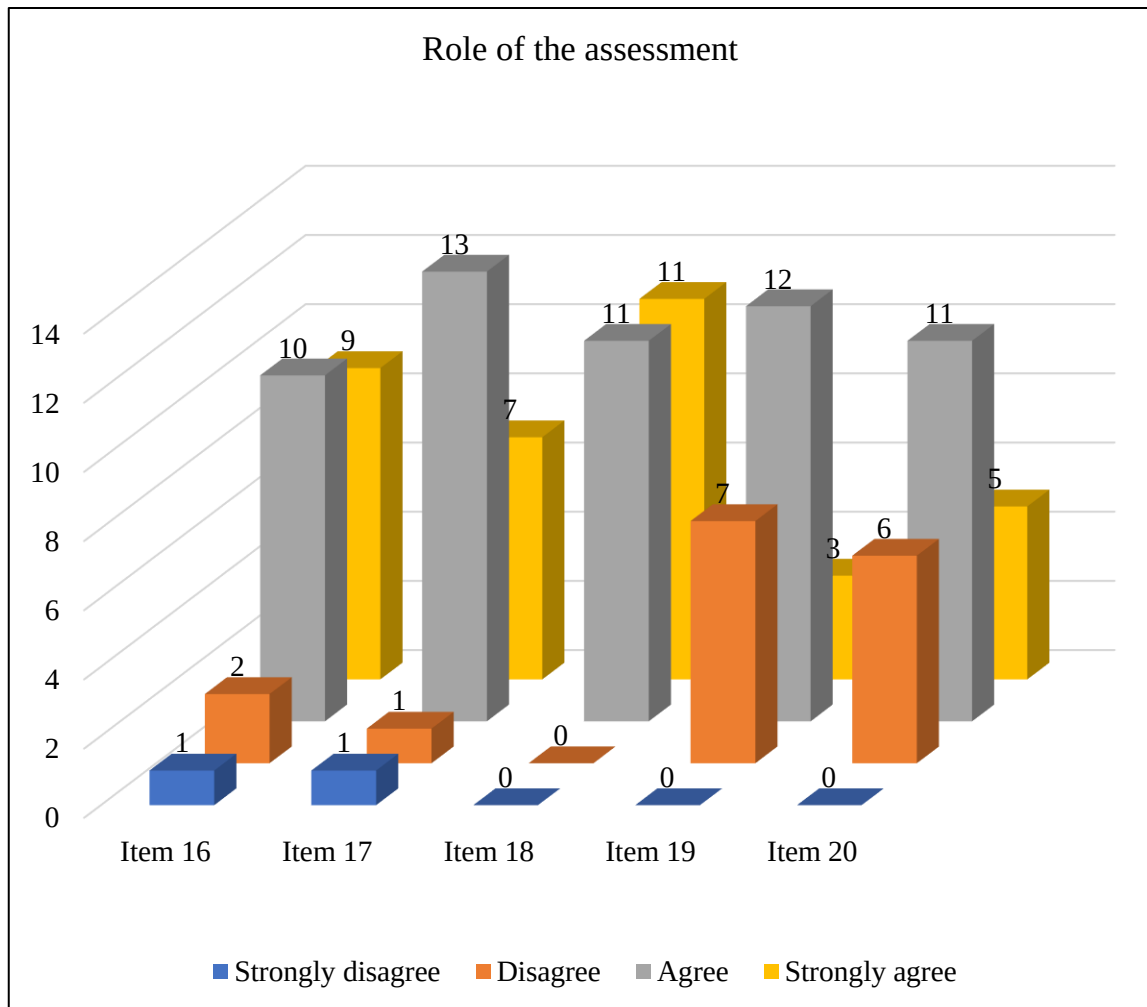


Figure 25- Graphical representation of teachers' responses on role of the assessment.

The section proceeded by questioning the educators through item 30 on whether they rely on formative assessment or not, to which the majority answered affirmatively. The subsequent item 31 indicates that the majority of teachers affirmed that their reliance on formative assessment is for the purpose of addressing students' individual needs and improving their teaching strategies rather than merely using it as a trend. The large percentage of educators expressed, via item 32, their regular practice of offering students constructive feedback, which they regard as highly significant and prioritise accordingly. Furthermore, over half of the participants indicated their dependence on alternative assessment strategies, specifically peer assessment and self-assessment, in their respective courses as seen by the replies to item 33. Additionally, the larger number of instructors

highlighted their efforts to incorporate assessments that mirror real-life situations wherever feasible.

3.2.1.7 Student-Centred Learning

The present section endeavours to provide a comprehensive overview of teachers' understanding and perspectives pertaining to SCL.

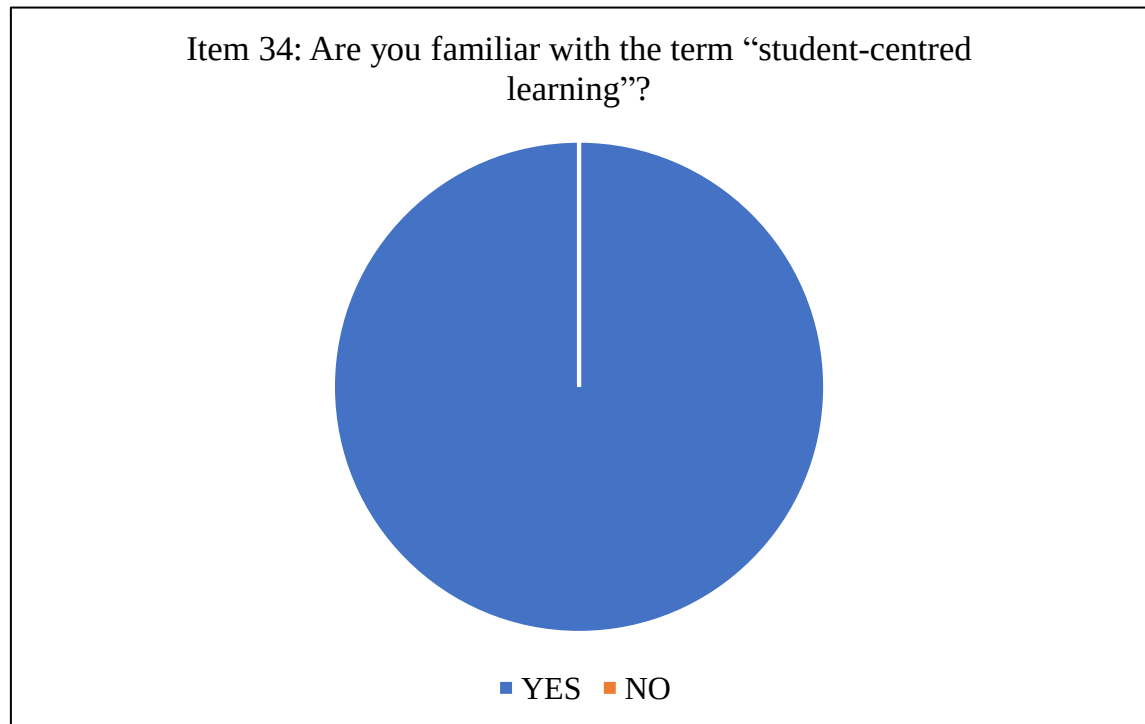


Figure 26- Pie chart illustrating educators' familiarity with the concept of SCL.

The findings of item 34 indicate that all participating educators assert their acquaintance with the concept of SCL, and that is likely attributable to the nature of the EFL stream at the university, where the subject of SCL is usually integrated into the curriculum. In turn, the participants were requested in item 35 to provide a concise elucidation of their comprehension regarding the concept, yielding the subsequent premises:

Theme	Number of Mentions	Example Excerpts from Teachers' Responses
SCL places students at the centre of the learning, shifting the focus from the teacher to the learner.	6	<i>"The students are the centre of the classroom. Their needs are prioritized."</i>
SCL promotes student autonomy, encouraging learners to take responsibility while teachers guide and support their development.	7	<i>"Students learn and develop a certain skill on their own." "Learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning process."</i>
SCL prioritizes understanding and addressing students' needs, which informs course design, syllabus development, and material selection.	5	<i>"Students' needs are taken into consideration to inform the course design, syllabus, and materials development."</i>
SCL requires active student participation through discussions, personal contributions, and PJBL, fostering interactive and reflective learning.	6	<i>"In a learner-centred approach, students are no longer passive learners who only receive information but are actively involved."</i>
SCL allows students a voice that is respected, allowing them to evaluate different aspects of the course and provide feedback on syllabus elements that best align with their learning needs.	4	<i>"They have the right to evaluate the syllabus and choose what suits them according to their needs."</i>
SCL is a process that positions students as active agents in their learning, where they are given more authority to participate in decision-making.	5	<i>"It's basically a teaching method where the student is given the authority of making or at least participating in the making of decisions concerning the content of the curriculum, the suitable time for studying, and maybe even a suitable assessment method."</i>

Table 20- Thematic analysis of teacher participants' conceptualizations of SCL.

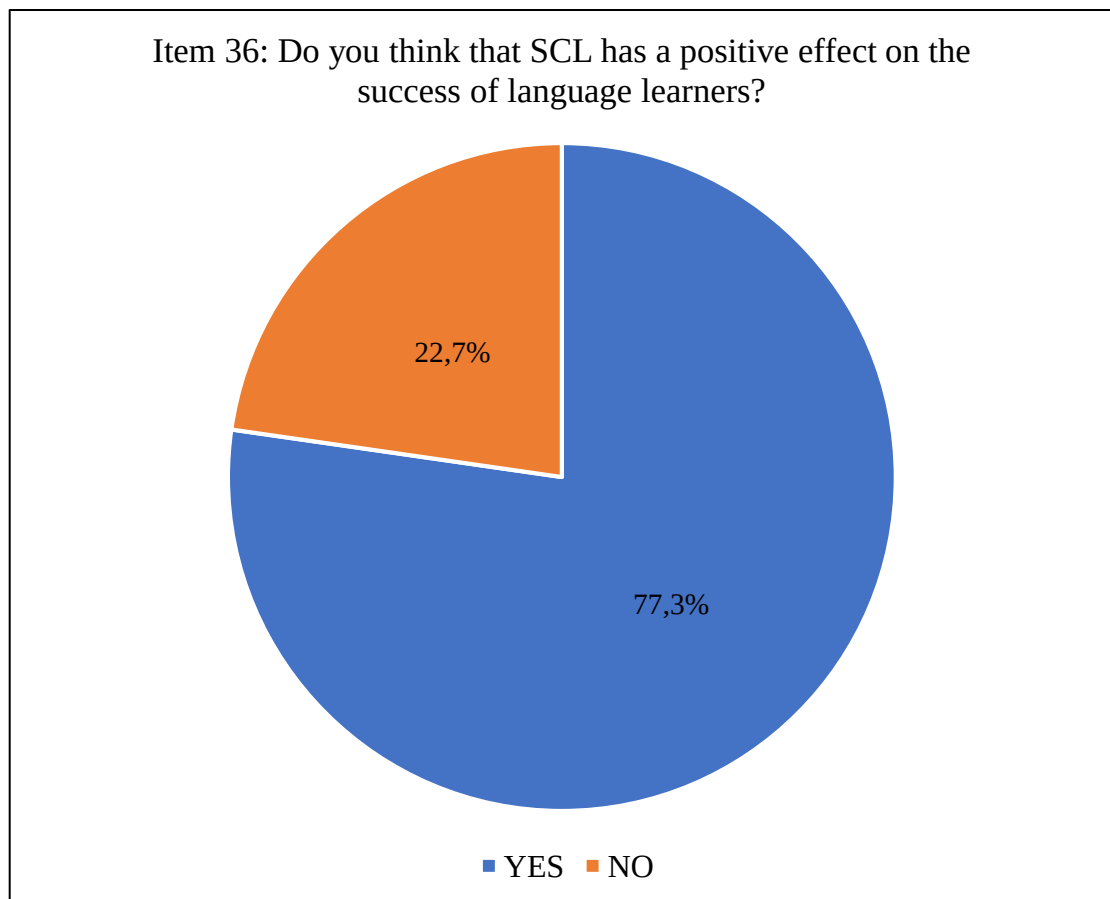


Figure 27- Pie chart depicting teachers' beliefs about the effectiveness of SCL in enhancing language learning outcomes.

In response to item 36, teachers were asked whether they believed SCL to be beneficial in language learning. A majority of 77.3% of respondents expressed a belief in the benefits of SCL, while a minority of 22.7% held the opposite viewpoint, doubting the effectiveness of the approach. In the follow-up item 37, participants who endorsed the advantages of SCL were invited to articulate some of the potential benefits that they believe the approach yields. Their perspectives were varied and are illustrated in the following Figure 28.

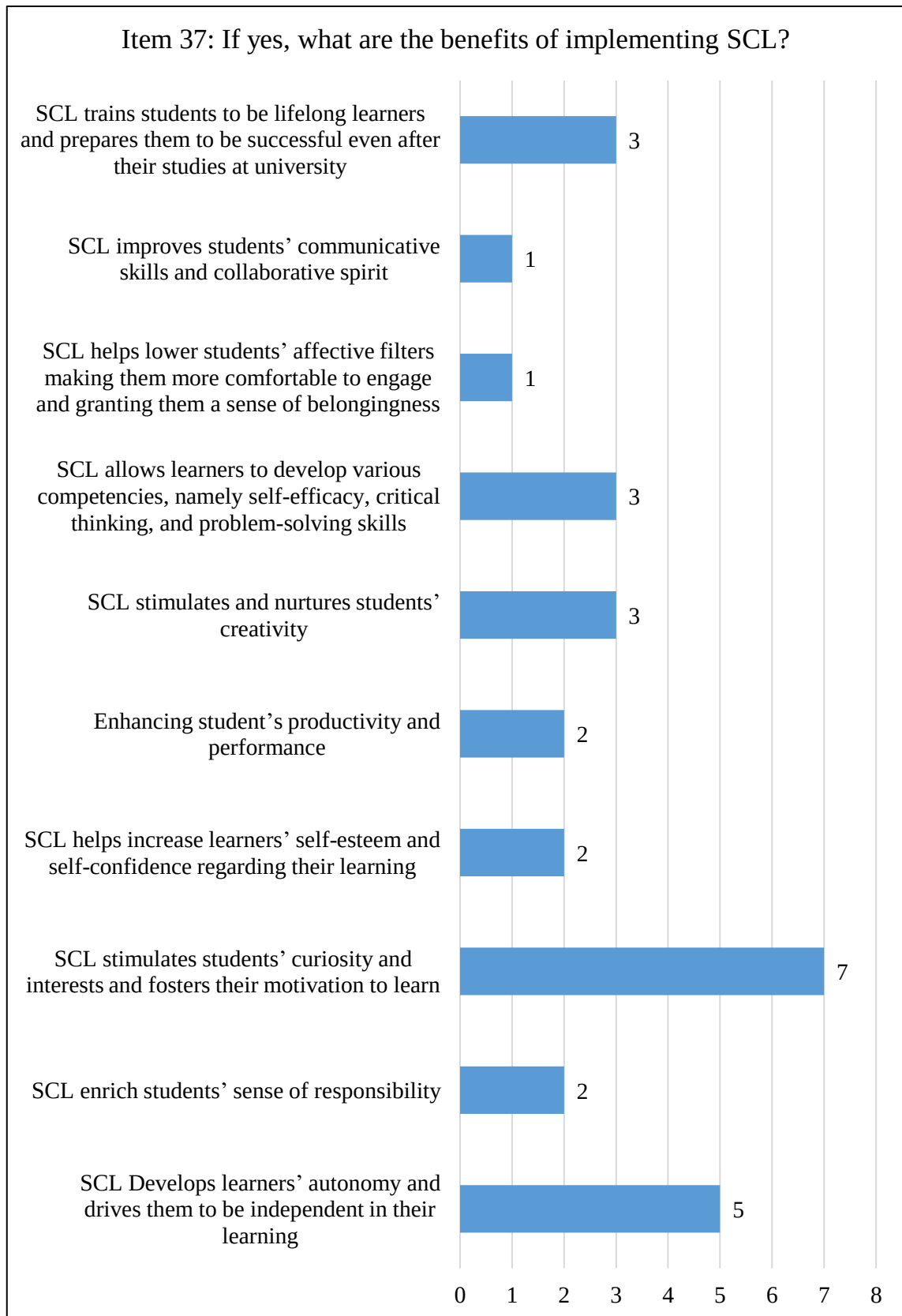


Figure 28- Graphical representation of teacher perceptions regarding the benefits of implementing SCL (Item 37).

The findings underscore that motivation, autonomy, and competency development are perceived as the most significant benefits of SCL. Additionally, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and creativity were acknowledged as key competencies enhanced through SCL, aligning with its emphasis on active and reflective learning. While the approach was also noted to boost students' self-confidence and sense of responsibility, its social and affective benefits, such as improved communication skills and reduced anxiety in learning, it received comparatively fewer mentions, suggesting that these aspects may be less pronounced in students' experiences.

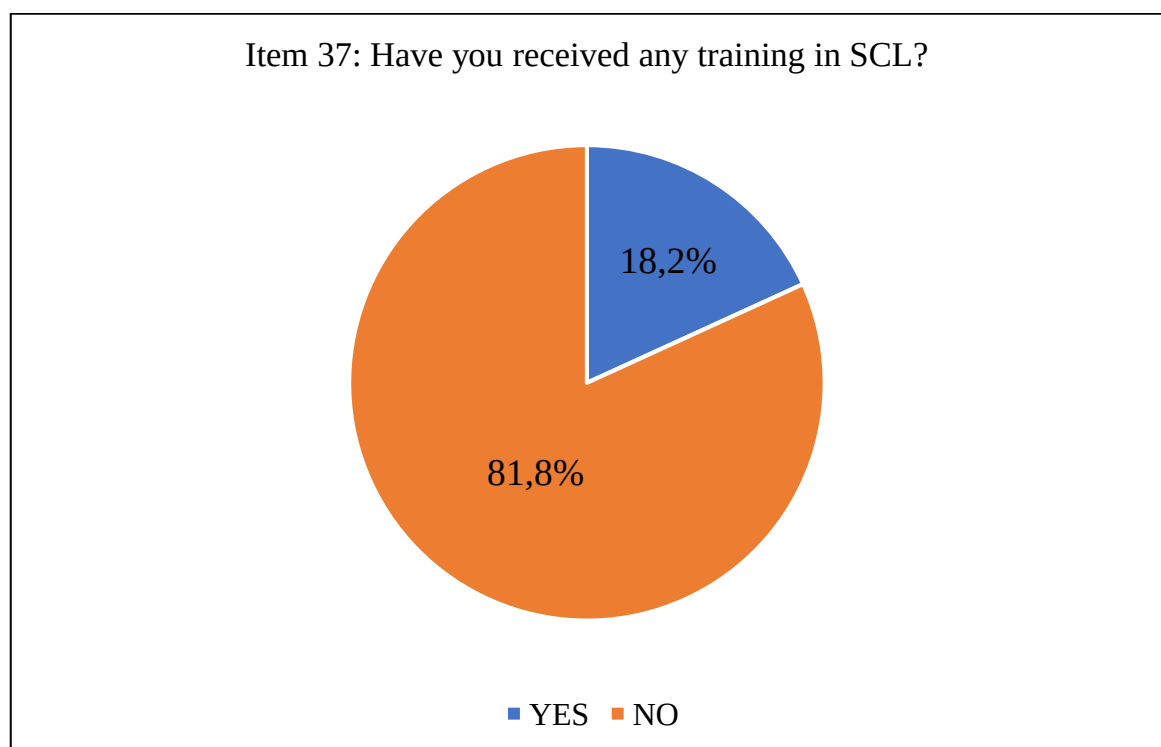


Figure 29- Pie chart illustrating educators' participation in SCL training programs.

In response to item 37 as to whether the educators had received SCL-related training, a mere 18.2% of the sample indicated that they had, with the remaining 81.8% stating they had never received such training. This may suggest that despite widespread familiarity with the concept of SCL, most educators may be implementing it without structured guidance or pedagogical support.

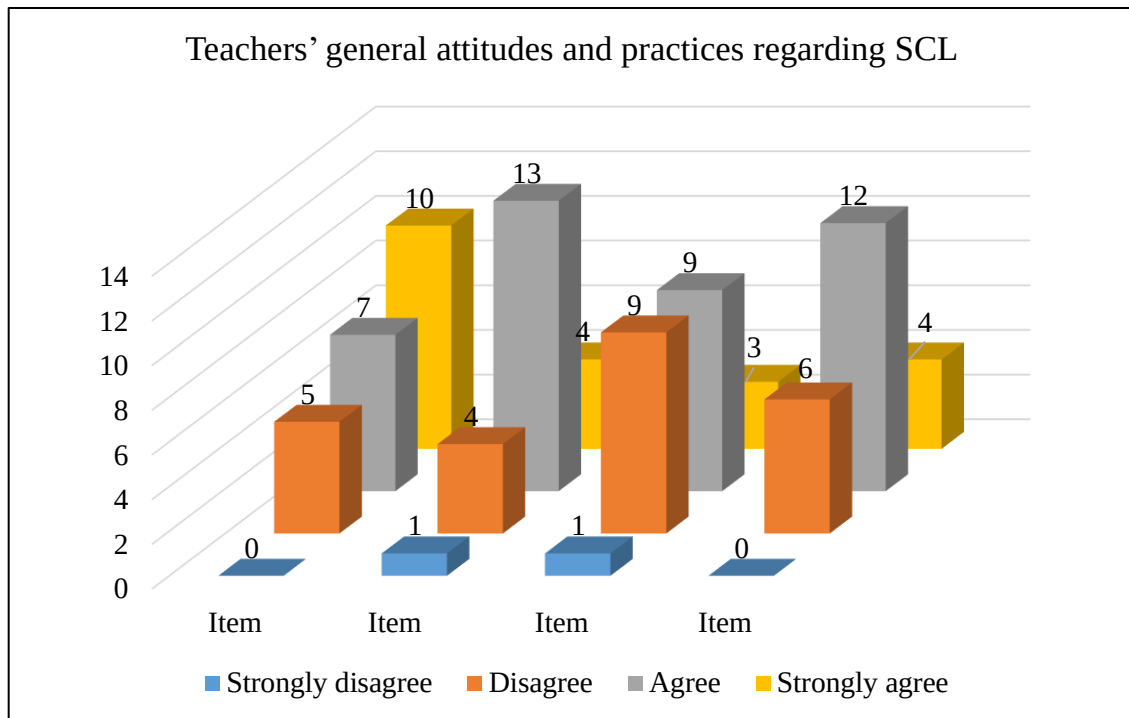


Figure 30- Graphical representation of teachers' general attitudes and practices regarding SCL.

Item number	Question	Mean	Std deviation
Item 38	I love to adopt SCL in my classroom.	3.22	0.79
Item 39	I implement SCL in my class whenever possible.	2.90	0.73
Item 40	I believe that my students prefer SCL methods.	2.63	0.77
Item 41	I know how to apply SCL methods in teaching.	2.90	0.66

Table 21- Teachers' general attitudes and practices regarding SCL.

The table 21 examined various facets relating to SCL. Analysis of responses to item 38 indicated that a majority of teachers expressed a favourable attitude and preference towards implementing SCL. Furthermore, the larger proportion of teachers reported that they actively incorporate SCL principles into their

classrooms, as revealed by responses to item 39. When queried about their opinions regarding students' viewpoint in item 40, a slim majority of the respondents expressed the belief that their students have a preference for SCL strategies. Additionally, the majority of teachers expressed confidence in their knowledge and capabilities on how to properly apply SCL according to responses to item 41.

Item 42 was a multiple-choice question that invited the participants to select the impeding reasons that hinder their effective implementation of SCL. The corresponding responses are presented in the subsequent table.

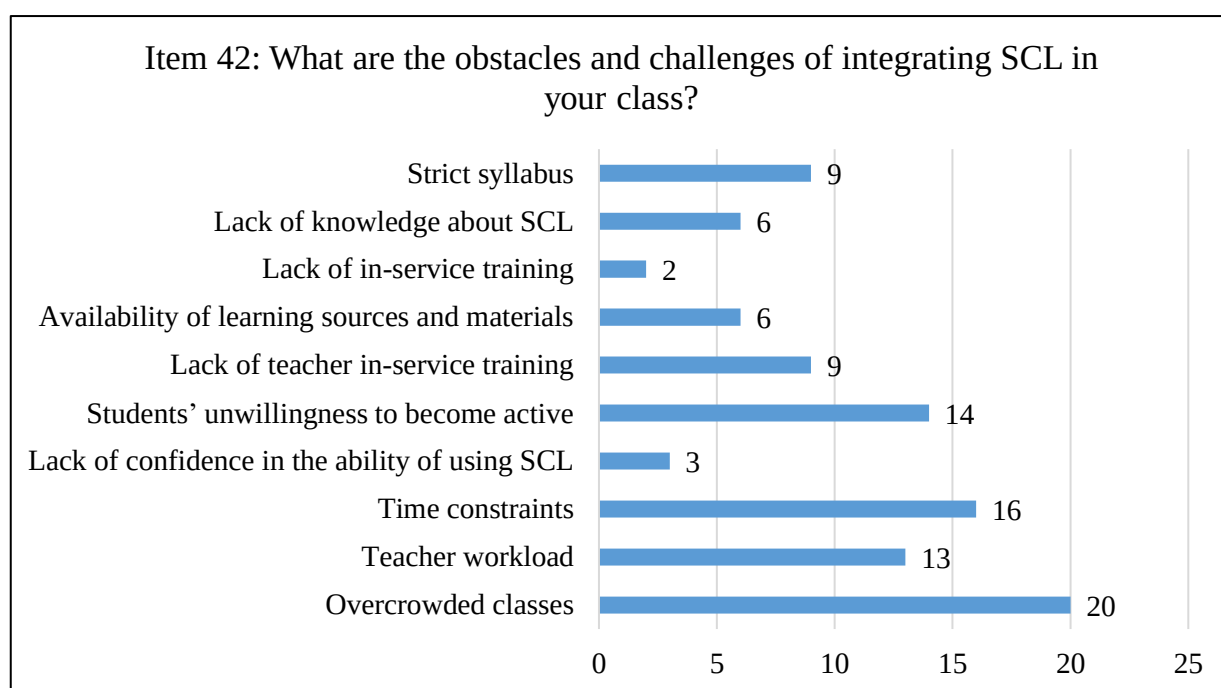


Figure 31- Graphical representation of obstacles and challenges reported by teachers when integrating SCL in their classrooms.

According to the findings of this study, the overwhelming majority of teachers, specifically 90.9%, have indicated that the primary obstacle hindering the successful implementation of SCL is the issue of overcrowded classrooms. This concern is closely followed by the time constraint factor, as reported by 72.7% of the participants, who believe that the allocation of only one hour for each module per week is insufficient to effectively incorporate student-centredness into their teaching practices.

The subsequent reason impeding the implementation of SCL as reported by 63.6% of educators is rooted in the prevailing perception held that students exhibit a lack of willingness to actively participate and engage in learner-centred strategies. In an alternative vein, another reason, specified by up to 59.9% of the participants, is the burden of workload experienced by educators which acts as a hindrance to the effective implementation of SCL. The following two reasons, which were equally chosen by 40.9% of the participants for each, were on the one hand the belief that the absence of structured SCL training played a role in impeding the effective implementation of the approach, and on the other hand the need to cover a predetermined strict syllabus in a given timeframe.

Two other factors tied for the subsequent place in hindering student centredness, each accounting for 27.3% of the participants' responses. These factors include a lack of overall understanding of SCL and a scarcity of learning materials that would facilitate implementing the approach. Only 13.6% of teachers mentioned the lack of confidence in their ability to use SCL as the last reason.

3.2.2 Teachers' interviews

In order to delve deeper into the comprehension and perspectives of SCL, seven teachers were chosen to participate in SSIs (T1, T2, T5, T4, T3, T9, T11). These instructors had previously been participants in the classroom observation and had also filled out the questionnaires. This ensured that there was consistency and continuity of data and allowed for a more thorough comprehension of the teachers' viewpoints. The interviews further enabled the triangulation of data, so augmenting the reliability and comprehensiveness of the conclusions.

3.2.2.1 Understanding of SCL

Since teachers' understanding of SCL is regarded as a major factor that shapes their implementation of the approach, they were asked to offer an account of their understanding of student-centredness. The following themes were identified:

Increased students' interaction and activity: all teachers mentioned that SCL implies providing more opportunities for students to be active, through participation in class and interaction among them and with the teacher to discuss the lesson. E.g.:

- T2: *"it is about building a learning environment that makes students active, motivated to participate and engaged in different types of activities, while I am only an organiser a guide and a facilitator"*

Different roles of the teacher: T5, T9, T2 and T1 acknowledged the new role of the teacher that SCL demands; being a facilitator, a guide, and a motivator, instead of being a transmitter of information.

- T9: *"SCL means that the teacher gives up the traditional role of standing in front of students transmitting information to passive students; instead, the role of the teacher becomes only as a guide from the side...also a facilitator, solving students learning problems, and motivator, like motivating students to make efforts"*

Focus on students' needs: T2, T5 indicated that SCL translates to putting emphasis and importance on students' needs and interests, implying that the teacher should adjust the lessons accordingly.

- T5: *"...in SCL students should be consulted on their needs, what they want to achieve, and what interests them regarding their learning"*

Students empowerment and agency: T2 and T9 noted that SCL includes students in decision-making, such as deciding about the type of content, teaching strategies, and evaluation methods.

- T2: *"SCL is about empowering students and making them feel that learning isn't something that could only be done by receiving information from the teacher and that's it."*
- T9: *"the approach is about empowering the students by making them think for themselves and granting them choice and decisions about some aspects of learning"*.

Increased responsibility: teachers T1, T2, T3, T4 and T11 pointed out the increased responsibility that SCL obliges to students. They argued that students should do their own research, prepare the lesson prior to sessions, and not rely solely on the teacher regarding their learning process.

- T3: *"It is about putting students in the spotlight and giving them autonomy so that they can evolve... students should engage more and"*

be more responsible by doing research, preparing lessons, and adding to the classroom conversation”

Building knowledge through constructing information: teachers T2, T5, and T1 believe that SCL involves giving students the chance to develop their own understanding through critical thinking, reflection, and discussion, rather than relying on traditional teaching methods.

- T2 *“So basically, the approach is about presenting them the opportunities to actually critically think for themselves and question information to come up with their own understanding.”*

3.2.2.2 Teachers’ Assessment of their Approach to Teaching

The next question sought to reveal teachers’ evaluation of whether they adopt SCL or TCL in their classroom and the rationale behind their choice. The findings were as follows:

Full Embrace to SCL: T5 and T9 view their classrooms as entirely student-centred, emphasizing their view on the importance of learner agency and critical thinking provided by the approach (T5) or finding the module of their content suitable for teacher centredness (T9).

- T5: *“I believe that my module is entirely student-centred, the kind of activities it requires makes it easier to use SCL”*
- T9: *“totally student-centred, I strongly believe that for learning to be effective, to be optimal, students should critically think about what they learn and question what the teacher brings”*

Blended approach: T2 reports relying on both TCL and SCL, recognizing their appropriateness in different situations, and reporting the importance of both approaches to cultivate an effective learning environment.

- T2: *“I rely on both approaches some lessons require the teachers to present lessons in a lecturing format and sometimes I exert some control to avoid chaos in the classroom, while in other instances I design my lessons to be student-centred”*

Resistance: T4, T3 and T11 teachers admit to relying solely on TCL, expressing the difficulty of employing student-centredness and blaming that on student passivity (T4 and T11) or limitations due to time (T3).

- T11: *“no, I use an entirely teacher-centred approach, I think that the problem is with the students they are too passive they do not do what they are told and expect us to give them everything”.*

Transition: T1 demonstrated a shift from TCL towards SCL, reporting that the latter brought about significant results.

- T1: *“I used to be a teacher-centred teacher but now I rely on a student-centred approach as I believe that this new approach is much more beneficial for them”.*

3.2.2.3 Teachers’ Implementation of SCL

The next inquiry in the interviews aimed to elicit how teachers claiming to adopt SCL are implementing the approach within their classrooms. Findings revealed the following themes:

Guided research and discussion: T1 reported in her new implementation to SCL that she relinquished lecturing for the majority of the class time in favour of guided discussion based on the information the students bring. She noted that she provides resources, such as handouts and keywords, to guide students in independent research for information related to the course. Subsequently, she initiates discussions themed on collaborative analysis and synthesis of the knowledge they have acquired.

- T1: *“... I give them just the topic... I guide them to fetch the information by themselves. I give them handouts but just to help them. While the whole work is expected to be done by them. That is in the process of preparing the lessons. When they come we all discuss the information to come up with wanted outcomes”*

Active participation and engaging activities: T5 considered that her implementation of SCL is reflected in the wide range of activities that drive students to take an active role in the classroom instead of being passive, forcing them to be productive agents in learning. Furthermore, she noted that the wide range of exercises accommodates the different interests and needs of students.

- T5: *“I try to bring different activities to my students and make them active all the time. I include everyone and give them opportunities to break from their shyness. I motivate them to participate and invite them to talk more while guiding them and giving them advice from the side. These different exercises can be interesting for different students and motivate them to participate”*

Students empowerment and choice: T5 and T9 reported that another aspect of their implementation of SCL includes providing students with choice and decision-making opportunities, thus emphasising students’ agency and

- T5: “... *I allow them the opportunities to choose topics and be creative in their activities, and also express their ideas and concerns and try to motivate them to learn and be responsible*”

Building exercises that stimulate critical thinking: T5, T9 and T1 considered that an element of focus in their employment of SCL is the reliance on open discussions and questioning in addition to stimulating critical thinking for the purpose of building their own knowledge.

- T9: “*I invite them to critically think and question everything. SCL means that you should have an independent voice as a student; don’t take everything for granted. They (students) should think and analyse and assess the information that they find, engage in meaningful discussion to analyse them and it will gain you knowledge*”

3.2.2.4 Preferences Towards SCL

The following question attempted to determine whether instructors really favour SCL. For those who affirmed their preference for the approach, a subsequent inquiry delved further to reveal their perceived benefits of student-centredness. The findings were as follows:

Teachers preferring SCL: Teachers T1, T2, T5, and T9 had positive perceptions and preferences for the implementation of SCL as they regarded the approach to have multiple benefits on the learning experience. The following benefits were determined

Student Outcomes and Lifelong Learning: T1, T3, and T5 believe that SCL has a favourable influence on academic achievement and equips students with the necessary skills to be lifelong learners. According to their views, SCL can be considered as a means to attain both immediate academic achievements and long-term educational benefits.

- “*It (SCL) would make the students long-life active learners, so being more successful even after studies*”.
- “*I prefer SCL, it brings better academic results from the students, makes them more active, and makes them understand the information better*”

Student engagement and increased motivation: T1, T2, T3, and T5 noted that SCL fosters students’ engagement and motivation, and lowers their affective filter. They assumed that by creating an interactive and

student-driven atmosphere that meets students' needs, SCL would be a valuable factor that boosts students' engagement, participation, and interest in different modules.

- T5: *"I prefer it a lot (SCL), it develops autonomy, inspires motivation among students to learn and work harder, and lowers affective filter among students"*
- *"I prefer to employ SCL, it creates a conducive atmosphere for learning, and most students are engaged and motivated to learn. It also teaches them to be long-life responsible learners who are able to think for themselves".*

Autonomy and Responsibility: T2 indicated the benefit of developing student autonomy and responsibility through SCL. She indicated that the self-reliance that the approach demands cultivates their sense of self-awareness and self-accountability, making them more confident in making different decisions.

- T2: *"... also, this way students will feel more responsible, more self-accountable, they will pay extra attention to the research they make and the information they bring. Each time they feel that their own efforts are being rewarded, they will feel more confident in their ability so they would invest more in their studies, making a circle".*

Teachers preferring TCL

Teachers T4, T3 and T11 announced that they prefer to adopt the TCL approach despite acknowledging the benefits of SCL. The investigation revealed different reasons for their reservations towards SCL:

Student readiness: teachers T4 and T11 reported that the reason behind their reluctance to implement SCL lies behind their perceptions regarding students being not ready to contribute actively and take responsibility for their learning. They argued that students often come to their courses unprepared, uninterested, and not willing to make efforts.

- T4: *"... furthermore, I do not think that students are ready for SCL, they will not be capable of taking responsibility of their own learning. They can't even bring a piece of information about the lesson we are having. So, I am obliged to give them everything."*

Practical challenges: another factor that discourages T3 from implementing SCL lies in the practical challenges that come with it, namely time constraints, limited resources, and overcrowded classrooms.

- T3: *“SCL has some benefits like making students life-long learners, but the time and the crowded classes do not allow to apply it so I rely on TCL”*

Lacks of confidence in implementing SCL: T4 and T3 preference for TCL centres upon their familiarity with the traditional approach and their lack of confidence in their abilities to use SCL:

- T4: *“I prefer TCL, I am more familiar and comfortable with it and to be honest I would not know how to apply it perfectly, maybe the newer generation of teachers would be better”*

3.2.2.5 Disadvantages of Employing SCL

The following question in the interview was to ascertain if there are downsides associated with the adoption of SCL. Teachers were requested to report the drawbacks that may arise from using a student-centred approach. While some teachers regarded the approach as overly positive with not-worth mentioning disadvantages, some others unveiled the following points:

Time consumption and content coverage: T2, T4, T3 and T11 have expressed concerns about the time-consuming nature of SCL. The personalised focus needed in SCL might impede the overall pace of the course, restricting the amount of content that can be covered within the academic timeframe. This presents a notable difficulty in achieving a balance between a thorough comprehension and a wide range of subject matter.

- T11: *“I think that the problem with SCL is that it takes so much time so the courses cannot progress at a sufficient rate; if you pay attention to each individual’s needs you will cover minimal courses in one semester”*

Overwhelming students: T2 highlights the psychological effect that SCL may have on students. They may sometimes find themselves burdened with heavy responsibilities, thereby needing constant assistance and reassurance from teachers, otherwise, they would feel lost. This underscores the extra effort that the approach requires in terms of execution.

- T2: *“I believe that it could be intimidating when it comes to students, if you give responsibility for some of them, they can be overwhelmed, feeling lost maybe, so it needs a lot of attention from teachers who use it”*

Dependence on students’ engagement: T1 noted the dependency of SCL implementation on the willingness and engagement of students. Thus, the efficacy of SCL could be reduced without active involvement, suggesting ineffective implementation of the approach in some instances.

- T1: *“it requires much effort from students so if they are not willing to be active, participate in the classroom and do the thing they are being told to do it will be difficult to use it (SCL)”*

3.2.2.6 Role of the Teachers

The subsequent inquiry in the interview probed instructors on their perceived roles in the learning process, aiming to elucidate how they manifest them in their classrooms:

Guide: Teachers such as T1, T2, T3, T4 and T9 considered their role to be a guide in the classroom, promoting student-led inquiry and independent learning. In this role, the teacher’s goal is to assist students in their learning process rather than just imparting information. According to the teachers, this can be mainly done by providing students with relevant resources and assessing the information they bring to the classroom.

- T1: *“I consider myself a guide who gives students documents to consult and subjects to read then discusses them after students make their own research, and I guide them in terms of determining the more appropriate information to build my lesson.”*

Information Provider: Teachers, including T2, T4, T3, and T11, acknowledge the need to impart fundamental information, especially when students lack the essential background knowledge needed for self-directed learning.

- T3 *“... my role is mainly a lecturer and a knowledge provider, especially when students lack basic knowledge about the content or it’s a new topic for them”*

Motivator: T1, T2, T5 and T9 mentioned the role of a motivator, claiming that it promotes student engagement and cultivates a dynamic classroom

environment. In responding to how they usually motivate students, teachers noted that they usually raise students' awareness of what an increased engagement may bring them, giving examples with high marks.

- T9 “... *I am also a motivator; I always encourage students to talk more and stop being shy. It is like ... pouring the fuel in them and this usually makes them participate more*”

Organiser: Another role mentioned by T1 and T5 is that of an organiser; particularly assisting students in coordinating their group tasks and guaranteeing organised and cooperative learning opportunities by selecting presentation turns, help assigning roles, etc.

- T5: “... *an organiser also ; I help students form their groups assign roles and turns to present, I also maintain the time for presentation if you leave students to talk freely they will not stop... »*

Feedback provider: T1, T2 and T9 indicated that an important role that they take is providing feedback to students, mainly aiming to help students learn from their mistakes and raise their awareness on the areas that students should improve on.

- T1 “... *and a feedback provider; I think giving constant feedback to students is an important part of the (learning) process. They can determine their mistakes and work to improve them and reflect on what not to do again*”

Psychologist: T2 highlighted that the assumed role of a psychologist is important to meet the emotional and psychological needs of students. She indicated that considering those factors is vital to nurturing a conducive educational setting.

- T2: “... *I play the role of psychologist and this is when students have some problems, I think that students' emotional factors should be taken into consideration for a better learning environment ...*”

3.2.2.7 Expectations from Students

The next question in the interview sought to elicit instructors' perspectives on their expectations of students in the classroom. The inquiry was designed to evaluate the expectations that instructors have of their students in order to effectively apply their teaching methods.

Active Participation and Discussion: all teachers highlighted the importance that their students actively participate in discussions, ask questions,

and engage with their peers in the classroom. They emphasised that they do not prefer students who remain passive in the classroom and barely talk.

- T2: *“I expect my students to be critical thinkers not mere recipients of information waiting to be fed; I want them to be responsible for their own learning, passionate enough to do their own research you know, to be active in the classroom ask questions to engage in discussion, interact more and strive for better”*

Critical thinking and independent learning: T1, T2 and T9 anticipate that their students engage in critical thinking, challenge information and not take anything for granted, and display the ability to study independently. These students are also expected to be able to do their own research and go beyond what is presented to them in the classroom in addition to expressing their own opinions.

- T9 *“I want my students to be true critical thinkers ... they should never take anything the teacher says for granted. Everything they hear, and everything they read is always open for debate. I want them to have the mind of a researcher, be able to critique and speak out their opinion and points of view”*

Discipline and Following Instructions: T3 and T11 indicated that they want their students to be attentive during classes, adhere to the classroom rules, and follow teachers’ instructions. Both teachers noted that they do not tolerate disruptive behaviour.

- T3: *“I want them to be disciplined, come on time don’t interrupt or make noise when I am explaining the lesson. I want them to make extra efforts to develop their levels, actually making efforts in their learning.”*

Preparation and Effort: T1, T4, T11 and T3 stressed the importance of students’ preparedness before class, noting that students should contribute to the lessons by doing homework and doing research. T1 for instance indicated that when students engage with the material she provides before class the lesson goes much smoother and it would allow her to be student-centred.

- T1: *“I expect my students to do their research and homework when they are asked to; in fact, I do not tolerate or accept students who come empty-handed in my classroom anymore.”*

3.2.2.8 Students’ Responsibility for Learning

The next question sought to capture teachers’ perspectives on their students’ abilities to take responsibility for their own learning. It aimed to reveal how they

perceive students' readiness to engage in self-directed learning, and actively seeking knowledge independently.

Positive Surprise and Acknowledgement of Potential: T1 and T5 were pleasantly surprised by their students' aptitude for independently discovering relevant material and successfully completing assignments on their own. They also expressed their belief that students have significant potential to take control of their own learning.

Similarly, T2 and T9 acknowledged students' ability to take charge of their learning and stated that this potential can be harnessed when coupled with appropriate supervision and motivation. T2 highlighted the importance of instructing students in self-regulation skills and effective learning strategies while T5 emphasised the significance of student motivation and emotions and cultivating a development mindset, whereby students have confidence in their capacity to learn autonomously.

- T1: *"Actually, I was surprised that many of my students were able to bring valuable information and build good cases when I asked them to do their own research"*
- T2: *"Yes, I do, they just need some guidance on how to become self-regulated learners, show them how to learn efficiently. A lot of students do have great potential if they are motivated enough ... if they are well-guided, I think they could be successful autonomous learners"*

Scepticism about students' ability: Teachers T4, T2 and T11 expressed a negative perspective on students' ability and willingness to take responsibility for learning. They described most students in their classes as passive, lazy, and expecting to be spoon-fed information. This viewpoint implies a possible discrepancy between the expectations of these educators and the actual learning experiences of their students.

- T4: *"Not at all, this generation of students is so lazy, they do not want to make any effort, they expect the teacher to do everything for them. When I ask them to prepare something or do homework, only a few get it done. The rest, nothing, they come and take a seat as spectators and that's it."*

3.2.2.9 Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of this section is to gain insights into teachers' perspectives regarding assessment practices within their classrooms. By thoroughly examining their views on formative and summative assessments, this section aims to understand how teachers perceive the role of evaluation in supporting student learning, the challenges they face in implementing various assessment strategies, and how these assessments ultimately shape their instructional approaches.

Integration of formative assessment: T1, T2, T5 and T9 considered formative assessment as an essential element of the learning process. T2 deemed it to be an integral component of her teaching, placing great emphasis on continuously assessing and providing feedback on student development. T5 noted that she frequently offers comments and feedback to students to help them grow and address their problems. T9 stated that she employs a dynamic evaluation approach that promotes peer review and self-assessment in addition to providing her own assessment and opinion on students' contributions. T1 despite admitting that she uses formative assessment occasionally, acknowledged its importance stating that she mainly relies on it to identify students' needs to build the next sessions accordingly.

- T2 *“Formative evaluation is a part of my teaching process, I believe that assessing students' progress throughout the academic year is really important and also I believe that students learn better when they are presented with feedback”.*

Focus on Summative Assessment: teachers T4, T3 and T11 stated that they rely on summative assessments, mainly due to time constraints and the perceived workload associated with formative assessments.

- T11: *“not really, only summative assessment, if I start to do formative assessment I wouldn't be able to finish the program. Plus, the massive number of students, imagine correcting hundreds of papers each time. It is impossible”*

3.2.2.10 Issues

This section aims to delve into teachers' perspectives on the challenges and issues associated with implementing SCL in their classrooms. It aims to shed light on the practical realities of adopting SCL approaches, including factors that may

support or hinder its effectiveness in fostering active student engagement, autonomy, and meaningful learning outcomes.

Time constraints: all teachers indicated that insufficient time constitutes the major obstacle in implementing SCL. They expressed that they encounter challenges in thoroughly exploring subjects in a student-centred manner within a limited time frame. Moreover, they complained that offering chances for student engagement and investigation becomes hard.

- T1: *“One hour per session is not sufficient. You start digging in deep with the students at a certain point, and then you find out that your hour is finished. You are left wondering how can I involve all students or use engaging activities while going over enough lessons”.*

Overcrowded classes: T1, T3; T5, T9 and T11 addressed the problem of large classroom sizes, noting that it negatively affects student engagement. T5 noted that in overcrowded classrooms, personalised learning becomes impractical making it difficult to meet all students’ needs or to offer individualized attention and feedback to students. T9 noted that a large number of students prevents the reliance on active and engaging strategies, which is an important element in SCL.

- T3: *“The number of students is unbelievable. More than 70 students in one class. That is tiring and it will not give the opportunity to each student to interact in the class. You cannot check the understanding of each student... if you give homework and check each one it will be a waste of time. So, all these elements hinder the process of teaching in SCL.”*

Teacher Workload: T1, T2 T3 T4 & T11 observed that the many responsibilities placed upon them, such as lesson preparation and grading, may cause them to be cautious in adopting a more demanding approach such as SCL. Doing so might lead to an unmanageable spike in their workload, making the courses excessively burdensome.

- T11: *“... More than that is that whenever you are to come to the class and then you start thinking about the exams; how am I going to correct all their papers? I have other courses to prepare to Master students to supervise (in preparing their dissertations). And with the huge number of students, the workload is affecting the teachers making them choose the more practical way (TCL)”*

Lack of teacher training: T2 and T5 said that inadequate training in SCL and its underpinnings can result in challenges when trying to incorporate student-

centred activities into the curriculum frameworks. T2 explained that the absence of training regarding the approach can make teachers who are eager to be student-centred feel insufficiently equipped and prepared to properly implement student-centredness. T3 also added that properly implementing SCL requires a deep understanding of the different pedagogical techniques and the rationale behind them so that teachers can avoid employing the approach at a superficial level. This highlights the importance of proper training.

- T3: *“you know, the problem is that sometimes teachers are instructed to use an approach without any type of training. It is like it’s up to you how to interpret it. Sometimes in theory, it’s okay all good we understand, but when it comes to practice and how should we actually use SCL in different situations... with different variables this is how it should be taught otherwise it would be used on a surface level”*

Students’ resistance to student-centredness: Teachers T4 and T11 identified students’ unwillingness to take responsibility and lack of motivation as a major obstacle in adopting student-centredness. They explained that this reluctance can appear in different ways such as adopting a passive role, minimal engagement in the classroom, refusing autonomy, etc. Such conduct can significantly diminish the efficiency of SCL, which mainly depends on active student engagement and self-directed learning.

- T11: *“I think that for SCL to happen students should be active, responsible, motivated to learn. But this is not the case in the majority of classrooms unfortunately; if you are encountered with lazy students who do not actively participate in learning and can take charge of their learning when they are asked to... not being able to even make a research, how is it possible to use SCL?”*

3.3 Classroom Observation Data Analysis

The objective of the classroom observation is to capture a snapshot of the presence or absence of SCL practices in their natural setting, being the classroom. This would allow to directly address two key research questions: Q2: What are Algiers 2 University’s third-year EFL students’ practices with regard to SCL? and Q4: What are Algiers 2 University’s third-year EFL teachers’ practices with regard to SCL?

By observing these practices first-hand, the study aims to provide a nuanced perspective on how SCL principles are implemented by both students and teachers. The analytical framework is based on Weimer's five tenets of SCL, enabling a structured and comprehensive examination of how these principles are adopted in the learning setting.

The classroom observations provided extensive insight into the implementation of SCL in various modules across third year undergraduate classrooms at Algiers 2 University. The findings revealed a spectrum of pedagogical approaches ranging from strictly teacher-centred methods to fully student-centred strategies, with many instructors employing a blended approach that balances both paradigms. The analysis details the practices observed in relation to Weimer's five tenets of SCL, examining the power balance, function of content, role of the teacher, responsibility for learning, and purpose of assessment.

3.3.1 Teachers' Practices

3.3.1.1 Power Sharing

One of the fundamental tenets of SCL is the redistribution of power between teachers and students, encouraging learners to take an active role in their educational experiences. The observational data revealed a mixed implementation of this principle across different modules.

➤ Freedom of Choice

The classroom observations revealed a range of methods for incorporating "student choice" in the classrooms. Although several instructors included aspects of choice, the degree and manner of control varied from one teacher to another. Conversely, some instructors have chosen a teacher-centred approach where students have minimal control, which indicates that those teachers refuse to relinquish control.

The commitment to providing students with choice instances and degree of autonomy was evident in several cases:

- **Assessment flexibility:** T2 and T10 granted students the choice to submit their assignments either in written form or via email. They also gave them the opportunity to negotiate the deadlines that best suited their needs in relation to their overall learning experience.
- **Topic exploration:** T5 and T13 provided students with the freedom to select their own topics for presentations and debates, which encouraged a sense of ownership over their learning. T1 in ESP module gradually introduced student autonomy by allowing learners to build lessons using their own research, shifting the dynamic from teacher-controlled to student-driven knowledge construction. It was observed that students demonstrated excitement as they discussed what they would like to choose with their peers.
- **Collaborative learning:** T2, T5, T6, T1, T9 and T13 allowed students the autonomy to select their peers for group work and negotiate their individual roles, fostering teamwork and leadership skills.

➤ **Absence of Student Choice**

The observation also indicated that in several modules, there is a lack of autonomy and opportunity for students to make choices, which affects the optimal implication of SCL. A significant number of teachers who were observed across different modules adhered to traditional and hierarchical classroom structures. They maintained a dominant role in decision-making and determined the pace, content, and structure of learning, often with minimal student involvement. The lack of collaborative decision-making opportunities resulted in passive student engagement, with learners adopting an observational rather than participatory role.

The following points, recorded during the observations, demonstrate the absence of choice among students:

- **Curriculum control:** in some modules (T4, T12, T11, T17), students completely lacked autonomy regarding selecting topics, instructional methods, assessments, deadlines, etc., in a demonstration of unilateral

transmission of information. This inflexibility was sometimes shown to hinder students' involvement, restricting their interests and preferred methods of learning.

- **Dismissive attitudes:** A lack of receptiveness to student input was noted in some instances. For example, T17 dismissed a student's suggestion to tackle an alternative subject with the comment: "*No we'll stick to learning about theories, I know better. You won't tell me what I should teach*". In other cases, students' questions were often deferred or disregarded e.g., T4: "*Let me finish, then we continue with the questions*", limiting opportunities for students to direct discussions or clarify misunderstandings. This demonstrates a lack of receptiveness to student input and knowledge, hindering their engagement in future instances.

3.3.1.2 Function of the Content

A defining characteristic of SCL is the emphasis on content as a tool for fostering deep learning, rather than merely delivering information. Across multiple modules, the observations indicated a spectrum of approaches to content delivery, ranging from constructivist methodologies to more traditional strategies.

➤ Content Delivery Focus

The observation revealed that some teachers (e.g., T4, T7, T14, T17) prioritised the fulfilment of the curriculum, frequently emphasising that students must work quickly and often delivering large blocks of information in a short amount of time. The time allotted for student questions or debates was restricted, which implies a unidirectional transmission of knowledge from the teacher to students, with less opportunity for student participation or inquiry. Students were visibly passive, demotivated, annoyed, or disconnected within such modules (e.g., T4, T7, T8, T14, T17). Furthermore, there was an emphasis on rote memorisation, suggesting a dependence on basic cognitive abilities like remembering and recognising, rather than promoting more profound comprehension and analytical thinking to the content being presented.

➤ **Content as a Tool for Empowerment**

Other teachers (T5, T16, T9, T6, T2, T1, T10) presented the material as a means of empowerment, where educators actively answer student concerns, adjusting and adapting their lesson contents appropriately. Teachers built their lesson contents in a way that fosters higher-order thinking abilities, such as inviting students to analyse, assess, and synthesise by using the information provided to them as a basis for investigation and criticism, motivating students to actively participate. The emphasis on active learning was apparent through incorporating the content into activities such as conversations, debates, presentations, and group work, which foster student participation and active involvement. Students invested more efforts with such teachers, doing research prior to class, engaging in collaborative learning with their peers, and taking initiatives

3.3.1.3 Role of the Teacher

In SCL, the teacher's role shifts from being the sole authority in the classroom to adopting a more guiding and facilitative one. Observational data from the present study revealed a diverse spectrum of teaching roles adopted by teachers, reflecting varying degrees of alignment with SCL.

➤ **Teacher-Centred Educators (T4, T8, T11, T12, T14, T16, T17)**

Their role included largely controlling the classroom environment. The primary focus of these teachers was the transmission of information, provision of instructions, and determination of all aspects related to the learning process. The teachers dominated the majority of the speaking time, advocating for a teaching method that relies heavily on lectures, leaving students in a passive role as mere recipients of information. The teachers rarely addressed students' concerns and comments, and if they did, it was done briefly without elaboration.

➤ **Blended Approach Educators (T1, T2, T3, T7, T10, T11, T15)**

According to the observations, those teachers struck a balance between conventional lecturing and SCL activities. Despite relying on lectures to present new information, they also designed activities that engage students and promote

active involvement. These activities included collaborative work, debates, problem-solving assignments, etc. In this context, the teachers' roles were observed to alternate between an authoritative figure to a guide, responsible for assessing, offering feedback, and monitoring conversations. Students in these classes were exposed to a combination of direct teaching and active learning chances and they were presented with more talking time. They appeared more involved and interested compared to the sessions dominated by TCL.

➤ **Student-Centred Educators (T5, T6, T9, T13)**

Teachers mainly assumed the role of a guide and facilitator. They presented students with more autonomy, while they offered ongoing feedback and assistance. Instead of monopolising the speaking time, these teachers constantly invited students to share their knowledge, ideas, and perspectives. They also designed engaging activities that stimulate discovery, conversation, and problem-solving. Another role assumed by these teachers was to provide a conducive atmosphere where students are motivated to actively participate in the subject matter, inquire, and cooperate with their classmates. They also appeared open to listening to students' problems and complaints, and offered help whenever they could.

3.3.1.4 Responsibility for Learning

Another key principle of SCL is the shift of responsibility from the teacher to the learner, promoting autonomy, self-regulation, and active engagement among students. Data from the observation revealed contrasting practices among teachers regarding the extent to which students were encouraged to take ownership of their learning.

➤ **Shared Responsibility**

According to the observation, T1, T3, T5, T6, T10, T13, and T15 endeavoured to empower students to take ownership of their learning. Several educators (T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, T9, and T10) assisted students in understanding their own cognitive processes, encouraging self-directed learning e.g., T1 ESP: *“You will prepare the lessons by yourself with my assistance”*.

Through giving advice and promoting self-reflection on learning styles, strengths, and weaknesses among students; educators (T1, T2, T5, T10) empowered students to cultivate a more profound understanding of how they learn best. Furthermore, it was noted that the teachers actively encouraged the development of essential skills required for taking ownership of learning, namely self-regulated learning and self-efficacy. This included teaching students strategies to efficiently manage their learning process, such as time management, goal-setting, and self-assessment abilities, rather than just concentrating on delivering the lesson content. Teachers also involved students in decision-making processes regarding their learning experiences and welcomed student ideas and suggestions, making students feel valued and empowered.

➤ **Teacher-Assumed Responsibility**

The observation also revealed teachers who predominantly controlled and directed the learning process (T4, T8, T11, T14, T16, and T17). They established an atmosphere where they had the primary responsibility for most aspects and decisions related to the learning process. Student ideas or suggestions were often discouraged or disregarded. The primary focus was placed on the lessons and the content presented by the instructors, with a strong emphasis on memorisation.

3.3.1.5 Purpose of Evaluation

In SCL, evaluation is not merely a tool for grading but a means to support ongoing learning and development. Observations from this study revealed a division among teachers in their use of assessment.

➤ **Formative Assessment-Focused Teachers**

The observation revealed that certain teachers (T1, T2, T5, T6, T7, T9, T10, T13, T15) employed a diverse range of formative assessments throughout the academic year. Some teachers (e.g., T1, T2, and T5) stated the objective of their reliance on formative assessment as to consistently observe and evaluate students' comprehension and advancement, enabling immediate adjustment to both the teacher and students' approaches to learning. Moreover, some teachers (e.g., T2,

T6, T9) provided feedback on a regular basis and ensured that it was tailored to the individual performance of each student. This individualised feedback assisted students in comprehending their strengths and areas for development and was visibly valued by most learners. Some teachers (T5, T13) also included alternative assessment strategies, namely self and peer assessment.

➤ **Summative Assessment-Focused Teachers**

It was observed that teachers T3, T4, T8, T11, T12, T14, and T17, primarily depended on summative assessments, relying mainly on final exams to evaluate students. The classes exhibited insufficient or absent reliance on formative assessments. Students' focus in such modules was majorly geared towards the lessons related to the final exams as observed from their conversations within the classroom.

3.3.2 Students' Practices

The classroom observations offered an additional comprehensive view of students' practices, highlighting varying degrees of engagement and autonomy. In order to provide a structured and critical analysis of these practices, the analysis was framed based on Weimer's (2002) five key tenets of SCL. Each tenet serves as a lens through which students' practices, behaviours and engagement levels were interpreted, thereby contributing to the understanding of their practices in the classroom.

3.3.2.1 Power Sharing

A defining feature of SCL is the redistribution of power in the classroom, shifting from teacher dominance to shared control with students. The observations revealed diverse student practices regarding power sharing, depending on the pedagogical orientation of the instructor.

➤ **Active Choice and Topic Selection**

In SCL oriented classes, particularly with T5, T13, T9 and T15, students demonstrated high levels of autonomy in decision-making. They were frequently invited to select topics for debates, presentations, and projects, which fostered a

sense of ownership over their learning process. For instance, in T15's methodology module, students were empowered to choose their research topics and collaborators for project work, while in T5's oral classes, students exercised autonomy by choosing debate topics, selecting presentation themes, and partnering with peers for collaborative tasks. This degree of freedom not only cultivated intrinsic motivation but also reinforced the idea of students as co-constructors of knowledge.

➤ **Minimal Decision-Making and Power**

Conversely, in more teacher-centred contexts, such as those observed in T4 and T14, students had little to no control over course content, methods, or classroom interactions. Students in these modules were confined to passive roles, merely following instructions without opportunities to negotiate their learning paths. They mostly followed handouts and took notes, with limited opportunity to initiate dialogue or redirect discussions. Power was mainly in the hands of the teachers, leading to reduced engagement and participation among students.

3.3.2.2 Function of Content

Weimer (2002) emphasises that content should function as a tool to develop learning skills and critical thinking rather than being an end in itself. The analysis of students' practices in relation to this tenet revealed a dichotomy between rote learning and transformative learning experiences.

➤ **Critical Thinking and Application**

In SCL focused modules, students treated content as a means to foster critical inquiry and reflective thinking. For instance, in T10's cognitive psychology module, students were engaged in problem-solving activities, such as interpreting visual stimuli related to Gestalt theory, and encouraged to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, including discussions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, in T9's literature module, students frequently debated the reliability of literary narrators, reflected on thematic content, and synthesised their analyses, demonstrating higher-order cognitive skills.

➤ **Surface Learning and Rote Memorisation**

By contrast, in TCL dominated classes like T4 and T14, content was primarily used for information transmission, and student engagement with it was limited to memorisation and replication. Students often copied dictated notes and focused on recalling facts rather than analysing or questioning the material. This surface-level engagement fostered a passive learning culture, where the content was treated as static information rather than an opportunity for intellectual development.

3.3.2.3 Practices depending on the Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher significantly influenced the nature of student participation. In SCL classrooms, students perceived their instructors as guides and facilitators, which in turn empowered students to take a more active role in their education. In contrast, with teacher-centred educators, student involvement was often limited, reinforcing passive learning behaviours.

➤ **Active Learners and Co-Constructors of Knowledge**

Instructors like T5, T13, T16, T10, and T15 cultivated an environment where students were encouraged to voice their opinions, challenge perspectives, and co-construct knowledge. In these classrooms, students were active learners, participating in debates, discussions, and collaborative tasks, as seen in T9's literature deep discussions of literary texts and T15's PJBL activities. Students responded to teacher prompts, formulated questions, and engaged in peer learning, showing ownership of the learning process. In T1 sessions, students became knowledge co-creators, bringing new information, contributing with examples, and engaging in collaborative lesson building. Moreover, in T3 lessons, students engaged in reflective thinking, answering higher-order questions, and offering critical perspectives on topics.

➤ **Passive Recipients of Information**

Conversely, in teacher-centred classes, students experienced their instructors as authoritarian figures who controlled the flow of information and

classroom discourse. For example, T4 and T14 dictated lessons and controlled all classroom interactions, which led to student passivity and disengagement. In T17's sociolinguistics, students' attempts to participate were often overlooked, and the teacher's focus on time constraints and discipline further discouraged interaction. In the methodology module with T8, students copied dictated notes with minimal opportunity to apply concepts or contribute perspectives.

3.3.2.4 Responsibility for Learning

A core principle of SCL is encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning through self-regulation, goal-setting, and self-assessment. Observations revealed contrasts between students' behaviours in classrooms that encouraged learner independence and those that reinforced dependence on the teacher.

➤ Autonomous Learning Behaviors

In SCL oriented classes, students consistently displayed responsibility for their learning. For instance, in T1's ESP class, after transitioning to a student-centred approach, students were observed bringing in research, contributing ideas for lesson content, and engaging in peer and self-assessment. Similarly, T15's students assumed responsibility for developing their research projects, making decisions about topic selection, collaboration, and methodology. These students demonstrated initiative, engagement, and a desire for mastery, as evidenced by their continuous inquiry and reflection on feedback.

➤ Dependence on Teacher Direction

On the other hand, in TCL classrooms, responsibility for learning was firmly placed on the teacher's shoulders. Students in T8 and T14 sessions largely waited for teacher instructions, displayed little initiative, and engaged in minimal self-directed learning. Students often expected answers and directions from their teachers, rarely engaged in critical thinking, and limited their participation to passive listening and note-taking.

3.3.2.5 Purpose and Process of Evaluation

The purpose of evaluation in SCL is to support learning and development rather than simply measuring it. The classroom observations demonstrated a spectrum of student experiences based on how evaluation was handled.

➤ Engagement with Formative Evaluation

In classes where formative assessment is relied upon, such as T6, T10, T1, and T15; students actively engaged with continuous feedback, showing a willingness to reflect on their performance and apply teacher guidance to improve. In T10's cognitive psychology and T15's methodology, for example, students responded positively to individualised feedback, which fostered a sense of progression and personal development. These students also engaged in peer evaluations, as observed in T5 and T13's Oral presentations, contributing to collaborative assessment practices.

➤ Dependence on Teacher Direction

In contrast, in summative assessment-oriented classes, such as T4, T12, T14, and T17, students were primarily focused on final exams and rote memorization. There was little to no formative feedback, and evaluation was perceived by students as a one-off judgment rather than a tool for learning enhancement. Student engagement was largely extrinsically motivated, often revolving around the fear of grades rather than the joy of learning or mastery.

Conclusion

This chapter presented and analysed the major findings of the study by exploring students' and teachers' perceptions and practices of SCL through multiple instruments, including questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations. The triangulation of these data sources has provided a general picture of how SCL is understood, perceived, and enacted within the third-year undergraduate classrooms at the English Department at the University of Algiers 2.

The results showed that students overall had an understanding of the approach and were able to articulate some of its fundamental elements, its advantages, and some drawbacks. The majority had positive perceptions of SCL and were in line with Weimer's (2002) principles of the approach. The majority supported shared decision-making, preferred content that stimulated their critical thinking and was tied to real contexts and clear goals. They also valued the SCL role of the teacher as a facilitator who guides, listens, and provides individualised feedback. While the majority of students liked the idea of taking responsibility of their learning, their confidence and skills in autonomy were uneven, and concerns about unclear learning criteria remain. Regarding the assessment, even though the majority of students admitted that their efforts were driven to a large extent by summative assessments, they were open to alternative and formative assessments. Nevertheless, they expressed concerns regarding unclear assessment criteria or being penalised for original answers, which can suppress their creativity and risk-taking. A welcoming and safe classroom atmosphere was considered as key for SCL, especially when voicing opinions and challenging teachers' takes. Across the study, students noted some obstacles, namely, large classes, short sessions, resource and technical limits, late transition to SCL, and inconsistent practices. Overall, students view SCL as desirable and achievable if the approach is implemented in a scaffolded way with transparent expectations, structured guidance and collaboration, consistent and clear assessment, and earlier preparation for independent learning.

The majority of teachers, on their hand, generally demonstrated understanding and endorsement towards SCL, its principles, along with its pros and cons. The majority claimed supporting sharing power with students and creating space for ideas sharing and respectful challenge. They also said that they design and prefer content that promotes inquiry, builds on prior knowledge, and, where possible, reflects real world situations, all while making course goals explicit. When asked about their roles, several educators reported being facilitators and guides who organise collaboration, motivate participation, and provide regular feedback, even as some still identify with the knowledge-transmitter role when

content is new or classes are large. As for responsibility sharing, the endorsement was cautious. Teachers noted that they encourage increased autonomy and independent discovery, but they questioned students' readiness and ability for self-direction and autonomous learning. Many teachers reported using formative assessment to adjust teaching and give regular and constructive feedback; however, alternative assessments are used less consistently. When questioned about preferences between SCL and TCL, many teachers favoured SCL due to its effects on engagement, autonomy, confidence, and long-term learning and achievements; some others however, preferred TCL, citing factors such as student passivity, time limits, and their own comfort with lecturing. A third group explicitly endorsed a blended approach, viewing this hybrid as the most pragmatic fit facing the constraints. Obstacles from the perspectives of teachers were overcrowded classes, short sessions, workload and syllabus coverage pressures, student unwillingness to be active, scarce materials, lack of training in SCL. Generally, most teachers view SCL positively and consider it feasible as long as students show greater willingness to engage and assume responsibility and key issues are addressed. Others are still attached to TCL, for the perceived efficiency and comfort it offers in content-heavy and time-constrained settings, and because they are more familiar with it.

Classroom observations showed that some teachers exhibited a predominantly student-centred profile; they shared power through granting some choice e.g., topics, peers, roles; and they treated content as a tool for inquiry through guided discussions, debates, and problem-solving tasks. These teachers adopted the facilitative role organising, coaching, and listening to their students. They further attempted to build responsibility for learning by encouraging preparation and self-regulation routines, and used formative assessment and feedback regularly. Teachers who subscribed to a blended approach provided choice within boundaries. Their content often started with lecturing then was reframed for inquiry and critical thinking through tasks when possible. The role of these teachers kept switching from knowledge provider to guide and responsibility was given when the chance permitted. Assessment consisted of a mix between

formative and summative assessments. Teacher-led instructors aligned least with SCL characteristics as power remained with the teacher while content was delivered for coverage and memorization. The role of the teachers of this profile was centred on transmitting information and responsibility stayed with the teacher, deciding almost everything regarding the learning process. Even if there was occasionally some formative assessments, evaluation among these teachers was largely summative driven.

Students' practices on the other hand generally mirrored the orientation of their classes. In student-centred modules, students had the opportunities to exercise choice such as selecting topics and partners. They also engaged with the content as a tool for inquiry and prepared beyond the class through guided research, and acted as co-constructors of knowledge in debates, presentations, and problem-solving tasks. they also engaged with formative feedback and showed autonomy when expectations were explicit. In blended lessons, students shifted from note taking teachers' input to engaging activities, displaying partial ownership in certain instances and responsiveness to classroom discussions. In TCL sessions, students' practices were largely passive, such as note taking, following handouts, limited questioning, etc. And effort was focused mainly around exam requirements with little self-directed learning. It is worth noting that even in student-centred classes a subset of students remained passive or disengaged often due to shyness, disinterest, or low confidence. Overall, many students attempted to assume power when invited, used content for inquiry when it was framed as such, assumed responsibility when the teacher granted it, and valued feedback from formative evaluation when it was given. When these conditions were absent, practices reverted to being passive, majorly note taking and memorisation.

CHAPTER FOUR:
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS,
PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS,
AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER
RESEARCH

Introduction

The present chapter presents the discussion of the research findings. It examines how the research data answers the research questions by contextualising the results to previous research in the existing literature to generate meaningful insights into the perceptions and practices regarding SCL. Additionally, the chapter offers a set of recommendations based on the findings to enhance the implementation of SCL in higher educational settings. Thereafter, suggestions for future research are provided to further explore and develop the implementation of SCL.

The aim of this study was to investigate how third-year undergraduate students and teachers perceive and practice SCL. By examining participants' perceptions and understandings of the approach and documenting how these views are enacted in classrooms, the study aimed to enrich the knowledge body regarding SCL and ultimately offer practical recommendations and strategies to enhance the effective implementation of this approach at universities.

The research adopted a mixed-methods approach, relying on questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations. This triangulation of tools was used to obtain a richer and more holistic understanding of participants' views and practices regarding SCL. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistical strategies, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic content analysis. Together, they provide a comprehensive foundation for interpreting the dynamics of SCL in higher education settings.

The chapter is structured around answering the research questions of the study, namely:

- Q1: What are the perceptions of third-year EFL students at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL?
- Q2: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL students' practices with regard to SCL?

- Q3: What are the perceptions of third-year EFL teachers at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL?
- Q4: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL teachers' practices with regard to SCL?

Each section engages with one of the research questions and discusses the related findings with respect to the existing literature and referring to Weimer's (2002) five tenets model of SCL.

4.1 Discussion of Students' Perceptions of SCL

This section discusses the perceptions of Algiers 2 University third-year undergraduate EFL students regarding SCL, based on the findings collected from the questionnaires and the focus groups. In addition to their overall views on the approach, the discussion aims to provide a comprehensive understanding and interpretation of how students view the approach as a whole, and Weimer's (2002) aspects of SCL, including power-sharing, the role of content, the teachers' roles, students' responsibility for learning, and the assessment practices.

The exploration of student perceptions is key as it illustrates the extent to which SCL principles are embraced, resisted, or misunderstood among them. Understanding these perspectives allows for deeper insights and better adaptive practices, which would lead to more effective implementation of SCL, as well as understanding and thus dealing with the potential barriers that may hinder its successful adoption.

The discussion of this section, as such, is structured around finding an answer to the research question: "What are the perceptions of third-year EFL students at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL"

The findings are examined in light of previous literature to identify key trends, challenges, and opportunities for enhancing student-centred pedagogical practices.

4.1.1 General Perceptions of SCL

SCL encompasses a range of values such as autonomy, engagement, and shared responsibility. Understanding how students generally understand and perceive the approach is essential for evaluating the effectiveness and feasibility of student-centredness. This part of the discussion therefore aims to reveal how and to what extent students understand SCL. It also aims to explore the preferences compared to the traditional approach, and reveal the potential challenges facing its implementation in higher education from students' points of view.

4.1.1.1 Understanding of SCL

➤ Informed Understanding

The data (chapter 3, p. 152-153) revealed that a considerable proportion of students demonstrate familiarity with the concept SCL and were able to articulate several of its core principles, such as autonomy, engagement, and independent learning. These students demonstrated an understanding of SCL not just as a pedagogical term but as an educational philosophy that encourages active participation and self-direction in the learning process. Such an interpretation is consistent with deeper framing within the literature, where SCL is considered not just as a mere pedagogical strategy but as a transformative model of learning that considers students to be active agents in their own learning (Weimer, 2002; Lea et al., 2003).

Focus group discussions (chapter 3, p. 158-159) expanded on these themes, with students suggesting SCL as a way of empowering the learning experience by supporting the development of students' voice, critical thinking, and academic self-regulation. A possible explanation for students' level of familiarity lies in their exposure to the concept in modules like didactics, as SCL is presented within as a key pedagogical term to be dealt with. That may also lead them to reflect on the approach's application within their learning setting.

➤ **Vague and Superficial Understanding**

Nonetheless, the understanding of SCL was not uniformly distributed. The questionnaire revealed that some of the students (28%) still reported unfamiliarity with SCL or associated it with vague or superficial definitions. While others appeared to conflate SCL with simply having more time to talk more in class or having fewer lectures. This reflects a gap between the theoretical conception of SCL and the level of clarity with which students can recognise and identify the practical feature of the approach. In the AHE context, where traditional, lecture-heavy models still dominate many disciplines, this lack of clarity is perhaps not surprising. When the approach is not consistently or systematically applied, students may struggle to sufficiently understand what it entails. As noted by Tagg (2012) and Kember (2009), without consistent and visible application across modules, student understanding of SCL remains minimal and potentially conflated with more performative or superficial changes in classroom interaction. Similarly, Kember (2009) suggests that if SCL is implemented poorly or vaguely articulated by teachers, students on their turns may misinterpret it as a merely stylistic unorthodox teaching style, rather than a structured and deeper one.

4.1.1.2 Preferences Between SCL and TCL

➤ **General Favourability Toward SCL**

The gathered data indicated that the majority of students (67%) have preferences towards SCL and viewed it as more interesting and beneficial for their educational experience. This positive attitude toward SCL was documented across both the questionnaires and the focus groups as students described the approach as more dynamic, engaging, and beneficial to their academic and personal development. These results are consistent with those of other studies (Weimer, 2002; Lea et al., 2003), which suggest that SCL is often positively perceived by students.

A key element that surfaced from the focus groups, which may explain students' inclination towards SCL, was their negative perceptions and criticisms

of TCL (chapter 3, p 159). They declared that they perceive the traditional approach as boring, disengaging, and lacking interaction. This dissatisfaction among students reflects that found in the literature, where TCL is often referred to as an outdated, tedious approach and ineffective in promoting a fruitful learning experience (Doyle & Zakrajsek, 2019; Tagg, 2019; Weaver & Qi, 2005; Weimer, 2002) (see chapter one, p 30).

The preference for SCL was not only grounded in its contrast with TCL, but also in the various benefits that students believed it brings. As reflected in the questionnaire data (item 33, p 157), students stated that SCL helped them develop several competencies, namely better academic achievement, increased critical thinking, better motivation, deeper understanding, etc. Students noted that the approach made learning more enjoyable, promoted autonomy, helped them build confidence, and fostered engagement. These perceived benefits may reflect what constitutes effective learning in the eyes of students, notably being active participants capable of directing their own educational journeys rather than passive recipients of information, and ones equipped with learning skills. That shows that their vision aligns with what SCL aims to achieve.

Another insight highlighting the positive perceptions towards the approach is students' belief that SCL should be introduced earlier in their educational journey. This sentiment was evident of growing awareness of the benefits that come with the approach, stating that the early implementations of SCL principles are important to avoid excessive reliance on teachers and better prepare them to be autonomous. This supports prior recommendations which advocate for the early implementation of SCL (Wungu, 2024; Zham et al., 2021).

➤ **Preference for TCL Among Some Students**

Despite the majority of positive perceptions of SCL, some students (33%) expressed a preference for the TCL definitions. The reason for that was mainly due to their familiarity with the approach and their perceived safer environment it provides. This preference was majorly noted among students who self-reported to be introverted, and who usually preferred to take notes and arrange their thoughts

in a less interactive and participatory environment. These students found the predictable setting of TCL more comfortable and aligned with their preferred learning styles. In contrast, the more interactive and highly participatory nature of SCL was overwhelming for some, misaligning with their preferred learning styles.

Similar findings have been noted in previous literature. For instance, Brown (2003) noted that some students often find TCL to be less intimidating due to its clear structure and less demand for active participation. Kaur (2014) asserted that students who are more accustomed to teacher-led instructions find TCL to be a more familiar and comfortable approach, most notably among those who prefer a more passive role in their learning process. As such, the findings of the study further highlight the importance of considering individual differences and prior experiences of the students when implementing SCL. This stems from the reason that not all students may immediately embrace the approach and be at ease with its more dynamic and participatory nature, which calls for a gradual and scaffolding process.

➤ **Desire for a Balanced, Blended Approach**

One notable and significant insight from the focus groups was the suggestion to find a balance between the two approaches, in a model that merges elements of both SCL and TCL. Those students advocated for an adaptive approach that considers individual differences in their readiness, subject matter, and educational context. This emphasises the need for a more tailored implementation of SCL, in which students gradually assume greater responsibility while still being guided by teachers. Such a balanced approach could be effective in addressing the resistance of some students towards SCL and further ensure that the transition from TCL to SCL is smooth and effective. In this regard, Al-Shehri and Alaudan (2024) argue that a balanced approach that combines the structure found in TCL with the engagement provided in SCL would enable students to navigate the transition without feeling overwhelmed. This balanced perspective can be relevant in the AHE context, as TCL is still highly adopted in many disciplines. A sudden imposition of full SCL without adequate preparation may

risk disengaging students or causing resistance. Kurniawati (2024) noted that SCL should be incorporated gradually, especially in contexts where traditional teaching is dominant; that would support students' confidence in their engagement in student-centredness and help develop their autonomy.

4.1.1.3 Perceived Barriers to Effective Implementation of SCL

While the majority of students favoured SCL in principle, it is worth noting that they simultaneously acknowledged significant obstacles to its effective implementation. Overcrowded classrooms, time constraints, limited access to authentic resources, and varying teacher commitment were frequently cited in both the questionnaire and interviews as barriers. These institutional and structural constraints were seen as undermining the possibility of fully realising SCL's benefits. The findings align with prior research (Weimer, 2002; Kember, 2009; Hoiden, 2017), which mentioned the same obstacles, stressing that they hinder the initiatives for applying SCL.

Beyond structural limitations, several students described a misalignment between their desire for more active involvement in learning and the actual practices of some of their instructors, particularly those who remained anchored in transmissive models. In several instances, students' expectations for more active roles were met with classroom experiences that remained teacher-centred. This was evident in the focus group discussions as students expressed frustration over missed opportunities to contribute with their knowledge or express their voice.

4.1.2 Power Sharing

4.1.2.1 Positive Perceptions and Readiness for Power Sharing

This study revealed that most students held positive perceptions regarding the tenet of power sharing in SCL (chapter 3, p. 142). The questionnaire results revealed that a large proportion of students appreciate the opportunity to contribute their own ideas, voice their opinions, and even challenge the perspectives of the teachers when necessary. This shows a willingness and inclination among students towards playing a more active role in the classroom and its power dynamics,

advocating for a more collaborative and equitable learning environment. This mirrors Weimer's (2002) assertion that SCL requires a redistribution of classroom authority, wherein learners are empowered to take greater responsibility and initiative.

Responses from focus groups reflected enthusiasm among students for having opportunities to contribute to their learning, indicating motivation and a deeper sense of engagement. Students' positive perceptions towards having more opportunities to decide about aspects of their learning, in addition to the observed increase in their engagement and excitement when they were given the freedom to choose topics for presentations or research projects, align with the principles of SCL (Weimer, 2002). For instance, Ryan and Deci (2017) suggest that when students are given a sense of control over their learning, they become more motivated and engaged; the freedom in learning is found to foster intrinsic motivation and deeper engagement among students. Furthermore, Weimer (2002) further supports this view by asserting that student autonomy and some freedom in decision-making can promote ownership of the learning process, leading to improved performance and satisfaction among learners. These findings confirm that power sharing, if implemented adequately, can foster ownership, motivation, and confidence.

4.1.2.2 Teacher Responsiveness and the Limits of Empowerment

Focus groups (chapter 3, p. 168) revealed that students' willingness to assume more power in the classroom is heavily influenced by teachers' receptiveness and openness. Some students recounted incidents where their attempts to complain about aspects of the courses, challenge the teacher, or take the lead in discussions were met with negative reactions, namely defensiveness, sarcasm, or dismissal by their teachers. These reactions resulted in a reluctance among learners to assume a more active role or offer their perspectives in the future. Such an incident underscores the conducive atmosphere required in power-sharing. Even if students are willing to engage more actively, their efforts can be diminished if met with a lack of support and hostile comments from teachers. This

confirms Keiler's (2018) study, which revealed that students' willingness to participate actively is dependent on teachers' attitudes toward power-sharing, showing that a dismissive teacher response can break students' confidence and negatively affect their engagement.

These dismissive behaviours were in fact observed in some of the classrooms, where instances of hostile responses from teachers towards students presenting alternative viewpoints were documented. Such reactions led to visible student resentment and disengagement. This highlights the significance of creating a supportive and open classroom environment for successful power sharing. And this is particularly important in SCL, as Soubra et al. (2022) concluded that effective implementation of SCL requires developing a positive dynamic between teachers and students. In such an environment, teachers are required to acknowledge and encourage student contributions and maintain a collaborative atmosphere.

This take also aligns with other existing literature that emphasises the importance of teacher responsiveness in SCL. For instance, Weimer (2002) noted that when teachers are open to sharing power and encourage student contributions, it can lead to a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. Conversely, when teachers are resistant and refuse to give up any power, it can hinder student engagement and reinforce traditional hierarchical structures that SCL aims to abolish (Freire, 1970).

4.1.2.3 Negative Perceptions and Resistance to Power Sharing

Although many students had positive views about power sharing, the data also revealed that some students held reservations or expressed discomfort toward such practices. These students described the expectation to speak up or take learning decisions as intimidating or overwhelming. This discomfort often stemmed from prior educational experiences that were heavily teacher-centred and in which students got used to passive roles.

Some students were uncertain about what to do with more freedom and did not know what was expected of them when given decision-making power. Others

expressed that they felt hesitant about making academic choices. Other students feared that criticizing the teacher or offering alternative points of view could lead to confrontations with the teacher or affect their grades. This reaffirms Brookfield's (2006) view, as he argued that in order for power sharing to work, students must feel safe, believing that their input will be received respectfully without harsh pushback or consequences. If this trust is missing, power sharing can be perceived as a liability instead of empowerment.

4.1.2.4 Balancing Power and Scaffolding Autonomy

To address the disparities in comfort with power-sharing, some students advocated for a balanced approach with gradual responsibility. In this setting, students can build confidence and competence with time before being expected to make complex academic decisions. This perspective is reinforced by Al-Shehri and Alaudan (2024), who argue that combining the clarity of traditional models with the engagement of SCL creates a supportive transition for students. Kurniawati (2024) also stresses the importance of gradual implementation in settings where TCL dominates, noting that scaffolding is essential for student success and autonomy.

Ultimately, students expressed positive views and seemed eager to assume more power in their learning setting, yet for that to be effective, there needs to be a gradual cultural shift within the classroom where both students and teachers feel comfortable and supported in their roles. Teachers must be willing to embrace student contributions, step down for their favour in some instances, and foster an environment where their perspectives are valued and learners are given more opportunities to voice their perspectives and decide about some aspects of learning. This not only empowers students and makes them more involved but also enhances the overall learning experience by encouraging critical thinking and active participation.

4.1.3 Role of the Content

4.1.3.1 Desire for Meaningful, Engaging, and Relevant Content

The findings highlight the majority of students' strong preferences for content that goes beyond mere memorisation and fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and active engagement (chapter 3, p. 145). Fitting with the principles of SCL, this emphasises the importance of not being limited to the confines of lectures, but also attempts to include dynamic, challenging, and connected to real-world contexts. Doing so would enrich a learning environment that is consistent with the constructivist view to education, which assumes that learners construct knowledge by engaging with and reflecting on content in a critical manner (Piaget, 1970; Vygotsky, 1978), thus adhering to the fundamental framework of SCL.

Students expressing a desire for curricula that integrates authentic situations and allow them to apply their knowledge to resolve context-specific and real-life issues is another indication that could help teachers design their lessons accordingly. This preference highlights the importance of relevance in education; when students see the connection between what they are learning and real-world problems, they are more motivated and engaged. The emphasis on problem-solving and critical thinking in content also helps promote the skills that are valued in today's demanding and challenging labour world. Khabeishvili (2023), in this regard, stated that real-world relevance drives students to develop key employability skills such as communication, teamwork, and reflective inquiry. Engaging in a content that promotes skills building for post-university work life is an important aspect in SCL that was appreciated by students.

Alternatively, the dissatisfaction expressed by students towards content that required extensive memorisation and a lot of abstract concepts highlights a main issue within the traditional educational approach, where the focus often lies on rote learning rather than meaningful engagement with the material. This aligns with the observations of Freire (1970), who critiqued the "banking model" of education,

where students passively absorb information rather than engaging with it critically and creatively.

4.1.3.2 Memorisation as Comfort Zone

Although the majority of students favoured content that fosters critical thinking and real-world application, it is important to acknowledge that not all of them responded similarly, as some displayed a preference for more traditional, memorisation-focused type of content. From the focus groups' responses, a minority of students indicated that they sometimes find problem-solving activities or critical inquiry overwhelming, especially when not accompanied by sufficient support. Although these views were not quantitatively dominant, they suggest that while content should aim to challenge students intellectually, it must also be structured in ways that scaffold learning and offer appropriate guidance.

One possible interpretation for this preference can stem from students' previous educational experiences, which in many Algerian educational settings have emphasised reproductive learning for examinations. As Biggs (1999) argued, learners who are accustomed to high-stakes, exam-oriented environments tend to develop a surface approach to learning. The primary goal in it is to recall information to pass the exam rather than develop a meaningful understanding to it. Another possible element can be linked to cultural aspects; Algerian educational setting in particular can be characterised with a high respect for teachers as authority figures and textual accuracy. In such environment, students may view the teacher as the authoritative source of knowledge, and memorising that knowledge is not only expected but respected.

4.1.3.3 The Importance of Goal Clarity

Another key insight from the findings highlights the importance of clearly defined goals and expectations in facilitating effective learning. Students consistently reported that understanding the objectives of a course enhances their ability to engage actively and see the relevance of the content. This is supported by research suggesting that goal transparency fosters student motivation, as it connects the learning process to achievable outcomes and personal aspirations

(Locke & Latham, 2002). Teachers, therefore, have a critical role in articulating the purposes and intended results of their lessons to create a focused and motivated learning environment.

4.1.4 Role of the Teacher

4.1.4.1 Preference to SCL Roles

The results of the study (chapter 3, p. 146) highlight that a significant majority of students favour instructors who adopt a facilitative approach, encouraging discussions, engaging in open dialogues, and providing meaningful guidance rather than merely transmitting knowledge. This preference sides with research indicating that teachers who act as mentors, rather than just lecturers, foster a more engaging and enriching learning experience (Hannafin et al., 1997). The roles also align with Weimer's (2002) conceptualisation of SCL, where teachers function as facilitators rather than sole authorities, promoting active engagement rather than passive absorption of knowledge.

Moreover, students indicated that they value teachers who listen to their concerns, provide emotional support, and demonstrate a genuine interest in their learning journey (chapter 3, p.165). This was particularly evident in responses from the focus groups' discussions, where many students highlighted the motivational impact of teachers who create a safe and encouraging learning environment. This is consistent with Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (2000), which emphasises the importance of teacher support in fostering student autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Additionally, the findings indicate that students feel more engaged when their teachers encourage open-ended discussions and allow space for student contributions. Those who had experienced such classroom settings expressed higher motivation and enthusiasm for learning, further supporting the argument that the teacher's role should be to create an interactive, student-driven learning environment (Prince, 2004).

Furthermore, the majority of students valued teachers who provided continuous feedback and individualised support, helping them improve their learning strategies rather than focusing solely on knowledge delivery. This

highlights the importance of constructive feedback as an essential component of effective teaching in SCL, as it allows students to refine their understanding and take responsibility for their academic progress (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

On another note, while the majority of students appreciate the guidance and support of teachers, they also voiced concerns about over-reliance on instructor feedback. Some students indicated that while feedback is helpful, they sometimes felt dependent on the teacher's validation rather than developing their own critical thinking and self-assessment skills. This raises an important consideration for educators implementing SCL, finding the right balance between providing guidance and encouraging student independence.

4.1.4.2 Implementation Gaps and Inconsistent Practice

The focus group responses (chapter 3, P. 172) on another hand revealed that while students recognise the benefits of teacher facilitation, they also noted that not all instructors effectively implement this role. Some students recounted experiences where teachers claimed to encourage independent learning but continued to dominate class discussions, leaving little room for students to express their thoughts. Others mentioned that while some teachers promoted dialogue and interactive learning, their expectations were unclear, leading to confusion about the students' roles in the learning process. This highlights the fact that successful facilitation in SCL requires clear guidelines, structured engagement, and purposeful scaffolding (Doyle, 2008; Weimer, 2013).

4.1.4.3 Valuing the Teacher as Knowledge Provider and Classroom Authority

Although the majority of student expressed their preference to the facilitative and guiding roles of their teachers, there were others who still hold a high regard for the traditional, teacher-centred roles. These students described their ideal teacher as one who clearly explains the lessons, illustrate with examples and provides the major points of the lesson. This indicates a preference for a traditional structured and authoritative knowledge transmitter in control of the classroom.

This perception aligns with a long-standing teaching paradigm that dominates many postcolonial and exam-oriented educational contexts, including Algeria. As Benrabah (2007) and Mebarki (2018) note, the legacy of the French academic model in AHE has contributed to a lecture-based, authority-centric classroom culture, where knowledge is often seen as fixed and held by the teacher. In this view, the teacher's role is not to facilitate discovery but to transmit essential content efficiently, preparing students for high-stakes assessments.

These findings indicate that not all students are ready to fully embrace student-centred philosophy. Some of them continue to link effective teaching with clear, structured content delivery, teacher authority, and well-defined classroom rules. These views further highlight the need for a flexible instructional approach that respects student readiness and allows for gradual scaffolding.

Ultimately, the findings suggest that students recognise and appreciate the shift from a teacher-centred to a facilitator role, yet the effectiveness of this transition depends on the teacher's ability to provide clear structure, consistent support, and a balance between guidance and student autonomy. Teachers who effectively communicate their expectations, provide meaningful engagement opportunities, and foster an inclusive, student-driven environment are more likely to see success in implementing SCL principles. However, when these elements are lacking or inconsistently applied, students may struggle to fully embrace the approach.

4.1.5 Responsibility for Learning

4.1.5.1 Embracing Autonomy and Self-Direction

The findings from the questionnaires and focus groups reveal that students generally recognise and accept their role in taking responsibility for their learning, a core tenet of SCL. Many students reported that they are willing to engage actively in their education, take initiative, and become more autonomous learners (chapter 3, p.149). The questionnaire data suggest that a significant portion of students value opportunities for self-directed learning, including conducting research, making decisions about their learning strategies, and exploring beyond the

prescribed curriculum. This is also reflected in the qualitative responses of the focus groups as students described proactive roles such as researching topics in advance and contributing to discussions. This aligns with Weimer's (2002) emphasis on shifting the responsibility of learning from the teacher to the student, allowing learners to develop independence and self-regulation. The sense of agency is also consistent with constructivist perspectives, which view learners as active participants in constructing knowledge rather than passive recipients (Paris & Paris, 2001).

Several students also reported feeling well-equipped and ready to manage their learning in an autonomous way. They explained their confidence to previous positive experiences, notably during the COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitated, even imposed a more self-reliant learning style. For them, forced autonomy led to a lasting academic independence. This aligns with Bandura's (1997) emphasis on mastery experiences in building self-efficacy, advocating thus for building more opportunities for independent learning. The findings also revealed that students who gradually develop autonomy and self-efficacy thrive in SCL environments as they become more confident, independent, and proactive in their academic pursuits

4.1.5.2 Conditional Embrace of Responsibility for Learning

However, while students expressed a willingness to take ownership of their learning, interview responses suggested that this transition is not always seamless. Some students noted that while they like the idea of autonomy, they feel unequipped or unprepared to handle the responsibility, particularly when clear guidance is not provided by instructors. The difficulty appears to lie not in a refusal to take responsibility, but in the practical and psychological readiness to assume it. This echoes the findings of Kirschner et al. (2006), who argue that novices require structured support to avoid cognitive overload in open-ended learning environments. Students who feel less confident in navigating content or managing the appropriate strategies may doubt their ability to take charge of their learning, even if they support SCL principles. Therefore, these findings once again

underscore the importance of gradual and structured transitions toward autonomous learning.

4.1.5.3 Resistance to Autonomy and Responsibility

It is also important to note that there were some students who reported discomfort with assuming responsibility. Their rejection stemmed from fear of acquiring incorrect knowledge and a lack of competence in independent information-seeking. Particularly, students expressed some concerns about their capacity to decide about the credible sources or construct an accurate and credible understanding without direct instructional support, indicating a lack of confidence in their academic self-efficacy. They even reported feeling overwhelmed by the level of autonomy when granted to them and expressed a preference for more structured guidance. This preference for TCL instruction aligns with the transmissive model, wherein learners depend entirely on authoritative figures for accurate knowledge delivery (Freire, 1970; Tagg, 2012). It also stresses that the shift toward student-centredness can be overwhelming when not supported by sufficient scaffolding.

Overall, students appear to value the opportunity to take ownership of their learning, but there are who still require structured support, clear expectations, and gradual scaffolding to build confidence in self-directed learning. This highlights the need for a balanced approach, where teachers foster autonomy while providing appropriate levels of guidance and support to ensure that students can navigate their learning journey effectively.

4.1.6 Purpose of Assessment

4.1.6.1 Grades as Primary Motives

The study revealed a significant agreement among students that grading remains a predominant motivator for their learning. This implies that for many students, learning remains tied to extrinsic rewards rather than internalised goals or long-term competence development. This supports the work of Brookhart (1997), noting that the majority of students perceive assessment through a grade-centric lens, and this view affects the effort they invest. Deci et al. (2001) indicated

that this type of summative controlling assessment tools, focusing solely on grades, may decrease intrinsic motivation among students, even if it is essential in SCL. While it is important to recognise the importance of summative evaluation, there is a necessity for reform in assessment policies at university to step down from the heavy grade-focused high-stakes format. In fact, Weimer (2002) emphasises that grading distorts learning priorities unless reshaped to reflect collaboration, reflection, and progression.

The significant effect of grading was also echoed during the focus group discussions. Students expressed that high-stakes exams have major effects on the rhythm and intensity of their academic efforts. Several participants acknowledged that their preparation and study habits are largely driven by final evaluation marks. They noted that these grades are the main determinant of their academic success. In this regard, the structure of assessment appears misaligned with the framework of SCL, where continuous, low-stakes feedback is central to the development of student, while the latter need to experience a mindshift towards more intrinsic-gearred aspirations for their studies.

4.1.6.2 Appreciation for Formative Assessment

Despite this, several students showed positive perceptions for alternative formative assessment methods. For instance, they expressed appreciation for peer feedback, self-assessment, and project-based evaluations when implemented. They reported that these methods made them feel more engaged, responsible, and capable of reflecting critically on their learning. This matches with Black and Wiliam's (1998) sentiment that students perceive formative assessment positively when embedded in classroom culture. Such sentiments point to a desire for more diverse and meaningful assessment experiences, which SCL advocates as integral to deep learning.

4.1.6.3 Concerns About Clarity and Consistency

A major concern related to assessment, which was revealed during the focus group, was the lack of clarity in evaluation criteria and inconsistencies in grading standards. Some students reported feeling uncertain about how their work was

being assessed, limiting their creativity and putting pressure to meet prescribed elements that the teachers set. This is a recurring problem found within the literature; For example, Killam and Heerschap (2013) indicated that the lack of clarity in assessing criteria is indeed problematic, especially when grading seems inconsistent. Sadler (2009) also confirmed that students frequently perceive the assessment criteria to be vague, too abstract or inconsistently applied. In this vein, Rust, O'Donovan and Price (2005) noted that students cannot take control of their own learning if they do not understand the standards for their success. Clarity in evaluation is further stressed by Boud and Falchikov (2006), who emphasise the need for transparent assessment criteria and structured evaluation processes in SCL to ensure fairness and reliability.

4.1.6.4 Institutional Constraints to Formative Practices

Students' answers also revealed some constraints that often limit the feasibility of formative assessment, such as overcrowded classrooms, rigid curricula, and time pressures. Many students recognised these limitations, expressing empathy for instructors who are unable to provide individual feedback or adopt more flexible evaluative approaches. These findings further emphasises the awareness among students to the institutional challenges hindering the implementation of SCL-aligned assessments.

Overall, students appreciate assessment methods that provide meaningful feedback, encourage reflection, and emphasise growth. However, to be effective in SCL environments, assessments must be transparent, structured, and gradually integrated to ensure that students feel confident and secure in the evaluation process.

In an attempt to give a response to the research question, Q1: What are the perceptions of third-year EFL students at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL? the findings of the research indicate that the majority of students hold positive views of SCL, underpinned by a growing awareness of its core principles. Students generally understand SCL as a pedagogical approach that prioritises autonomy, engagement, and critical inquiry, and they associate it with increased motivation,

empowerment, and academic maturity. Their perceptions generally reflect a strong endorsement of Weimer's (2002) five tenets, as:

- They seem to value power-sharing when teachers are open and responsive;
- they appear to favour content that promotes relevance and critical thinking over memorisation;
- they are motivated by teachers who act as guides and facilitators rather than knowledge transmitters;
- they show a willingness to assume responsibility for their own learning when provided with appropriate support;
- and they advocate for assessment practices that emphasise feedback, reflection, and growth rather than summative high-stakes grading.

Nevertheless, these positive perceptions coexist with an awareness of the challenges that hinder full implementation. Students highlighted inconsistencies in instructional practices, lack of transparency in assessment, and institutional barriers such as overcrowded classrooms and rigid curricular structures. While some students expressed confusion or limited understanding of SCL, particularly where it was only partially or superficially enacted, many articulated a desire for more systemic and consistent integration of its principles. Importantly, students also recognised their own evolving role in the learning process, with several noting the need for gradual scaffolding to develop the confidence and skills required for greater autonomy.

4.2 Discussion of Students' Practices

This section aims to answer the research question Q2: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL students' practices with regard to SCL? Understanding students' actual practices with regard to the SCL framework is fundamental to assessing the viability and depth of the approach's implementation within the educational context. While much of the existing literature on SCL tends to focus on pedagogical strategies employed by educators, this study shifts part of its analytical lens to students, whose behaviours, choices, and strategies equally shape the learning experience. The findings of the research are examined in light

of Weimer's (2002) five tenets of SCL, shedding light on how students actually engaged in power-sharing, content interaction, learning responsibility, and assessment practices.

4.2.1 Student Engagement in Power-Sharing

Power-sharing in SCL revisits the traditional classroom hierarchy by redistributing the extent of authority between teachers and students. The tenet advocates for shared decision-making and greater involvement in shaping and making decisions about the educational journey (Weimer, 2002). The study, as such, explored power-sharing by examining students' reported classroom experiences and actual practices, while paying attention to the opportunities presented to them to influence their learning experience. The results revealed a complex, context-dependent engagement with power-sharing among students, with a desire to engage and practical constraints.

4.2.1.1 Endorsement and Enactment of Shared Power

The majority of students in the questionnaires revealed a strong inclination towards actively participating in their learning, with a significant portion affirming that they aspire to contribute their own knowledge and share extra ideas regarding different subjects. This is further corroborated by focus group findings, where students recounted some learning experiences in which they voiced personal interpretations or challenged some notions presented by teachers, especially in more discussion-oriented modules such as with T5, T9, and T13. Observations indeed documented the enactment of agency and some decision-making in such modules through choosing topics, peers, and negotiating timelines. These classroom environments were identified as more democratic, where learners felt intellectually recognised. For instance, students frequently mentioned how they enjoyed "presenting different perspectives," "arguing a point," or "asking the teacher to elaborate or reconsider." Such practices clearly illustrate students enacting agency and participating in meaningful exchange of ideas. This participatory desire also resonates with hooks (1994, p. 40), who wrote "When everyone in the classroom, teacher and students alike, recognizes that they are

responsible for creating a learning community together, learning is at its most meaningful”. Thus, it can be concluded that, provided that the classroom environment is inclusive and teachers support autonomy, students move from endorsing power sharing to enacting it.

4.2.1.2 Conditional Openness

The observational data suggested that students’ contributions appeared more conditional. In classrooms where the instructor acted as a guide, invited students to share their opinions, or explicitly facilitated open discussion, students voiced their opinions, presented suggestions, engaged in collaborative learning, debated content, and constructed activities with their peers. This was particularly visible during role-play sessions or when students negotiated meanings during writing corrections. Yet in more traditional, heavy teacher-oriented classrooms, such behaviours were rarely observed. Students remained mostly silent, often taking notes or listening passively, even when directly asked to contribute. This silence and lack of participation are linked to the absence of an inviting environment. This emphasises Kumaravadivelu’s (1999) findings showing that classroom participation, engagement, and agency are shaped by power structures and discourse norms, which are governed by the teacher’s approach. He also indicated that students participate more when discourse is open and student-centred.

4.2.1.3 Students’ Inputs into Instructional Decisions

Regarding involving students in instructional decisions, contributions were mainly in the form of activity selection, some course content topics, choosing peers for collaborative works, selecting topics of presentations, and deciding on the fitting deadlines for homework. Observations showed active suggestions presented by students and an active role in trying to make decisions regarding different elements of their learning, but solely in classrooms where instructors actively included students in planning. Conversely, in more rigid or syllabus-driven courses, particularly lecture-based modules, students had little to no say in how classes were conducted. Notably, some students expressed frustration with this

lack of input, stating that it made the course feel irrelevant or disconnected from their needs. This finding resonates with Weimer's (2002) assertion that student ownership over content contributes to deeper engagement and higher investment in learning.

4.2.1.4 Questioning and Challenging Alternative Points of View

Power-sharing also entails questioning and challenging the alternative perspectives presented by the teacher. The principle behind this is to empower students to become critical thinkers and active constructors of knowledge. While questionnaires revealed that students would like to challenge teachers' ideas, in the classroom observations, moments of student questioning or challenging teachers' inputs were rare and almost exclusively occurred in classrooms led by teachers with explicit student-centred orientations. These outcomes parallel those found in Cook-Sather's (2006) study, claiming that students rarely critique and challenge authority figures unless structures are explicitly designed to invite dissent and feedback. The classrooms in which students dared to present alternative perspectives in this study were often structured around open-ended questions, providing feedback, and engaging in structured debate. Learners in these settings were observed respectfully negotiating meaning, critiquing interpretations, and proposing alternative points of view.

Power-sharing, in practice, is therefore less about a student's willingness and more about whether the institutional and interpersonal conditions permit it. Students may possess the motivation and capacity to assume agency and actively participate in decision-making. Nevertheless, without structural invitations, and risk-free environment, and a teacher-student relationship that is built on mutual respect and trust, students' voices often remain silent or marginalised.

4.2.2 Students' Interaction with Content

Within Weimer's (2002) SCL framework, the role of the content is redefined not as a mere prescribed knowledge to be transmitted, but rather as a catalyst for student inquiry, reflection, and application. The classroom

observations in this research revealed a contrast between student practices and engagement in discussion-driven, student-centred interactive modules and those in traditionally lecture-heavy, teacher-centred ones.

4.2.2.1 Using Content as a Catalyst for Inquiry

In student-centred modules (e.g., T5, T9), where there is less focus on content memorisation in favour of critically discussing and understanding information, a notable number of the sample students were observed to actively attempt to construct knowledge, build on prior understanding, and engage in peer collaboration with the aim of interpreting and assimilating new knowledge. This demonstrates their ability to take an active role in shaping content, when the design of the course allows them to, and engaging in meaningful learning experiences when provided with opportunities to do so. Modules that present the content in such a way exemplify what Vygotsky (1978) describes as zones of proximal development, where collaborative interaction scaffolds deeper learning. The findings also suggest that when the choice of content design encourages active participation, students are more likely to assume ownership over their learning and engage with content on a deeper level

A key observation in SCL practices was the number of students who took initiatives to expand their engagement with content beyond what was presented in the classroom. A significant portion of students reported and were observed researching additional materials, reading extra documents, or discussing topics with peers. From the observations, such behaviours were most often noted in classrooms where teachers modelled reflective thinking and encouraged exploration (T1, T5, T15). This extended engagement reflects principles of deep learning approaches, as described by Biggs and Tang (2011) and Entwistle and Ramsden (1983), where learners seek to integrate and apply knowledge beyond surface memorisation.

4.2.2.2 Coverage-Oriented Content Use

Conversely, in more traditional modules (e.g., T4, T14, T17), students adopted a passive role, receiving and transcribing information rather than actively

interacting with content. In such modules, students were silently following handouts and taking notes during lectures, with minimal engagement beyond listening and transcribing dictated information. These courses were characterised by a dominant teacher-centred lecturing and rigid adherence to pre-determined content structures, presenting students with limited space for agency or interaction. Even when given opportunities to ask questions or offer input, students in these courses often remained passive, highlighting the persistent TCL tendencies in these disciplines.

Classroom environments which present content this way are indicative of what Freire (1970) called the “banking model” of education, in which learners are considered as passive repositories of information, who are expected to store and reproduce knowledge rather than question or reframe it. In the same vein, Prosser and Trigwell (1999) consider these settings to promote surface learning, in which students prioritise rote memorisation and mechanical note-taking. This instructional model is deemed to prioritise content coverage over conceptual engagement.

These findings reinforce the assertion that student engagement with content is not solely a matter of learner disposition but is highly contingent on instructional conditions. According to Fredricks et al. (2004), cognitive engagement is most probable to happen when students perceive the content as meaningful and adaptable. When teachers presented their lessons in a way that invited students’ interpretation and exploration, the latter reciprocated with higher levels of cognitive investment and initiative. In contrast, when content was presented as static and predetermined, students were more likely to adopt surface learning strategies and disengage from deeper inquiry.

4.2.3 Students’ Practices with Respect to the Role of the Teacher

Within Weimer’s (2002) framework, the teacher’s role shifts from transmitter of information and the authoritative figure to a facilitator, guide, and co-constructer of knowledge. The observations in this study showed that students’ practices closely relate to the stance that teachers take. Whenever instructors

assumed a facilitative role, students behaved as active learners and co-constructors of knowledge. On the other hand, when instructors retained an authoritative, TCL role, students became passive recipients of information.

4.2.3.1 Facilitative Roles and Students as Co-constructors

In classes where teachers assumed a facilitative role, from designing tasks, initiating inquiry, and providing feedback, etc. (T5, T9, T10, and T15), students voiced opinions, challenged perspectives, formulated questions, and built on one another's ideas; for example, they initiated meaningful debates in T9's literature classes and the project design and defence in T15's methodology sessions. This can be evidence that environments that support autonomy foster initiative and responsibility among students (Reeve, 2006). They also align with Weimer's (2002) take that guidance and facilitation in the learning process enable learners to assume authentic roles in advancing the lesson.

4.2.3.2 Teacher-Centred Roles and Students as Recipients

Conversely, in teacher-centred modules (e.g., T4, T14, T17, T8), instruction was dominated by lecturing, sometimes dictated, and a strong focus on syllabus coverage. Students, in turn, adopted largely passive practices; listening, transcribing, and offering brief comments rather than interpretations, deep exploration to the content or challenges to the different takes. Even when asked to participate, initiative was minimal. This mirrors findings that believe that transmission-oriented conceptions of teaching elicit surface approaches to learning (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Trigwell & Prosser, 2004) and that controlling environments suppress exploratory behaviours key to SCL (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Overall, the findings indicate that students' behaviours and practices closely reflect the stance teachers adopt. When teachers work as facilitators, structuring purposeful dialogue, inspiring inquiry and critical thinking, and offering feedback, students move into active, meaning-oriented practices. Whereas when teachers follow a transmissive and controlling role, students revert to passive, compliant, note-taking routines.

4.2.4 Student Responsibility for Learning

Within Weimer's (2002) framework, the tenet of student responsibility moves beyond mere participation to include active engagement in the learning process, self-regulation, independent inquiry, monitoring their learning journey, and accountability for academic growth. In this study, and while there is evidence that students recognise the importance of taking charge of their learning, the depth and consistency of such practices also remain contextually dependent.

4.2.4.1 Responsibility Enacted in Autonomy-Supportive Modules

From the observations, practices reflecting high levels of student responsibility were noted in modules which supported student agency. For instance, within discussion-driven modules (T1) or ones that adopted PJBL (T15), students were seen independently preparing materials in advance, engaging in autonomous research, and collaboratively constructing the lesson through peer dialogue, thus demonstrating proactive behaviours. These practices indicate ownership of learning among students in addition to the urge to take initiatives and the willingness to go beyond what the teachers demand. Furthermore, in modules where teachers encouraged exploration and accepted diverse viewpoints, students assumed more active roles and were more eager to present their own contributions, suggesting that conducive pedagogical environments can cultivate responsible learning practices. These behaviours reflect self-regulated learning models, where planning, strategizing, and self-reflection are jointly fostered by task design and feedback (Zimmerman, 2002; Pintrich, 2000)

4.2.4.2 Reliance and Passivity in Transmission-Oriented Modules

The enactment of responsibility was, however, not consistent across all modules. In traditional teacher-dominated courses (e.g., T8, T14), students were frequently observed to be passive, silent, and disengaged. Students' dominant practices were characterised by reliance on note-taking and dependence on teacher instructions. Even when given some opportunities to contribute, most students did not display behaviours associated with active responsibility, such as questioning, synthesising, or extending content. These patterns reflect the enduring influence

of the transmissive teaching approach, in which students are conditioned to deem knowledge as delivered rather than constructed (Freire, 1970; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999).

4.2.4.3 Readiness and Skill Gaps

Focus groups revealed that several students acknowledged that while they valued autonomy, they often felt unprepared to act on it. They described being accustomed to directive teaching and lacking training in skills such as researching for reliable sources and critical evaluation of information. In this regard, student responsibility was aspirational but constrained by prior educational conditioning and a lack of explicit scaffolding. This complexity suggests that responsibility for learning is not merely a learner trait, but a product of cultural, institutional, and pedagogical contexts. As Biesta (2010) contends, educational responsibility must be cultivated among students rather than being assumed. Therefore, institutions and teachers are urged to design learning environments that support the development of autonomy as both a skill and a disposition. Without this support, responsibility remains as an abstract notion rather than a consistent practice.

4.2.5 Students' Interaction with Assessment

Weimer (2002) deems assessment in learning as not just a tool for assigning grades but also a pedagogical instrument intended to promote learning. SCL as such, broadens the framework of assessment to integrate formative and integrative purposes, aiming to guide students in their academic development through reflection and feedback. Moreover, instead of relying only on summative, high-stakes evaluations, SCL emphasises continuous assessments that are contextually relevant and student-involving. The analysis of the gathered data indicated that student behaviours related to assessment behaviors ranged from active engagement with feedback to passive receipt of marks, with notable differences observed across various modules and classroom environments.

4.2.5.1 Formative Assessment in SCL-Oriented Classes

From the classroom observation data, it became evident that students' engagement with assessment was primarily reactive. In classes where teachers provided detailed feedback, some students were observed discussing feedback with peers, seeking clarification, or attempting to understand how to incorporate feedback into future work, indicating an emergent practice of feedback-based learning. These practices align with Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's (2006) notion of efficient formative assessment, which considers feedback as an interactive process that informs self-regulated learning

4.2.5.2 Compliance Under Summative Evaluation

However, these behaviours were inconsistent. In many sessions, particularly in the more teacher-centred modules, students received feedback or grades without visibly engaging with them. There was no observation of questions, requests for clarification, and no evidence of attempts for strategic adjustment in future participation. This reinforces concerns in the literature that, without intentional scaffolding and student awareness of feedback literacy, its potential to enhance learning remains largely unrealised (Carless & Boud, 2018).

It is also worth noting that where in-class assessments or corrections were embedded in teaching, some students often responded in compliance. They were observed to mechanically note the right answers without reflecting on their misconceptions. This observation reflects what Carless (2006) termed as "ritualistic use" of feedback, where correction is acknowledged but not integrated into learning strategies. In such instances, students demonstrated limited self-monitoring and over-reliance on teachers' authority to validate correctness. There was also minimal peer-checking or independent justification of responses. This behaviour suggests underdeveloped metacognitive strategies, a finding echoed in the work of Sadler (1989), who argues that for feedback to inform improvement, students must first understand the standards and learn how to close the gap between current and desired performance.

Focus group findings indicated that students frequently admitted that their primary motivation to engage in tasks was the promise of grades. This extrinsically motivated practice of assessment reveals that while students may be aware of formative intentions, their actions remain strongly tied to summative structures. This pattern suggests a dominant culture of performance rather than mastery, where assessment is approached as an end goal rather than an opportunity for iterative development.

4.2.5.3 Alternative Assessment

In terms of peer engagement with assessment, practices remained underdeveloped. Although some students acknowledged the value of peer critique, especially in oral performance contexts, structured peer assessment was infrequently embedded within the classroom experience, and spontaneous peer-led evaluation was rarely observed. Students appeared unsure about how to evaluate their peers or how to incorporate such feedback into their own learning, which suggests a need for clearer modelling and support for collaborative assessment practices.

4.2.5.4 Students' Views on the Application of SCL

One of the main objectives of this research was to understand not only how students perceive the concept of SCL but also how they experience and envision its application within their academic environments. SCL, as an instructional approach, is not defined by a singular method but by the extent to which it empowers learners to take control of their educational experience through active participation, autonomy, and personal engagement. Accordingly, input regarding its practical implementation is critical in evaluating the feasibility, relevance, and effectiveness of such an approach within the AHE context.

Student responses revealed a notable grasp of the core principles of SCL. Across focus groups, students articulated a vision of learning characterised by interaction, collaboration, reflection, and learner agency, all of which align with foundational models of student-centred pedagogy (Weimer, 2002; Biggs & Tang, 2011). Their suggestions for implementation included PJBL, peer exchange, open

discussions, and classroom presentations. In line with previous literature that links active learning techniques to higher motivation and deeper cognitive engagement, these learning techniques were regularly characterised as more intellectually challenging and engaging than typical lectures (Prince, 2004; Bonwell & Eison, 1991).

Importantly, students stressed the need for early exposure to SCL, pointing out that the deeply ingrained implementation of TCL throughout their earlier education had created academic passive habits that were hard to break. This suggests that SCL may not have the same revolutionary power in higher education if it is not applied, especially to students who are used to directed teaching. In this regard, when active methods are introduced abruptly, students may resist autonomy and revert to compliance (Felder & Brent, 2009)

When asked to suggest practical reforms, students advocated for more flexibility and ownership in addition to integrating assessment formats that reward creativity, autonomy, and independent thinking. These recommendations, which emphasise learning as contextual, participative, and personally relevant, are in line with constructivist and experiential learning theories (Kolb, 1984; Dewey, 1938).

Students also identified several practical barriers to SCL implementation, including overcrowded classrooms, time constraints, and insufficient technological infrastructure. These structural constraints reflected common concerns in the literature about the institutional limitations to implement a supportive student-centred environment (Fullan, 2007; Biesta, 2010).

In response to the research question Q2: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL students' practices with regard to SCL? the findings reveal that while third-year EFL students at Algiers 2 demonstrate a willingness and readiness for applying the principles of SCL, the actual enactment of these principles in practice is contextual and dependent on teachers' choice of the approach and institutional conditions. Students largely engaged actively in power-sharing, content negotiation, autonomous learning behaviours, and formative assessment strategies, but such practices were most evident in learning environments where

teachers intentionally designed student-centred environments. Across modules that fostered open dialogue, encouraged decision-making, and promoted learner agency, students responded with increased initiative, collaborative engagement, and critical reflection, behaviours reflective of Weimer's (2002) vision of the empowered agentic learner.

However, this level of engagement was not consistent across all modules. In more traditionally structured, lecture-heavy settings, students often defaulted to passive roles, relying on instructor direction, mechanically completing assessment tasks, and demonstrating limited ownership over content or learning outcomes. These practices reflect the influence of transmissive educational models and underscore that student-centred behaviours are not simply a product of learner will, but are shaped by the design of the learning environment and the nature of teacher-student interactions. Even when students expressed a willingness to participate more fully in shaping their learning experience, such agency remained largely unrealised without structured scaffolding, supportive teacher facilitation, and risk-free opportunities for meaningful contribution. It is important to note in this regard that students' positive perceptions of SCL did not always automatically translate into consistent student-centred practices. The reason for that is that certain perceptions appeared to carry greater influence over their actual behaviours. For instance, when students perceived teachers as dismissive or harsh in their reactions, they became reluctant to contribute, fearing negative evaluation or ridicule, and this limited their willingness to exercise agency. Similarly, perceptions that creativity or critical input would not be fairly assessed discouraged students from taking risks or proposing original ideas, leading to compliance with teacher-led tasks rather than authentic engagement. This suggests that positive perceptions of SCL are necessary but not sufficient conditions for enactment, as students majorly shape their practices in accordance to teachers' behaviours and the teaching climate.

The findings thus suggest that students' capacity to enact SCL strategies is not innate but it develops progressively. This requires sustained instructional

modelling, employing content for developing critical thinking, consistent opportunities for practice, and a gradual shift in responsibility within a supportive and safe environment. Notably, the majority of students do not seem to resist SCL; rather, they often lack the tools, support, and enabling environments needed to fully engage with it. For SCL to be effectively realised in practice, it must be approached not merely as a pedagogical method but as a shared relational mindset to empower students; one in which they are gradually granted more responsibilities and support through scaffolded autonomy, formative feedback, and the creation of inclusive, participatory classrooms. Only then can the aspirational goals of student-centredness translate into tangible student practices.

4.3 Discussion of Teachers' Perceptions of SCL

This section aims to discuss the perceptions of Algiers 2 University third-year teachers regarding SCL, based on the findings from their responses in the questionnaires and interviews. The discussion is framed according to Weimer's (2002) five tenets of SCL. Through discussing teachers' perspectives with respect to previous literature, this section attempts to provide a deeper understanding of how they conceptualise SCL, their attitudes toward its implementation, and the challenges they face in adopting student-centred practices.

This section of the discussion thus attempts to answer the research question Q3: What are the perceptions of third-year EFL teachers at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL? In addressing this question, the discussion explores not only the extent to which teachers align with the philosophical underpinnings of SCL, but also seeks to uncover the depth of their understanding of the approach.

4.3.1 General Perceptions of SCL

4.3.1.1 Conceptual Understanding of the Approach

The analysis of both questionnaires and interviews uncovers that teachers' perceptions appear to be profoundly shaped by their pedagogical values, institutional circumstances, and individual teaching experiences. While many instructors demonstrated an awareness of SCL principles and a degree of

alignment with its objectives, the depth of their understanding and the degree of implementation varied substantially.

Across the research tools, teachers displayed broad familiarity with SCL (see chapter 3, p. p191; 197). Their responses comprised notions of fostering student autonomy, promoting critical thinking, and emphasising active engagement among students. According to these teachers, SCL is seen as a transformative approach that aims to reposition students in a central role of the learning process. For them, SCL is not simply about specific classroom techniques to follow, but rather about rethinking the relationship between knowledge, authority, and learner agency. For instance, some teachers declared that SCL redefines their role not as transmitters of information, but as guides and facilitators, co-researchers with their students of the learning journey. This perception resonates with Weimer's (2002) and Hoidn's (2017) foundational principles, particularly in terms such as role of the teacher, shared responsibility and power redistribution.

Despite this philosophical alignment, it was noted that there was a variation in how teachers clearly and comprehensively articulated the principles of SCL. While several teachers articulated a nuanced, philosophically grounded view of the approach, others demonstrated more superficial or fragmented conceptions. For some, SCL was reduced to practices such as letting students speak more or reducing lecturing time in favour of students' participation, without articulating how these techniques support broader goals such as learner autonomy, cognitive engagement, or the construction of knowledge. This limited framing reflects what O'Neill and McMahon (2005) describe as surface-level adoption, in which teachers embrace the vocabulary of student-centredness without engaging with its epistemological or pedagogical implications. The disparity was also evident in the open-ended questionnaire responses, where several definitions lacked coherence or revealed a degree of uncertainty about how SCL principles could or should be enacted within specific disciplinary contexts, an issue shared by Kember (1997),

who found that educators often struggle to translate constructivist ideals into concrete classroom strategies.

An important element that could explain this gap between the conceptual and practical aspects can be attributed to limited formal preparation, since only 18.2% reported participating in SCL-related training. As Fullan's (2007) notes, a classic implementation problem is when teachers endorse an approach but lack the procedural know-how to enact it. Similar to this, Prosser and Trigwell (1999) contend that a teacher's comprehension of teaching has a direct impact on the breadth of their pedagogical strategies; if that comprehension stays at a procedural level instead of a conceptual one, SCL runs the risk of becoming a collection of disjointed methods rather than a cohesive framework.

4.3.1.2 Attitudes Towards the Approach

➤ Positive Perceptions and Perceived Benefits

Teachers generally held positive attitudes toward SCL and recognised its potential to enhance student learning (77.3% saw it as beneficial). Many educators asserted that the approach can elicit more cognitive engagement, develop critical thinking, and foster lifelong independent learning skills, all of which are objectives of contemporary higher education (Barr & Tagg, 1995; Weimer, 2002). Several instructors indicated experiencing specific instances where the adoption of more interactive, participatory strategies resulted in improving students' motivation, participation, and the overall classroom dynamics. These experiences reflect findings by Prince (2004) and Biggs and Tang (2011), who argue that active learning environments result in deeper level understanding and more academic engagement from students.

➤ Persistent Doubts and Mixed Views

Despite these positive views, some teachers expressed concerns regarding the practical implementation of SCL. They noted several structural challenges that may limit the application of the approach, and the recurrent theme was the lack of institutional support. For instance, overcrowded classrooms, rigid syllabi, limited

access to instructional materials, and insufficient time were frequently mentioned as obstacles. Teachers expressed that they are bound to the structure of the academic system, which often leaves little space for experimentation, open dialogue, or student-led inquiry. These concerns emphasise the findings of Kember (2009), who stated that the implementation of SCL in higher education is often constrained by institutional traditions and logistical limitations. Under this same vein, Fullan (2007) underscores that without a fundamental shift at the administrative, cultural, and curricular levels, even well-intentioned pedagogical shifts are likely to stall.

➤ **Preference for TCL**

Certain teachers clearly expressed a preference for TCL, not out of refusal to SCL's aims and principles, but because TCL is perceived as clearer, faster, and more manageable and practical under their teaching circumstances. These teachers highlighted their comfort and familiarity with the approach, backing up their choice with the coverage demands, the very large classes, students' uneven readiness for autonomy, and their own confidence with the lecture-based courses mode. This stance shows again that teachers' conceptions and self-efficacy shape their approach (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). In short, where contextual constraints remain unresolved, conceptual beliefs remain rigid, and professional training opportunities are limited, TCL is experienced as the safer, more reliable default, even by teachers who are philosophically accepting to SCL.

4.3.2 Power-Sharing

This section highlights teachers' perceptions of power-sharing, showcasing a range of attitudes that span from support to conditional acceptance, and in certain instances, underlying resistance. These diverse perspectives are influenced by educators' instructional philosophies, organisational limitations, and perceptions regarding students' preparedness.

4.3.2.1 General Openness to Sharing Power

The questionnaire (chapter 3, p. 179) responses revealed that a significant portion of teachers expressed a willingness to involve students in aspects of the

learning process, which are typically the sole responsibility of instructors in traditional settings. They reported a willingness to encourage students to share their ideas, offer alternative perspectives, and contribute to course content. These responses indicate a recognition of the importance of a democratic classroom environment, in which learners are empowered and knowledge is co-constructed. These perceptions align with the principles of student-centredness (Weimer, 2002; Cook-Sather, 2006). There was also a recognition to the importance of creating a safe and inclusive classroom climate in which students feel confident expressing their views and providing feedback, which is considered as an essential foundation for participatory learning and engagement. The interviews data further provided more insights into these perspectives, as some teachers outlined a strong belief to the importance of disrupting the rigid hierarchal structure of the classroom and recognising the pedagogical benefits of shared power dynamics. These teachers (T1, T2, T5, T9). proposed power-sharing as a means to enhance student motivation, engagement, and sense of responsibility. They described instances where students were allowed to select their project topics, negotiate deadlines, or initiate discussions, all of which were perceived to foster ownership and deeper involvement in learning.

4.3.2.2 Selective, Low-Stakes Involvement

Nevertheless, the results also indicate that the extent and nature of power-sharing are still contingent. While teachers are generally more open towards students' involvement in discussions, or in negotiating assignments, fewer demonstrate comfort with relinquishing authority over fundamental curricular decisions, such as assessment design, learning outcomes, or instructional methods. This selective engagement mirrors observations made by Bovill et al. (2011), who noted that although co-creation is often encouraged, it is frequently limited to low-stakes aspects of the course, leaving the central architecture of learning largely within the teachers' hands. This suggests a limited adoption of power-sharing that may stem from doubts about students' readiness and capability to critically and meaningfully shape their learning journey.

4.3.2.3 Readiness Concerns

The hesitation around the full decentralisation of authority was reflected by certain concerns among teachers, mainly marked by their perceived view regarding the lack of student preparedness for shared decision-making. For instance, educators noted that they are sceptical about whether their students possessed the necessary self-regulatory, critical thinking, and academic maturity skills to efficiently handle a more autonomous role, especially for third-year students compared to the Master's level. These concerns resonate with the arguments of Kirschner et al. (2006), who suggest that inexperienced students may struggle without adequate scaffolding, especially when demanded to be self-directed and assume more power. As several teachers in this study expressed, shifting responsibility without proper support could compromise classroom coherence and lead to disengagement.

4.3.2.4 Role Identity and Comfort

On a related note, some teachers also recognised the psychological and emotional aspects of power redistribution and highlighted the internal conflict that goes along with any redefinition of professional identity. Sharing control for these teachers meant letting go of ingrained roles as authoritative knowledge providers, a change not readily embraced. This is consistent with Kelchtermans (2005), who asserted that pedagogical change is not merely technical but also personal, and that can affect teachers' self-concept, security, and status. Teachers' expressed discomfort about possible loss of credibility or erosion of academic seriousness reflects results by Fanghanel (2007), who notes that institutional norms often support hierarchical teacher identities, so rendering efforts at flattening authority emotionally challenging.

Thus, while teachers generally recognise the value of power-sharing, its implementation remains inconsistent, often contingent upon teacher comfort levels and student responsiveness.

4.3.3 Role of the Content

4.3.3.1 Conceptual Alignment with SCL Content

Examining the responses of the teacher questionnaire (Chapter 3, p. 182) shows a generally favourable attitude toward the SCL principle regarding the function of content. The majority of instructors rejected rote learning and factual transmission as efficient pedagogical strategies, instead affirming that they attempt to design lessons to promote inquiry, critical thinking, and practical application. In this regard, many teachers further acknowledged the importance of aligning academic content with real-world contexts and incorporating problem-solving tasks that engage students in higher-order thinking. This indicates an internalisation of SCL models regarding the content use and implies that many teachers' views of curriculum delivery align with the approach's principles. Such views resonate with Biggs' and Tang's (2011) study, which advocates for content that functions as a vehicle for cognitive engagement rather than as an end in itself. Similarly, Weimer (2002) contends that in a true student-centred classroom, content should be used to help students acquire critical skills, intellectual curiosity, and personal meaning.

4.3.3.2 Implementation Constraints and Coverage Pressures

Still, the degree to which these SCL views regarding the content are actually implemented seems to differ depending on the nature of the module and teaching environment. Several teachers agreed that while using content as a tool for intellectual development is important, practical limitations sometimes reshape content into fixed knowledge to be transmitted rather than explored. This perception was especially evident in content-heavy and theoretically driven modules such as Civilization, where there is a perceived pressure to cover a large syllabus, which frequently compels educators to resort to lecture-based delivery models. These findings reaffirm Kember's (1997) observation that even teachers who support constructivist models may revert to traditional instruction under institutional pressure, particularly in contexts where content coverage is prioritised over depth of engagement.

4.3.3.3 Student Readiness and the Need for Scaffolding

Teachers also point out a further difficulty regarding students' preparedness to interact actively with academic materials. Several educators said that students sometimes show up for class without the fundamental knowledge, critical literacy, or confidence needed to significantly challenge or interpret difficult concepts and complex ideas. This gap forced some instructors to adopt a more cautious, structured approach, delaying critical or reflective practices until a basic understanding is grasped. This concern calls again for the importance of Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the zone of proximal development, which suggests that learners must be scaffolded appropriately to progress from basic comprehension to higher-order skills such as critique and synthesis

Hence, while the conceptual endorsement of content as a means for skill development is appreciated among educators, its realisation remains contingent on the nature of the module, institutional flexibility, student preparedness, and curriculum design that supports depth over breadth.

4.3.4 Role of the Teacher

4.3.4.1 Shifts Beyond Knowledge Transmission

The findings from both the questionnaires (Chapter 3, p.183) and SSIs (Chapter 3, p. 204) indicated a recognition among teachers to the need to move beyond the conventional role of the knowledge holder. The majority of respondents indicated that they strive to create dynamic, captivating learning environments in the classroom and make sure that students are comfortable sharing their thoughts. This reflects a shift toward an expanded view of the teacher's role that moves beyond instructional delivery to include emotional and motivational support, which are central to establishing psychologically safe, student-centred classrooms (McCombs & Whisler, 1997). In SCL, where learning is about fostering autonomy, critical thinking, and interpersonal development rather than just absorbing information, creating such environments is fundamental.

4.3.4.2 SCL Roles Dimensions

Interview data (Chapter 3, p. 204) revealed deeper perspectives, revealing that many teachers have set their professional identity to be in line with SCL principles. Rather than acting as authoritative figures, they described themselves as facilitators, mentors, and co-learners, embracing a more relational and responsive stance. Teachers also mentioned actively listening to students, adapting instruction based on learner feedback, and inspiring engagement rather than controlling outcomes, showcasing the humanistic perspective and reflecting what Hargreaves (2000) terms the “emotional geographies” of teaching, where relational closeness, trust, and empathy are essential components of pedagogical effectiveness. In the same vein, another important dimension in teachers’ self-perception was their emotional role. Many teachers stated that encouraging students, listening to their issues and creating a positive learning environment were all crucial elements of their jobs. This again reflects the humanistic foundations of SCL, including not only intellectual but also emotional and interpersonal growth (Rogers, 1969; McCombs & Whisler, 1997). Teachers’ recognition of the need to support students’ psychological well-being and learning confidence also aligns with the work of Noddings (2005), who stresses that care, trust, and relational connectedness are essential elements of meaningful educational experiences.

4.3.4.3 Blended Roles

The responses also illuminated the presence of a blended approach to their roles, integrating both teacher-centred and student-centred strategies depending on the multiple variables. They indicated that their role is not fixed but dynamic depending on the context, such as student profiles, class size, the content complexity, and the module itself, etc. For instance, some teachers expressed the belief that some content requires direct explanation, particularly in theoretical modules. Nevertheless, even within these constraints, opportunities for student engagement and interaction should be maximised. This blended approach is often advocated for within the literature. For instance, Biggs and Tang (2011) argue that effective teaching often involves a strategic balance between guidance and autonomy, structured delivery and exploratory learning. The findings also align

with Vermunt and Verloop (1999), who posit that implementing an effective pedagogical approach is not necessarily a matter of choosing a strictly specific model but of adapting teaching to the evolving needs of learners.

4.3.4.4 Retaining TCL Identities

One noticeable insight from the data was that, despite the major support for SCL, some teachers continued to position themselves as the central actors in the classroom, thus assuming the traditional role. This was reflected in comments that framed the teacher as the primary source of knowledge or portrayed students as insufficiently prepared to assume greater responsibility. This suggests that the internalisation of SCL principles has not yet fully displaced traditional conceptions of teacher authority, thereby limiting the depth at which SCL can be authentically practised. As Weimer (2002) contends, effective student-centred teaching demands not only a change in strategy but a fundamental shift in belief systems about teaching and learning.

4.3.4.5 Structural Constraints and Professional Learning Needs

Teachers once again identified structural and institutional constraints as significant obstacles to reimagining their role. Overcrowded classrooms, limited instructional time, rigid syllabi, and insufficient institutional support were consistently cited. These challenges are well-documented in the literature as enduring impediments to pedagogical innovation (Kember, 2009; Biesta, 2010). Many educators also noted a lack of professional training in SCL, particularly around how to move from directive to facilitative instructional models. This finding is consistent with Keiler's (2018) argument that successful SCL implementation requires explicit professional development, which not only equips teachers with techniques but also supports the psychological transition toward shared authority and co-constructed learning environments.

In sum, third-year teachers at the University of Algiers 2 displayed a continuum of role orientations, ranging from teacher-centred to student-centred roles. Some embraced SCL, positioning themselves as facilitators and guides who prioritised student engagement, learner autonomy and responsibility, and

resonating with humanistic views. Others adopted blended roles, strategically balancing direct instruction with interactive depending and adapting to contextual factors such as class size or content nature (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Vermunt & Verloop, 1999). Other teachers, however, retained traditional TCL identities, framing themselves as authoritative knowledge providers and expressing doubts about students' readiness for autonomy, confirming Weimer's (2002) point that authentic SCL requires shifts in belief as well as method. Across teachers' practices, structural constraints and limited professional development emerged as decisive factors, suggesting that advancing SCL in Algerian higher education depends not only on teacher beliefs but also on structural reforms (Kember, 2009; Biesta, 2010; Keiler, 2018).

4.3.5 Responsibility for Learning

4.3.5.1 Support for Students' Responsibility

The analysis of teacher data regarding responsibility for learning revealed that most teachers, particularly in questionnaire responses, expressed strong support for encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning. They advocated for the notion that fostering student independence, reflection, and self-regulation is a critical goal of higher education. This aligns well with Weimer's (2002) framework, which argues that the redistribution of responsibility from teacher to learner is central to authentic SCL. Interviews added more clarification regarding teachers' expectations as they do want their students to participate actively, develop critical thinking skills, search for information, contribute ideas, and prepare beforehand. Such expectations reflect Weimer's (2002) responsibility tenet as she holds that responsibility is enacted through proactive behaviours such as pre-class study, idea contribution, and critical questioning rather than mere compliance.

4.3.5.2 Acknowledgement of Students' Capacity

Interviews (Chapter 3, P. 206) revealed that several teachers (e.g., T1, T2, T5, T9) articulated confidence in students' capacity to take charge of their learning as long as the expectations are explicit and support is provided. They reported a

pleasant surprise with students' abilities and initiatives when invited to research, bring evidence to class, co-construct lessons, and act on feedback. These perceptions play key role in promoting SCL as they influence the degree to which students are granted autonomy. According to Pajares (1992), educators' beliefs about their learners shape classroom practices. When teachers trust students' capacities, they are more likely to design learning environments that foster agency and initiative.

4.3.5.3 Doubting Students' Capacities and Readiness

On the other hand, other participants (e.g., T4, T11) exhibited scepticism regarding students' ability to take responsibility of their learning, describing many as passive, underprepared, lazy and expecting to be spoon-fed. Therefore, these students were deemed unsuited to increased autonomy. Such views constitute a barrier, as highlighted by Kember (2009), that instructors who perceive students as lacking motivation or foundational skills are often reluctant to relinquish control, fearing that autonomy would lead to confusion, disengagement, or superficial learning. Furthermore, Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) argue that when learners are seen as dependent or cognitively immature, teachers tend to default to teacher-centred methods, emphasising knowledge transmission and classroom control.

4.3.6 Purpose of Assessment

4.3.6.1 Endorsement for Formative Assessment

A significant proportion of the teachers' sample appeared to acknowledge the value of the formative assessment. Many teachers agreed, as revealed in the questionnaire data (Chapter 3, p. 188), that formative assessment should be incorporated in the learning process and that it has a role in adapting instruction to meet students' needs. Such views align with the SCL principle that assessment should be ongoing and feedback-driven rather than final and judgmental (Weimer, 2002). Also, several teachers perceived assessment as a tool for both determining learning gaps and adapting their pedagogical strategies. This suggests a recognition of its role in influencing the learning trajectory. These views reflect

the theoretical framework proposed by Weimer (2002), who positions assessment as a critical space for student engagement, feedback dialogue, and developmental support. In this regard, there is encouraging evidence that the pedagogical view on formative assessment is gaining ground among educators in the AHE context.

Teachers' endorsement of feedback-oriented assessment further reinforces this view. Questionnaire responses indicated major agreement that constructive and individualised feedback is a regular feature of their instructional practice. Interview data provided richer accounts of how teachers strive to highlight strengths, offer corrective input, and encourage self-reflection. This is consistent with Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick's (2006) influential model of formative assessment, which emphasises the dialogic and self-regulatory dimensions of feedback.

4.3.6.2 Constraints and Reliance on Summative Assessment

Despite this endorsement for formative assessment, several teachers reported in the interviews that they frequently had to rely heavily on summative, exam-based assessment formats, blaming that once again on institutional and logistical limitations, including crowded classrooms, limited time, and assessment-driven curriculum structures. Similar trends have been noted in other systems of higher education where performance metrics and accreditation pressures have led to a dominance of summative paradigms (Boud & Falchikov, 2006; Carless, 2007).

In answering the research question Q3: What are the perceptions of third-year EFL teachers at Algiers 2 University regarding SCL? The findings reveal that most teachers' perceptions of SCL are generally positive and conceptually aligned with its principles, despite being uneven in depth and practice. Many instructors recognised SCL as a transformative approach that fosters autonomy, critical thinking, and active engagement, and several even deemed themselves as facilitators, guides, and co-learners rather than authoritative figures. These views reflect a growing philosophical openness, challenging the Algerian traditional educational philosophy, shifting from transmission to facilitation and a recognition of the humanistic and relational dimensions of teaching.

Regarding the balance of power, many teachers reported being open to involving students in decision-making and discussing meaning. Moreover, they acknowledged the benefits of a democratic classroom environment. Yet in practice, they reported that this was often restricted to low-stakes aspects such as discussion topics or task formats, with teachers reluctant to share control over core areas like assessment design, learning outcomes, or course structure. Concerns over student readiness, academic maturity, and classroom management frequently constrained the extent of their willingness to advocate for shared power. Regarding the function of content, many endorsed content as a tool for fostering inquiry, critical thinking, and real-world application, but in practice, content-heavy modules and syllabus demands often led them back to transmissive lecturing. In terms of the role of the teacher, there was strong recognition of the need to move beyond transmission, with several teachers describing themselves as facilitators, guides, and co-learners, though others adopted blended strategies depending on factors as class size and nature of the module, while some teachers retained traditional teacher-centred identities due to student unpreparedness, familiarity with the approach, and fear of losing control. For the responsibility of learning, most endorsed student autonomy and self-regulation, with some reporting encouraging outcomes when students were trusted with responsibility, while others doubted learners' preparedness, describing them as passive or dependent, which reinforced traditional control. Finally, on the purpose of assessment, most teachers conceptually favoured formative, feedback-oriented practices and stressed the value of dialogue through feedback, but institutional pressures, large classes, and accreditation systems forced reliance on summative examinations.

Overall, teachers at Algiers 2 University perceive SCL as a valuable but challenging approach. Their beliefs reflect aspiration in their recognition of its benefits for autonomy, engagement, and critical learning. But at the same time, there was some hesitation and reliance on familiar traditional practices due to uncertainty, discouraging beliefs, and certain constraints. Advancing SCL in this context therefore requires not only strengthening teacher conceptual clarity and professional identity but also addressing the structural and cultural barriers that

limit enactment, ensuring that SCL is more than a theoretical term and becomes a pedagogical reality.

4.4 Discussion of Teachers' Practices of SCL

The effective implementation of SCL requires more than theoretical alignment; it necessitates shifts in pedagogical practices, classroom dynamics, and instructional priorities. This section offers a critical discussion of teachers' practices as observed, reported, and reflected upon across the various data collection tools. Drawing from questionnaires, interviews, and extensive classroom observations, the discussion aims to answer the research question Q4: Q4: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL teachers' practices with regard to SCL?

4.4.1 Power-Sharing

The observations revealed notable variations in teachers' willingness to share authority in the classroom. While some educators actively sought student input and promoted decision-making opportunities, others maintained a traditional, authoritative role, keeping control over most classroom interactions.

4.4.1.1 Endorsement to Bounded Enactment

Several teachers demonstrated a clear commitment to power-sharing by engaging students in decision-making, particularly in modules like Oral Expression, Literature, and Writing expression. Such instructors (e.g., T1, T5, T9) encouraged students to choose topics for presentations, participate in debates, and contribute to discussions. They also validated student input by integrating their perspectives into lesson content. For instance, T2 and T10 let students submit their assignments either in written form or via email and negotiate deadlines. T5 and T13 invited learners to choose the topics for debates and presentations. Also in ESP, T1 gradually repositioned herself as a guide while students build lessons using their own research. This aligns with Weimer's (2002) vision of power-sharing, where students assume active roles in shaping their learning experience. Notably, teachers were observed most comfortable inviting student voice where

the instructional risk was minimal and the stakes are low. The core designs and decisions regarding the courses and classrooms remained largely teacher-controlled. Questionnaire data indicated that 72% of teachers consult students, yet a follow-up question revealed that consultation mainly occurred in activity selection, content focus, and deadlines, with far fewer instances of shared decisions over methods, assessment formats, or course objectives. This, once again, mirrors Bovill et al.'s (2011) finding that co-creation is often limited to low-stakes elements while the central decisions remain teacher-held. The ability of students to take more power in such instances is contingent upon their preparedness and awareness, which require gradual scaffolding to their agency in the learning process.

4.4.1.2 Power Remaining with the Teachers

Conversely, other teachers exhibited resistance to power-sharing. In content-oriented modules, educators (e.g., T4, T12, T11, T17), teachers were observed maintaining rigid control over classroom activities, setting the pace, deciding about the content and activities unilaterally. Such teachers relied on lecturing, discouraged interruptions, and made minimal efforts to involve students in shaping lesson direction. For example, in the Civilization module, T4 explicitly asked students to hold their questions until after the lecture, leading to a passive classroom environment. Similarly, in ESP, students who did not complete their homework were asked to leave, reinforcing a teacher-dominated structure rather than an interactive, participatory one.

In the interviews, several educators acknowledged that while they conceptually supported greater student involvement, they rarely operationalised it due to time constraints, syllabus rigidity, or doubts about students' maturity and preparedness. This hesitation points to an uneven internalisation of SCL principles, where belief in student empowerment coexists with a reluctance to relinquish traditional teacher authority.

In fact, a significant challenge to power-sharing was teachers' hesitancy to trust students with responsibility. Teachers expressing concerns about students'

lack of preparedness or maturity, believing that they would struggle to manage greater autonomy emerged as a main inhibiting factor to power-sharing. This aligns with findings by Keiler (2018), who posits that many educators struggle to relinquish control due to concerns about maintaining academic standards and classroom management.

4.4.2 Role of the Content

The observations revealed significant differences in how teachers approached course content, with some focusing on fostering critical engagement and inquiry, while others adhered to lecture-based, transmission-style teaching.

4.4.2.1 Predominance of Information Delivery Content

Analysis of the classroom observation data revealed that content delivery continues to dominate teachers' instructional practices, particularly in modules characterised by a strong theoretical foundation (e.g, T4, T7, T14, and T17). These teachers frequently relied on expository lecture formats, often reading or paraphrasing textbook content with limited deviation. The teacher was the primary transmitter of content, with minimal opportunities for students to manipulate, evaluate, or extend the material.

In the observed transmission-heavy sessions, few chances were given for students to interact with information actively through questioning, problem-solving, or peer conversation. This reflects what Prosser and Trigwell (1999) describe as surface approaches to teaching, in which content coverage takes priority over conceptual change or deep learning.

4.4.2.2 Attempts at Content Relevance and Skill Development

The observation also noted that some educators (T5, T16, T9, T6, T2, T1, and T10) attempted to present content in a manner that encouraged students to connect it to their prior knowledge or real-life experiences. For example, T9 used literature books to spark debate and evaluation; T10 embedded problem-solving around cognitive psychology content (e.g., Gestalt visual interpretation) and linked theory to real-world scenarios (e.g., COVID-19 discussions); while T1 relied on a

flipped classroom by asking students to conduct research first and then co-construct lesson content in guided discussion. These instances reflect a strategic shift in content framing, aligning more closely with the SCL principle of content as a vehicle for constructing meaning. The practices also resonate with constructivist principles, which stress the value of experiential learning and contextualisation in making academic content personally meaningful and cognitively engaging (Dewey, 1938).

Moreover, the classroom observation mirrored, to a certain degree, questionnaire responses (Chapter 3, p. 182), in which teachers claimed that they design activities that stimulate active interaction (Item 13, Mean 3.40) and reflect real-life situations whenever possible (Item 14, Mean 3.36), indicating that SCL-consistent content framing is present in certain classrooms.

4.4.2.3 Content Framing and Learning Objectives

One of the key indicators of student-centred practices in the role of content is the clarity and accessibility of learning objectives. Questionnaire data revealed that most teachers reported clearly stating course goals (Item 11, Mean 3.66). However, from the observations, communicating course objectives was generally inconsistent. Learning goals were often stated implicitly or at the beginning of the semester and rarely revisited with many teachers. While others (T1, T9, T10) took the additional step of linking classroom content explicitly to the outcomes and used that to steer inquiry.

This suggests that while the formulation of content objectives is present, their pedagogical integration, as a shared reference point for reflection, goal-setting, or evaluation, remains not widely practiced. As a result, content risks becoming a static requirement that needs to be memorised rather than serving as a dynamic tool to scaffold deep learning.

4.4.2.4 Constraints Shaping Content-Centred Practice

Interviews revealed several barriers that contribute to the content-centric orientation of instruction. Teachers frequently cited limitations such as curricular

overload, time constraints. Instructors (e.g. T3, T11) expressed that they felt obligated to cover the syllabus and rushed to complete all modules before the exam period. These external pressures create a culture of coverage rather than deep comprehension, where content delivery takes priority over critical engagement or learner exploration. Moreover, some teachers (such as T3) reported uncertainty about how to redesign content in line with SCL principles, indicating a need for pedagogical training and curricular flexibility. Without institutional support for content reform, such as modular autonomy or interdisciplinary design, teachers may default to conventional models that are more manageable under existing constraints.

4.4.3 Role of the teacher

4.4.3.1 Persistence of Traditional Teacher Roles

In a number of modules, educators' practices remained dominantly teacher-centred, retaining the role of primary knowledge source and classroom controller (T4, T8, T11, T12, T14, T16, and T17). Their sessions were characterised by prolonged lecturing, minimal student engagement, and a clear dominance of the classroom power dynamics. In some sessions, teachers deferred students' immediate questions (e.g., T4: "Let me finish, then we continue with the questions"), and in others resisted learner input on content direction (e.g., T17: "No we'll stick to learning about theories... You won't tell me what I should teach"), reinforcing a hierarchical discourse. Such teachers perceived their responsibility as one of content delivery and classroom control, a view frequently echoed in their interview responses. This aligns with Kember's (2009) study, which provides empirical evidence from higher education showing that traditional beliefs about teaching persist across disciplines, particularly in content-heavy modules. This persistence in the traditional role can be rooted in different beliefs about teaching. Brookfield (2015), in this regard, highlights that many educators, despite being exposed to progressive theories, revert to traditional roles due to perceived institutional pressure and risk-aversion. He argues that even well-

intentioned educators often feel safer maintaining their identity as experts rather than embracing the vulnerability that comes with relinquishing classroom control.

4.4.3.2 The Emergence of a Blended Model

The emergence of a blended pedagogical model from the observation of the teachers' practices illustrates an adaptive and hybrid role, wherein educators (T1, T2, T3, T7, T10, T11, T15) alternate between direct input, especially when introducing new or theoretical content, and between student-centred strategies, such as group tasks, debates, problem-solving, etc. This transitional role reflects what Kember (1997) refers to as a conception shift, where instructors shift between information transmission and learning facilitation, often without fully committing to either. In such contexts, student-centred practices are often adjusted to fit the constraints of fixed syllabi, large classes, or summative assessment models, rather than transforming the learning environment as a whole.

In this regard, it is to note that blended practices can signal transitional stages, where teachers are experimenting with new potentials, trying to engage students without disrupting course structure or facing institutional challenges (Fanghanel, 2009). Some may also be responding to student expectations, especially where learners remain accustomed to hierarchical classroom dynamics and passive learning roles. Choosing to assume a blended role also can be interpreted as an attempt to balance structure and flexibility. In this view, blending direct instruction with student-centred practices is not a deficiency but a pedagogically strategic choice which enables teachers to maintain conceptual clarity and content accuracy and institutional expectations while also fostering learner engagement and autonomy. This balancing act aligns with what Weimer (2002) describes as a recalibration of roles, where the teacher still advances in the curriculum but in ways that promote student ownership of learning.

4.4.3.3 Assuming a Student-Centred Role

A subset of teachers (T5, T6, T9, T13) was consistently observed to assume a role that most closely aligns with Weimer's (2002) vision of the teacher as a facilitator of learning. These educators not only encouraged student contributions

but also created learning environments in which inquiry, collaboration, and self-direction were embedded in almost every classroom routine. Their classes featured student-led discussions, project-based tasks, and problem-solving activities, often with real-time formative feedback. This resulted in higher levels of engagement, as students were observed navigating content with a sense of autonomy and shared responsibility.

The adoption of dominantly student-centred roles could be driven by a philosophical commitment to learner autonomy and inquiry-based learning. These teachers seemed to act from their belief in the value of student agency and co-construction of knowledge, aligning closely with Weimer's (2002) vision. One factor that could facilitate their adoption of these roles is the nature of the module they teach, as they likely teach in disciplines such as oral expression, written expression, or literature, which are more compatible with interpretive, discussion-oriented, and learner-driven approaches.

4.4.4 Responsibility for Learning

4.4.4.1 Practices that Foster Shared Responsibility

A notable group of teachers in the study demonstrated pedagogical practices that advanced the principle of shared responsibility in learning, a core tenet of student-centred philosophy (Weimer, 2002). Rather than positioning themselves as sole authorities, these instructors (T1, T3, T5, T6, T10, T13, and T15) actively encouraged students to assume agency in their academic journey through practices that foster self-regulation, reflective inquiry, and participatory learning. Observational data provided evidence that these teachers were deliberately cultivating environments in which responsibility was distributed between teacher and learner, thus fostering learning autonomy.

For instance, practices such as encouraging students to prepare and explore content independently reflect this shift and exemplify self-regulated learning instances (Zimmerman, 2002). It argues that students must be guided to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning in order to achieve academic autonomy. To give more illustration, teachers like T5 and T10 explicitly scaffolded these

processes by modelling metacognitive strategies, encouraging self-assessment, and promoting time management and peer discussion. Their classrooms functioned as training grounds for independent academic behaviour. Moreover, practices that encouraged student responsibility extended beyond individual learning habits to include shared decision-making about course content, classroom norms, and task negotiation.

Within the Algerian higher education context, that are traditionally characterised by teacher authority and student passivity (Benrabah, 2007; Amrani, 2016), these practices reveal that some instructors are challenging cultural and institutional norms by creating environments where students learn to take initiative and responsibility for their progress.

4.4.4.2 Teacher-Assumed Responsibility

In contrast to the teachers who promoted shared responsibility, a subset of instructors (T4, T8, T11, T14, T16, T17) were observed to adopt pedagogical philosophies that largely emphasised teacher authority as the central organising figure of the classroom. These teachers assumed primary control over instructional decisions and lesson transmission. Lessons were predominantly characterised by expository delivery, where students were positioned as passive recipients expected to listen, take notes, and replicate content.

Such classroom environments are another precursor to Freire's (1970) notion of the banking mode of education, in which knowledge is deposited by the teacher and retrieved by the student with little opportunity for critical engagement or transformation. While these approaches may appear efficient for managing time and coverage in densely packed curricula, they are considered as opposites to the core principles of student-centredness, which prioritise autonomy, inquiry, and active participation (Weimer, 2002).

These findings are reflective of transmissive controlling pedagogies that remain entrenched in many educational contexts. Biggs and Tang (2011) argue that such models may encourage surface learning, where students prioritise memorisation and reproduction at the expense of deep understanding and critical

thinking. The consequence is often a classroom culture marked by low agency, limited metacognitive engagement, and diminished motivation.

Interviews with the teachers revealed a recurring belief that students were not sufficiently prepared for autonomous learning. They cited low motivation, weak foundational skills, or passive academic habits as barriers to effective student participation. This shows that teachers' beliefs about student readiness strongly influence their willingness to share responsibility. The students' lack of motivation or unpreparedness reflects what Pajares (1992) terms belief-driven practice, as teaching approaches are often anchored more in teachers' perceptions than in evidence of what fosters learning. These perceptions also reflect findings from McCombs and Miller (2007), who identified teacher beliefs about student readiness as a critical factor shaping the degree to which responsibility is shared in practice. This explains why the classroom culture observed in such cases often displayed low agency, reduced metacognition, and minimal intrinsic motivation, all leading to surface learning (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

4.4.5 Purpose of Assessment

4.4.5.1 Integration of Formative Assessment

Several teachers enacted assessment as an ongoing, supportive process between teacher and student. Their practices reflected the core principles of formative assessment as advocated by Black and Wiliam (1998), who argue that assessment becomes formative when evidence of learning is used to adapt teaching and learning to meet students' needs.

These educators (T1, T2, T5, T6, T7, T9, T10, T13, and T15) integrated assessment strategies that allowed for continuous monitoring of student progress throughout the semester. Observations indicated the use of questioning, open-ended discussions, reflective assignments, and formative quizzes, not merely as tools for giving grades, but as ways for reporting students' needs and areas of progress to them. In addition, the practice of providing individualised, constructive feedback was aligned with the notion of assessment for learning, where students are guided toward self-awareness and improvement.

Such feedback practices do not merely inform students of their academic standing; they also engage learners in dialogue, promote metacognitive skills, and support self-regulated learning (Sadler, 1989). Furthermore, the inclusion of alternative assessment methods, such as peer and self-assessment, represents a deliberate effort to share responsibility and develop learners' evaluative judgment, a key aspect of student agency in assessment (Boud & Falchikov, 2006).

4.4.5.2 Reliance on Summative Assessment

Conversely, other teachers (T3, T4, T8, T11, T12, T14, and T17) displayed a full reliance on summative assessment, typically in the form of examinations at the end of the semester. Classroom observations confirmed that assessment in these contexts was largely detached from the ongoing instructional process. Feedback was largely general, with limited opportunities for students to engage in reflection or revision based on their assessment outcomes.

These practices underscore what Shepard (2000) describes as the measurement model of assessment, where testing is used for selection and decision about passing or failure, rather than as a means of enhancing learning. While summative assessments play an undeniable role in institutional accountability, their overemphasis often leads to a mindset of teaching to the test, narrowing the curriculum, and suppressing student creativity and critical thinking (Harlen, 2007).

This section has attempted to answer the fourth research question, Q4: What are Algiers 2 University's third-year EFL teachers' practices with regard to SCL? The study addressed the question through multiple dimensions, namely, power-sharing, role of content, teacher roles, responsibility for learning, and role of assessment. The analysis of teachers' practices at the University of Algiers 2 revealed a continuum of enactment ranging from traditional, teacher-centred approaches to predominantly student-centred practices, with several teachers occupying a blended, adaptive middle ground. Across the five dimensions of SCL, clear evidence emerged of both innovation and resistance.

On the balance of power, some teachers actively sought to build a democratic classroom dynamics through shared decision-making and student voice,

even if power-sharing was most evident in low-stakes aspects of teaching such as topic selection and deadlines, while assessment, curriculum design, and methods largely remained with the teacher. With respect to the role of content, several teachers still relied heavily on information transmission, especially in theory-driven modules, but other teachers strategically reframed content as a tool for inquiry, debate, research, and real-world application, illustrating efforts to align with constructivist principles despite curricular overload.

Regarding the role of the teacher, practices reflected three main orientations; persistence of transmissive, authoritative teacher-centred roles; adoption of blended strategies to balance structure with autonomy; and, in a smaller but significant group, dominant commitment to being a guide, facilitator, collaborator, and promoter to student agency. The enactment of responsibility for learning had a similar take as some teachers scaffolded autonomy and self-regulation through metacognitive strategies and shared decision-making, while others maintained strict control, justifying their stance with deficit views of students as unprepared or passive. Finally, in terms of the purpose of assessment, a notable group integrated formative strategies, feedback, and even peer-assessment to support learning, but others relied almost exclusively on summative exams, reinforcing accountability over development.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that while many teachers aspire to operationalise SCL principles, practices remain partial, inconsistent, and shaped by beliefs, contexts, and structural constraints. Teachers' willingness to adopt student-centred roles is influenced not only by philosophical views but also by disciplinary demands, class size, syllabus rigidity, and perceptions of student readiness. Institutional pressures, particularly curriculum coverage and exam-based evaluation systems, further sustain transmissive practices. Yet, the emergence of blended and facilitative models suggests that a shift towards SCL is possible. Some educators are already observed to be challenging hierarchical traditions and cultivating classrooms of inquiry, autonomy, and collaboration. Ultimately, the practices observed confirm that advancing SCL in Algerian higher

education requires more than individual teacher initiative to include certain reforms, professional development, and an institutional culture that pushes for experimentation, scaffolds student readiness, and balances accountability with meaningful learning.

These findings also reinforce the idea that teachers' perceptions strongly influence their classroom practices. As Pajares (1992) argues, educators' beliefs about teaching and learning act as powerful filters that shape instructional decisions. In this study, for instance, teachers who perceived the approach favourably and students as capable of autonomy were more likely to enact facilitative, student-centred strategies, while those who doubted the effectiveness of the approach and student readiness tended to revert or stick to transmissive models. This aligns with Prosser and Trigwell's (1999) contention that teachers' conceptions of teaching directly affect the quality and depth of their pedagogical practices.

Overall, the section concludes that the adoption of SCL remains partial and constrained. Institutional barriers, teachers' beliefs, and lack of professional development continue to hinder full implementation. A shift toward authentic SCL will require structural support, pedagogical training, and a reconceptualisation of both teacher and student roles.

4.5 Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study, which explored the extent to which SCL is perceived and practised by teachers and students in the Algerian university context, have revealed both promising developments and persistent challenges. The data drawn from multiple sources, including questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations, indicated that while SCL is widely regarded as pedagogically sound and beneficial in theory, its actual implementation remains uneven, situational, and often constrained by structural, cultural, and pedagogical factors. This section attempts to propose a set of practical and strategic recommendations, grounded in these findings and interpreted through the lens of Weimer's (2002) five core tenets of SCL.

Rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all model, the recommendations presented here are contextually sensitive and pragmatically oriented, aiming to enable a sustainable transition toward meaningful SCL implementation.

4.5.1 Normalising and Advancing Power-Sharing

The study revealed that while many teachers were open to power-sharing, their enactment was often limited to low-stakes areas like topic choice or activity selection, leaving core instructional decisions under teacher control. This mirrors Bovill et al.'s (2011) finding that co-creation is often bounded within safe zones. To normalise power-sharing, it must be embedded as an expected pedagogical practice, not an optional experiment. Moreover, teachers in this study frequently expressed doubts about student readiness for autonomy, echoing Kirschner et al.'s (2006) caution that inexperienced learners may struggle with unscaffolded decision-making.

To advance meaningful SCL, power-sharing must be normalised as a pedagogical expectation rather than an optional practice. As Weimer (2002) stresses, redistributing authority is central to student-centred teaching, but it requires both philosophical commitment and structural support. For the Algerian context, this implies a gradual, scaffolded approach to sharing power. Teachers might begin by involving students in negotiating classroom norms, selecting among assignment options, or suggesting supplementary materials, before progressing to deeper collaboration in setting learning objectives or contributing to assessment criteria. Such staged, progressive, and organised involvement helps address teachers' concerns about readiness while also building students' confidence and competence in decision-making.

Institutionally, Algiers 2 University could attempt to embed co-creation frameworks into its policy; for example, by requiring that course syllabi include a section on student contributions and suggestions to the learning design. Some other initiatives, like creating student-teacher consultation meetings or project-based modules co-planned with students, would gradually shift classroom culture from hierarchical to participatory. Especially in a context like Algeria, where teacher

authority is ingrained from earlier stages of learning (Benrabah, 2007; Amrani, 2016), such institutional backing is essential to legitimise power-sharing and encourage hesitant educators to adopt it without fear of losing authority or academic seriousness.

Ultimately, normalising power-sharing in Algerian higher education requires seeing it not as a threat to teacher expertise but as a strategic resource for engagement. When students are invited to co-own their learning environment, they are more motivated, accountable, and invested in their progress. For teachers, this does not mean abandoning authority but reframing it as shared leadership, where guidance and student agency work in tandem to create more democratic and effective learning environments.

4.5.2 Reshaping Content as a Vehicle for Thinking

The findings further reveal that for many teachers, content is still considered largely as mere static information to be transmitted and memorised. This reflects what Prosser and Trigwell (1999) describe as surface approaches to teaching, which prioritise coverage over deep understanding. In turn, this defies the constructivist premise of student-centredness, which treats content as a medium through which students engage in critical thinking, deep inquiry, and knowledge making. While some teachers did attempt to design and incorporate interactive, problem-based activities, these efforts were inconsistently practised and often limited to modules seen as practical.

For Algerian universities, this requires first rethinking curricular design. Overloaded syllabi that pressure teachers to cover material should be reshaped to focus on promoting critical thinking and advocating for building knowledge while not neglecting key concepts that unlock deeper disciplinary understanding (Meyer & Land, 2003). Furthermore, teachers must be supported to redesign activities so that even theoretical modules, such as Civilization or Linguistics, are taught through debates, problem-solving, or real-world case studies. For example, linking historical content to contemporary sociopolitical issues and getting students to reflect on them could help them see relevance and apply critical thinking.

Similarly, embedding interdisciplinary projects would allow students to synthesise knowledge across fields. Institutional flexibility is thus needed; unless syllabi are adapted to permit depth over covering, even willing teachers will remain constrained to transmissive delivery.

It is thus essential that all content areas, regardless of the nature of the module, be reconceptualised to some extent as opportunities for cultivating intellectual engagement and critical thinking in order to better achieve the learning goals. This entails a readjustment of curricular design to emphasise learning skills such as analysis, synthesis, application, and debate. Teachers should be supported in designing activities that require students to build on prior knowledge, collaborate in solving open-ended problems, and reflect on their learning pathways.

To this end, syllabus flexibility and outcome-based design must be advocated for. This will give teachers the pedagogical opportunities to experiment with innovative practices that align with SCL principles. While it is important for students to engage with a sufficient body of content to develop subject-matter competence, the main objectives should not be the slavish coverage of information. Instead, content should serve a pedagogical purpose to stimulate critical thinking, foster problem-solving, and provide opportunities for applied learning.

4.5.3 Redefining the Role of the Teacher

Despite widespread recognition among teachers of the theoretical value of SCL, the findings of this study demonstrated differences in how the role of the teacher is enacted. While some educators embraced facilitative roles, positioning themselves as mentors, guides, and co-learners, others continued to view themselves primarily as knowledge transmitters and classroom authorities. This reflects what Brookfield (2015) calls the comfort of expertise, where teachers go back to the safety of transmissive practices, usually due to institutional pressures, content-heavy curricula, or fear of losing control. Similarly, Kember (2009) provided evidence that such traditional conceptions of teaching remain resilient across higher education, particularly in contexts dominated by exams and rote

learning. In Algeria, this persistence is reinforced by long-standing cultural expectations of the teacher as the unquestioned authority, as well as structural systems that reward content delivery over active learning (Amrani, 2016).

To address this gap, it is imperative to initiate a redefinition of the teacher's role. This begins with ongoing professional development that goes beyond technique to focus on critical reflection on pedagogical identity. As Keiler (2018) notes, adopting SCL requires not only new methods but also a psychological shift in how teachers perceive themselves and their responsibilities. Such reflection would help teachers move from being content deliverers to becoming co-constructors of knowledge, paying attention to scaffolding dialogue, inquiry, and collaborative problem-solving.

Institutional recognition and support through addressing teachers' demands, such as reduced workload and providing classes with fewer students, would further encourage pedagogical risk-taking. In doing so, teachers can begin to redefine themselves as co-constructors of knowledge, scaffolding inquiry and collaboration while maintaining enough room to address enough content and paying attention to different students' needs. Beyond incentives, redefining the teacher's role also requires structural opportunities for experimentation. Teachers should be granted greater curricular flexibility to adapt modules, experiment with flipped classrooms, or introduce problem-based learning tasks without being fixed to a rigid syllabus that must be covered. As Biesta (2010) argues, pedagogical innovation is only sustainable when institutions allow teachers to teach for learning rather than teach for coverage.

In the Algiers 2 University context, this could take the form of a pilot programme with certain modules, where teachers are encouraged to test SCL methods and shift and experiment with new roles, document their practices, and share outcomes at the end. Such initiatives could encourage teachers to shift their assumed roles and gradually build evidence-based data, showing other teachers that facilitative roles can thrive under the same module.

4.5.4 Structuring Student Autonomy and Responsibility

One of the most significant findings of this study is students' uneven readiness to assume responsibility for their own learning. While many participants expressed enthusiasm for autonomy, others, particularly those accustomed to TCL, reacted with discomfort, anxiety, or even confusion when confronted with expectations of self-regulation and agency. This reflects Weimer's (2002) argument that redistributing responsibility for learning is central to SCL, but also one of its most challenging aspects. Responsibility cannot be assumed as a natural innate capacity; it must be deliberately scaffolded. As Zimmerman (2002) notes, self-regulated learning develops through explicit instruction in metacognitive strategies such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's progress. Without such scaffolding, learners risk becoming disengaged or overwhelmed when asked to manage autonomy prematurely.

To address this, Algerian universities should introduce and promote dedicated modules or integrated sessions on academic and learning skills, particularly in the early undergraduate years. These modules could train students in metacognition, time management, critical thinking, and self-assessment skills that are necessary for autonomous learning. For example, dedicated sessions could guide students on how to prepare for lectures, undertake efficient research from reliable sources, and plan revision schedules. Learning these skills can help students be more confident in their ability to assume responsibility for their learning.

Teachers can further support autonomy by gradually involving students in co-constructing learning goals. Instead of simply dictating objectives, instructors might begin courses with collaborative discussions about expectations, skills to be developed, and approaches to classroom dialogue. Over time, students can be engaged in negotiating topics, setting deadlines, or even contributing to assessment criteria. This would reduce anxiety and build student confidence, echoing aspects of Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development, where learners

can handle increasing responsibility when supported through appropriate scaffolding.

Finally, Algerian students have often been accustomed to hierarchical teacher-student relationships (Benrabah, 2007; Amrani, 2016), where responsibility is framed as obedience rather than agency. Universities could therefore foster a student partnership beyond individual classrooms; for example, through peer mentoring activities, student-led study groups, or student representation in curriculum committees. Such practices would reinforce the idea that responsibility is not limited to individual study habits but extends to shared ownership of the learning process at both classroom and institutional levels.

4.5.5 Reclaiming Assessment as Learning

While a portion of teachers employed formative, developmental assessments and offered constructive feedback, the majority continued to rely almost exclusively on summative evaluations in the form of final exams. This approach reinforces passivity, discourages experimentation, and marginalises the processual nature of learning. This reliance on high-stakes testing reinforces what Shepard (2000) calls the measurement model of assessment, where evaluation serves primarily as a tool for ranking and selection rather than for enhancing learning. Such approaches tend to encourage surface learning (Biggs & Tang, 2011), as students prioritise memorisation for exams over critical engagement, creativity, or self-regulation.

To move beyond this, there is a need to reframe assessment to serve the purpose of learning (Boud & Falchikov, 2006). This requires integrating assessment as an ongoing process in which evidence of student performance informs both teaching and learning. Formative assessment practices such as reflective journals, portfolios, peer feedback, and performance tasks can promote deeper learning by positioning students as active participants in their own evaluation (Black & Wiliam, 1998). For example, portfolios in writing modules would allow students to track drafts, revisions, and feedback over time, highlighting progress as well as outcomes. In Oral Expression, peer-assessment

activities could train students to critically evaluate communication strategies, fostering both self-awareness and collaborative responsibility.

However, for such practices to be enacted, both teachers and students must develop assessment literacy. Teachers require support to design valid, equitable, and transparent tasks, moving away from exams that assess only recall toward methods that evaluate higher-order thinking, problem-solving, and application. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) emphasise the role of feedback in developing students' capacity to self-regulate; thus, teachers should be equipped with skills in feedback delivery that is constructive and actionable. Equally, students must learn how to interpret and use feedback, rather than seeing it as mere justification of grades. This can be fostered through training in self- and peer-assessment, where learners practice applying rubrics and criteria, developing evaluative judgment (Boud & Soler, 2016).

4.5.6 Investing in Professional Development as a Continuous Process

The findings of this study indicated that several third-year EFL teachers at the University of Algiers 2 conceptually endorsed SCL yet struggled to translate it into practice, often reverting to TCL practices in their core, even if they think they are implementing SCL. A recurring factor behind this gap is the lack of professional training. Only a minority of teachers reported exposure to SCL-dedicated training. Those who do often describe the workshops as more theoretical rather than practical or ongoing. Without structured professional development, teachers remain under practical uncertainty, a classic problem also noted by Fullan (2007).

To address this, Algerian universities must organize professional training and consider it as a continuous and collaborative process, embedded in institutional culture rather than an occasional event. These professional learnings should not be occasional workshops which tend to focus on tips and tricks without challenging deeper beliefs (Samuelowicz & Bain, 2001). Instead, programmes must include a reflection process, experimentation, and feedback that allow teachers to test SCL strategies, adapt them to their contexts, and share outcomes with peers.

Communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), where faculty regularly meet to discuss classroom challenges and innovations, would provide an important platform for collective learning and better acceptance of SCL.

Finally, professional development should better address the emotional side of pedagogical change. As Kelchtermans (2005) notes, altering teaching practices often threatens teachers' sense of security, authority, and professional identity. Reflective workshops that allow teachers to articulate these concerns and reframe their roles as facilitators of learning can help ease this transition and allow them to accept their new identities.

4.6 Suggestions for Further Research

The present research gave a snapshot of how SCL is perceived, interpreted, and enacted in the English Department at Algiers 2 University. While the study has provided valuable and rich insights, several avenues remain open for further research.

Future research can adopt empirical studies that examine the effects of SCL on students' academic performance. As the current investigation focused on perceptions and practices, possible studies can opt for experimental or quasi-experimental designs to measure how the application of SCL strategies affects students' achievement, engagement, and language skills development with time.

Another suggestion for further studies is conducting targeted research focusing on one of the specific SCL tenets of Weimer's (2002). This may offer both students and teachers greater opportunities to express concerns, elaborate on personal experiences, and voice perspectives that may have remained underdeveloped within the broader, more general framework of the current investigation.

Another possible direction would be to explore the cultural dimensions influencing the implementation of SCL within the Algerian context. Since educational practices can be affected by cultural norms and values, it can be valuable to deeply investigate factors such as authority structures and student-

teacher relationships in Algeria. Such research would help identify context-specific barriers and facilitators, enabling the development of culturally sensitive strategies that better align SCL principles with the sociocultural frameworks of Algerian higher education. This would contribute to more effective and sustainable integration of SCL by respecting local traditions while promoting pedagogical innovation.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings of the study in relation to the four research questions, with the aim of examining how student-centred learning (SCL) is perceived and practiced by third-year EFL students and teachers at the University of Algiers 2. By triangulating quantitative and qualitative data and interpreting the results through the lens of Weimer's (2002) five tenets of SCL and building on previous related literature, the discussion attempted to provide an understanding of the extent to which SCL principles are conceptually endorsed and practically enacted within this higher education context

Overall, the findings indicated that both students and teachers hold largely positive perceptions of SCL and recognise its potential to enhance engagement, autonomy, critical thinking, and meaningful learning. Students generally endorsed power-sharing, valued relevant and inquiry-oriented content, preferred facilitative teacher roles, expressed willingness to assume responsibility for learning, and advocated for formative, feedback-oriented assessment. Teachers similarly articulated favourable views of SCL and demonstrated awareness of its philosophical foundations, particularly regarding learner autonomy and active engagement. This endorsement suggests that resistance to SCL at the level of perceptions is limited, and that the idea of shifting away from purely teacher-centred models is manageable.

However, across all five tenets, it appeared that there was a gap that emerged between perceptions and practices. For students, the enactment of student-centred behaviours proved highly context-dependent, flourishing in classrooms where teachers created supportive and low-risk environments, but

diminishing in lecture-dominated, authority-driven settings. Students' practices were strongly shaped by their perceptions of teacher responsiveness, fairness in assessment, and emotional safety, confirming that learner agency is relationally constructed rather than inherent.

Teachers' practices likewise reflected a continuum of enactment, ranging from traditional transmissive approaches to blended and, in fewer cases, fully student-centred models. While some teachers enacted facilitative roles, scaffolded autonomy, and integrated formative assessment, many adopted hybrid practices as pragmatic responses to institutional constraints, disciplinary demands, large class sizes, and perceived student unpreparedness. These patterns reinforce the role of teachers' beliefs about students, content, assessment, and professional identity as key mediators of practice (Pajares, 1992; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999).

Taken together, the discussion demonstrates that the implementation of SCL at Algiers 2 University remains partial and shaped by the interaction of individual perceptions, classroom practices, and structural realities. This chapter has not only interpreted these findings but has also attempted to provide a set of pedagogical implications, highlighting the need for sustained professional development, curricular and assessment flexibility, scaffolding of student autonomy, and a redefinition of teacher and student roles.

Consequently, the insights generated in this chapter provide a critical foundation for the following chapter, which builds more explicitly on these pedagogical implications and translates them into concrete recommendations for enhancing the implementation of Student-Centred Learning in the Algerian higher education context.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to investigate the perceptions and practices of both EFL third-year undergraduate students and teachers concerning SCL within the AHE context, using a multi-method design that integrated questionnaires, SSIs, classroom observations, and focus group discussions. Rooted in Weimer's (2002) five core tenets of SCL, power-sharing, the role of content, the role of the teacher, responsibility for learning, and the purpose of assessment; this research sought to critically examine the extent to which the theoretical underpinnings of SCL are understood, adopted, and embodied in real classroom practices.

The findings revealed that students overwhelmingly hold positive perceptions of SCL, appreciating its emphasis on autonomy, engagement, and critical thinking. Many expressed a clear preference for discussion-based, interactive settings over lecture-heavy delivery when these environments were deemed safe and teachers welcomed student voice. They also valued power-sharing as many wanted a say in selecting some aspects of their learning or wanting to challenge some notions brought by the teacher. Students also demonstrated a keen interest in content that fosters real-world problem-solving and practical applications, reinforcing the idea that learning should be dynamic and relevant to their academic and professional aspirations. Where goals were transparent and links to real-world or disciplinary practice were explicit, students reported deeper engagement. Conversely, many did not appreciate modules that focused on content coverage, reporting limited perceived learning. Students also described the facilitative teacher role as a guide who listens, probes, and provides meaningful feedback, as central to effective SCL. They valued instructors who modelled inquiry, curated resources, organised collaboration, and created a safe atmosphere. Still, some students, especially those anxious and used to the traditional way of teaching, expressed a preference for transmissive lecturing. Most students endorsed taking more responsibility; preparing before class, researching independently, and monitoring their own progress. This is under the condition that expectations are clear and support is scaffolded. Some explained that years of teacher-led methods had formed compliant habits. A small subset preferred the teacher to remain directive, usually citing uncertainty about standards or limited

confidence in their own learning skills. Regarding evaluation, students endorsed formative assessment. They highlighted the importance of transparent criteria, and meaningful feedback. They also had positive perceptions about peer and self-assessment. However, they also admitted that summative exams often drove their efforts. It even pushed them towards risk-avoidance and rehearsal over exploration. Several voiced concern about vague criteria or being penalised for original answers, which hindered their willingness to think beyond the box.

The data on students' practices make it clear that while third-year EFL students at Algiers 2 demonstrate willingness and readiness to embrace SCL, the extent to which they can enact its principles in practice is highly context-dependent. Their behaviours and strategies were shaped not only by their perceptions and resistance but even more by the design of the learning environment and the teacher's approach. Importantly, students' perceptions of teacher reactions and assessment fairness directly and significantly shaped their behaviours. Supportive and open climates encouraged active participation, whereas perceptions of harshness or unfair evaluation fostered withdrawal and compliance. In classrooms where teachers intentionally cultivated a student-centred environment with dialogue, collaboration, and shared decision-making, students actively engaged and responded with enthusiasm, assuming roles that reflected Weimer's (2002) vision of the agentic learner. They demonstrated initiative, critical reflection, and collaborative engagement, actively participating in power-sharing, content negotiation, and formative learning practices. However, this level of engagement was inconsistent across the modules. In traditionally structured, lecture-dominated ones, students often defaulted to passivity, relying heavily on instructor direction, mechanically completing tasks, and showing limited ownership over content or outcomes. These behaviours reflect the influence of the traditional transmissive educational system, where the role of the student has been one of compliance rather than autonomy. Even when students expressed a clear desire for greater participation, their agency remained unrealised without the necessary scaffolding, modelling, and risk-free opportunities for contribution provided by the teacher.

Teachers, on the other hand, displayed mixed attitudes towards SCL. While many teachers demonstrated a general awareness of the approach framework and were positively inclined toward its benefits, such as increased student autonomy, critical thinking, and active engagement, the practical application of these beliefs remained inconsistent and sometimes superficial. Most teachers endorse the idea of sharing classroom authority and welcoming students' challenges, granting them space to make their views heard. They describe valuing student voice, inviting alternative viewpoints, and consulting learners about topics, tasks, partners, or timelines. At the same time, many frame power sharing as conditional, only feasible once students show readiness, self-discipline, and critical literacy. Core decisions, however, are often perceived as the teacher's responsibility. In short, teachers like the principle but bound its scope to safeguard standards and manage risk. Regarding the content, teachers overall rejected the heavy transmissive content and affirmed that it should provoke inquiry, connect to prior knowledge, and build analytical problem-solving skills. They recognised the importance of tying materials to real contexts and using content as a vehicle for thinking. Yet they also perceived disciplinary and curricular pressures that makes it harder to apply this type of content across every module. Most teachers described their roles as facilitators, guides, motivators, organisers, and feedback providers rather than authoritarian knowledge transmissive ones. Many emphasised their roles in creating a safe climate, listening, and catalysing participation. Still, teachers recognised the need to switch roles when necessary. Few others clearly preferred the traditional roles of the teachers due to familiarity and perceived barriers. Most teachers broadly value students taking ownership, preparing, researching, self-monitoring, and reflecting. While some teachers believed that students can rise to these expectations when scaffolded and motivated, others were skeptical, citing habits formed in teacher-led schooling and uneven self-regulation and capabilities. The shared perception is that responsibility is developed, not simply demanded: transparency, modelling, and gradual release are viewed as prerequisites for success, which in turn justified retaining tighter control. Regarding evaluation, teachers align with formative, feedback-rich assessment as a driver of learning.

They see feedback as central to guidance and improvement, and show positive views about the use of self and peer review.

The analysis of teachers' practices revealed a continuum of enactment, ranging from transmissive TCL to a facilitative SCL, with several teachers opting for a blended approach. Across the five dimensions of Weimer's (2002) some teachers enacted student-centred practices by scaffolding autonomy, encouraging decision-making, integrating problem-solving, and using formative feedback to guide learning. These practices positioned students as active participants and reflected a shift toward facilitation, inquiry, and collaboration. Teachers who adopted these approaches often taught in modules more compatible with interaction and were observed fostering a safe environment that promotes exchange of ideas and learner agency. However, many teachers operated in a blended mode, alternating between lecturing and stimulating inquiry and critical thinking depending on factors such as syllabus demands, class size, and students' readiness. In this model, teachers attempted to balance content coverage and institutional expectations with efforts to involve students in meaningful ways. At the same time, other teachers enacted traditional, teacher-centred practices. In these classrooms, lecturing dominated, power remained firmly with the teacher, and student input was tightly restricted. While in some cases these practices stemmed from resistance to SCL and more comfort with TCL, in other cases they emerged from practical concerns, namely time constraints and the need to cover the syllabus, and doubts about students' readiness for autonomy. In some cases, teachers described lecturing as the safer or clearer approach, particularly under conditions of overcrowded classrooms, rigid syllabi, and institutional pressure for syllabus coverage. These patterns reveal that teachers' practices were strongly shaped by their perceptions. Educators who viewed students as capable of independence and perceived their own role as facilitators implemented more student-centred, collaborative, and inquiry-based practices, whereas those who doubted student preparedness or identified primarily as knowledge transmitters tended to stick to traditional TCL practices. This finding echoes Pajares' (1992) claim that teacher beliefs act as powerful determinants of instructional behaviour,

as well as Prosser and Trigwell's (1999) argument that conceptions of teaching directly affect pedagogical approaches.

The findings demonstrated that SCL is not a uniform approach that can be easily applied across contexts. Its implementation is highly linked to factors such as class size, course type, teacher philosophy, and student readiness and willingness. Despite these challenges, it is worth noting that the research revealed the presence of committed teachers and reflective students who, when supported, can act as catalysts for wider pedagogical reform. It revealed instances where small shifts in classroom interaction, such as inviting student feedback, designing inquiry-based tasks, or allowing students agency, created positive impacts. These changes demonstrate the potential for effective change when coupled with strategic institutional support.

Overall, the study makes several contributions to the literature on SCL, particularly in the Algerian EFL context, where limited research has examined the perspectives of both students and teachers systematically. By providing empirical insights into the challenges and opportunities of SCL implementation, this research offers valuable recommendations for educators, policymakers, and curriculum designers seeking to foster more participatory and engaging learning environments. Moreover, it highlights the importance of contextualising SCL within the specific realities of AHE, acknowledging both its potential benefits and the structural barriers that may impede its effectiveness.

Ultimately, the findings suggest that while there is significant potential for SCL to enhance learning experiences in Algerian universities, its successful adoption requires commitment at multiple levels. Teachers must be equipped with the necessary pedagogical tools, students must be supported in their transition to greater autonomy, and institutions must create environments that facilitate participatory learning. Without these elements, the shift towards SCL will remain fragmented and inconsistent. However, with a collective effort from educators, students, and policymakers, student-centred learning can pave the way for a more dynamic, engaged, and transformative educational experience.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Students' Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is a part of a doctoral research that aims at collecting information about student-centered learning. You are kindly invited to answer the following questions. This is not a test so there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. Your name will not appear in the research and your confidentiality shall be assured. Your valuable contribution is much appreciated.

Please tick (✓) your answer(s) in the corresponding box(es) and make full statements whenever necessary.

Section 1: Personal information

1. Age: 19 – 21 ☒ 22 – 25 ☐ 25+ ☐
2. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☒
3. group: 313
4. Why did you choose to study English?
 - You would like to get a job with the English language (e.g., Teacher, Translator) ☒
 - You love the English language and culture (e.g., Movies, Music, Novels, etc.) ☐
 - Parents' desire ☐
 - You do not know the purpose of choosing to study English ☐

Others:

.....

.....

5. How would you describe your motivation level in learning?

Low level ☐ Neutral level ☐ High level ☒

Section 2: Power-sharing

6. Do you like to offer your own knowledge and contribution to the content of the course?

Yes ☒ No ☐

7. Do you like to question and challenge the ideas of the teacher and offer an alternative perspective when you feel it is appropriate?

Yes ☒ No ☐

8. Do you like to be granted the opportunity to share your ideas and feelings regarding the process of learning?

Yes ☒ No ☐

9. Do you like to be consulted on different aspects of learning?

Yes ☒ No ☐

10. If yes, what are the aspects that you would like to be consulted on?

the content of the course	☒	classroom activities	☒
objectives of the course	☐	assessment methods	☐
teaching methods	☒	assignments and deadlines	☐

Others:

Section 3: Role of the content

11. I prefer courses that make me build knowledge through inquiry and critical thinking instead of memorization.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☒ Strongly Agree ☐

12. I learn better when I understand the goals and objectives of my course.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☒ Strongly Agree ☐

13. I enjoy building new knowledge by critically comparing new information to my prior experiences and knowledge.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

14. I prefer a curriculum that provides opportunities to interact and apply information in real-life situations

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

15. I prefer content that allows me to learn how to solve real problems in the discipline.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

Section 4: Role of the teacher

16. I like teachers who encourage me to play an active role in the class rather than the ones who act as the sole knowledge holders

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

17. I like teachers who help me develop learning skills (e.g., critical thinking, analysing)

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

18. I like teachers who are open and listen to my problems

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

19. I like teachers who make me feel comfortable sharing my opinion

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

20. I want my lecturer to continuously motivate me to study

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☒ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

21. What are the roles that you are expecting from your teachers?

..... To be a motivator / a good assessor so that I can be
..... aware of my weaknesses and uplift my English
..... level.....

Section 5: Responsibility for learning

22. I like taking an active role in the classroom

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

23. I prefer finding information by myself rather than it being given to me by teachers

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

24. I explore content beyond what was reviewed in class.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

25. I am confident that I can take charge of my own learning (e.g., knowing how to manage my own learning needs, activities, time, resources, and goals)

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

Section 6: Role of the assessment

26. I only work on my exercises if they will be rewarded with grades

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☒ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

27. Exams are what motivates me to learn hard

Strongly disagree ☒ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

28. I like to engage in self and peer assessment

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☒ Strongly Agree ☐

29. I can monitor my own learning and development

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☒

Section 7: Student-centered learning

30. Are you familiar with the term student-centered learning?

Yes ☒ No ☐

31. If yes, briefly provide a short explanation of the term according to your understanding

..... It is an educational approach which shifted the focus from the
..... teacher to the learner. It uses interactive strategies to engage
..... the students and make them active producers than passive receivers.

32. Do you think that student-centered learning has a positive effect on success as a language learner?

Yes ☒ No ☐

33. If yes, what are the benefits of implementing student-centered learning?

...improving academic performances...improving abilities like...
 ...encouraging team work...problem solving, critical...
 ...increasing student's participation...thinking and creativity...

34. Which of the following approaches do you prefer as a learner?

Student-centered learning ☒
 Teacher centered learning ☐

35. In your opinion, which of the following issues prevents the optimal implementation of student-centered learning?

Overcrowded classes ☒ Students' unwillingness to become active ☒
 The huge workload ☐ Educators' teaching approach ☒
 Time constraints ☐ Availability of learning sources and materials ☐
 Others

36. Please tick the box(es) that correspond to your preferred way of learning:

Listen to the teacher lecturing while taking notes. ☒
 Learning lessons by heart (mechanic memory). ☒
 Reading extra documents related to the courses. ☒
 Engage in a meaningful discussion ☒
 Doing engaging exercises and activities. (e.g. projects, role plays) ☐
 Engaging in cooperative work with your classmates ☐
 Others

Thank you for your time and cooperation

Appendix B: Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

In the light of preparing a doctorate thesis that aspires to collect information about student-centred learning, you are kindly asked to answer the following questions. Your help will be a tremendous contribution to my research

Your name will not appear in the research and your confidentiality will be assured.

Please tick (✓) your answer(s) in the corresponding box(es) and make full statements whenever necessary.

Section 1: Personal Information

Your name:*

Diploma*: Ph.d ☐ Magister ☐ Other ☐

Field: Didactics ☐ Literature and civilization ☐ Linguistics ☐ Other ☐

For how long have you been teaching English?

1-5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ 10-15 years ☐ 15-20 years ☐ More than 20 years ☐

Section 2: Power-Sharing

1. I allow my students to contribute and offer their own knowledge to my course.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

2. I urge my students to express alternative perspectives and opinions to mine when appropriate.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

3. I encourage my students and make them feel comfortable to share their opinions, beliefs and feelings regarding different aspects of the learning process.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

4. I consult my students on different aspects of learning

Yes ☐ No ☐

5. If yes, what are the aspects that you consult your students on?

You can choose multiple answers.

The content of the course ☐ Classroom activities ☐

Objectives of the course ☐ Assessment methods ☐

Teaching methods ☐ Assignments and deadlines ☐

Others:

.....
.....
.....
Section 3: Role of the Content

6. The content/curriculum of my course allows students to practice using inquiry or ways of thinking in the discipline

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

7. I always make sure that the goals and objectives of my course are clearly stated.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

8. I present content that drives students to build on their prior knowledge and experiences to construct their own understanding of the subject.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

9. I design activities that allow my students to actively interact with the teacher and with each other.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

10. I try to design activities that reflect real-life situations whenever possible.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

11. I present content that allows students to develop analytical and problem-solving skills whenever possible.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

Section 4: Role of the Teacher

12. I always try to create an active learning environment in my classroom.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

13. I always try to create a motivating classroom environment for my students.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

14. I feel like I create an environment that fosters student learning.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

15. I always listen to my students' personal problems and complaints.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

16. I make students feel at ease in sharing their opinions.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

17. How would you describe your role in the classroom?

.....
.....
.....

Section 5: Responsibility of Learning

18. The majority of my students take an active role in my course.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

19. I urge and help students to take and accept responsibility for their own learning.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

20. I believe that the majority of my students are capable of taking responsibility for their learning.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

21. I encourage students to explore content beyond what was presented by the teacher in the class.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

22. I create an environment in which students are encouraged to take ownership of their own learning.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

23. My students and I both agree and take responsibility for achieving learning goals.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

24. My students and I both agree and take responsibility for achieving learning goals.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

25. I urge and coach my students to be self-directed and life-long learners with self-efficacy skills.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

26. I try to make my students confident and aware of their own potential and abilities to learn and develop on their own.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

Section 6: Role of the assessment

27. I integrate formative assessment within the learning processes of my course.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

28. I utilise formative assessment to adapt to my students' needs and improve my instructional strategies.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

29. I always try to provide my students with constructive feedback.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

30. I present my students with the opportunity to engage in peer assessment and self-assessment in my course.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

31. I always try to implement real-life situation tasks whenever possible in the assessment of my students.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

Section 7: Student-Centred Learning

32. Are you familiar with the term student-centered learning?

Yes ☐ No ☐

33. If yes, briefly provide a small explanation of the term according to your understanding

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34. Do you think that student-centered learning has a positive effect on success as a language learner?

Yes ☐ No ☐

35. If yes, what are the benefits of implementing student-centered learning?

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36. Have you received any training in SCL?

Yes ☐ No ☐

37. I love to adopt SCL in my classroom.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

38. I implement SCL in my class whenever possible.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

39. I believe that my students prefer SCL methods.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

40. I know how to apply SCL methods in teaching.

Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly Agree ☐

**41. What are the obstacles and challenges of integrating SCL in your class?
You can choose multiple answers.**

Overcrowded classes ☐

Students' unwillingness to become active ☐

Teacher workload ☐

Time constraints ☐

Availability of learning sources and materials ☐

Lack of confidence in the ability of using SCL ☐

Lack of teacher in-service training ☐

Lack of in-service training ☐

Lack of knowledge about SCL ☐

Strict syllabus ☐

Thank you for your time and cooperation

Appendix C: Teachers' Interview Questions

- How do you understand or define SCL?
- Do you adopt a Student-Centred or Teacher-Centred approach in your teaching? Why?
 - If you implement SCL, how do you apply it in your classroom?
- Which approach do you prefer overall: SCL or TCL? Why?
- What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of SCL?
- How would you describe your role during the teaching and learning process?
- What expectations do you have of your students in the learning process?
- Do you think students are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning? Why or why not?
- What assessment methods do you typically use, and what learning goals do they serve?
- What challenges do you face when trying to implement SCL?

Contextual Questions

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Appendix D: Teachers' Interview Transcription Sample

Teachers' interviews

Teacher name: [REDACTED]

Code: T1

Module: ESP / Didactics

Date: 08/09/2022

Question 1: How do you understand or define SCL?

“Look, whenever we are in front of our students, we expect them to interact with us. Me, as a teacher, I am in favour of interaction and communication with the students to check whether the information is well-grasped or not. So with SCL try to make students more active and interact more, and that comes with more roles upon our shoulders; to guide the students, to motivate them to learn and to monitor them. Of course this will put more responsibilities on students themselves.. and here is the core idea about the approach; making students use their critical thinking, think on their own and construct their knowledge by looking for the truth ...”

Question 2: Do you adopt a Student-Centred or Teacher-Centred approach in your teaching? Why?

“to be honest, at the beginning of the year, I used to be a teacher-centred teacher but now I rely on a student-centred approach as I believe that this new approach is much more beneficial for them (students). Like, I gave my lessons in the form of lectures at first, but with the results I decided to switch the way I deal with them. Now they work more they put on the efforts and I can already see the results”

Question 3: If you implement SCL, how do you apply it in your classroom?

“actually I changed the way I present the lesson, now I give them just the topic that we are supposed to deal with and I guide them to fetch the information by themselves. I give them handouts but just to help them. While the whole work is expected to be done by them. That is in the process of preparing the lessons. When they come we all discuss the information to come up with wanted outcomes”

Appendix E: Students' Focus Group Questions

- What is your understanding of SCL?
- Do you prefer SCL or TCL? Why?
- What do you think are the main advantages and disadvantages of SCL?
- What roles do you expect your teachers to adopt in the classroom?
- What roles do you believe your teachers expect you to fulfil as students?
- In your opinion, how can SCL be implemented in the classroom?
- Do you feel confident taking responsibility for your own learning? Why or why not?
- Do you think SCL is encouraged and supported by your teachers and institution?
- What challenges or obstacles do you perceive in implementing SCL?
- Looking across the modules you've studied, which ones do you perceive as more student-centred and which as more teacher-centred? Why?

Contextual Questions

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Appendix F: Focus Groups Transcription Sample

Focus groups

Students names and codes: ██████ (S1), ██████ (S2), ██████ (S3), ██████ (S4), ██████ (S5), ██████ (S6), ██████ (S7), ██████ (S8).

Group: 3L3 (Focus Group 1)

Date: 11/06/2022

Question 1: What is your understanding of SCL?

S6: “I believe it’s about relying on myself a lot, doing a lot of research by myself, adding more information to the information given by the teacher and so on”.

- S1 S2 S3 S4 S8: (comments with agreement)

S4: “Yes, and it means that we rely on ourselves and do more work, more research on our own then discuss it with our teachers in the classroom”

S2: “Yes I agree, and I also think that in SCL the lesson should be designed according to the student’s needs while considering the best method that the teacher can use to fulfil those needs and the learning styles of students”.

- S1 S2 S3 S5: (comments with agreement)

S5: “SCL should be focused on the interest of the learners, what they want to learn and how; sometimes we get information and we accept and understand only what seems interesting for us”.

S7: “Yes exactly, what came into my mind is the interest of the learners; what he wants to learn and how, sometimes we get the information and we accept and understand only what seems interesting to us, so SCL can give us what we want and what we need”.

S2: “In my opinion, it’s the opposite of the TCL where the teacher is giving all information and never expecting anything back; but in SCL, students can take part in debates, can interact, can have a different point of view from the teacher.”

Appendix G: Observation Scheme

Observation Scheme

Subject:	Class:
Teacher:	Number of students:
Date:	Total minutes of the class:

Time	Teachers' practices	Students' practices

Appendix H: Observation Results

1. The observations results

1.1. Writing Expression

- **Teacher T6**

The observation noted the returning of homework assignments to students, accompanied by constructive feedback, at the beginning of each instructional session. The pedagogical approach employed during the sessions was centred around the utilisation of PBL and the elicitation of inquiries from the students. Furthermore, the lesson design incorporated the integration of student responses as a means to construct and develop the instructional content across all sessions. (e.g. writing a subjective sentence on the board while students try to make it more objective using hedging) an example of the questions asked would be: “What’s the problem with your friend’s answer?”. The instructor attempted to raise students' awareness regarding the potential applicability of the lessons within the context of their educational trajectory. The teacher relied on cooperative work while moving around rows offering assistance for students who required it during all of the sessions. The teacher was observed to be identifying and highlighting students' challenges and errors, while simultaneously praising commendable efforts. The instructor provides the students with the choice to either promptly submit their homework or alternatively, to submit it at a later time through email.

- **Students (gr1)**

A substantial number of students were observed to be actively involved and exerting effort in responding to inquiries and resolving challenges posed by instructors across the different sessions. The sessions under investigation involved the active participation of students in collaborative learning, characterised by their engagement in discussions to solve problems and peer assessments. Students sought the guidance and feedback of their instructor while and after doing exercises.

- **Teacher T2**

The teacher commenced his sessions by articulating and introducing the objectives of each different course. The educator employed problem analysis such as scrutinising a written composition brought by students to illustrate the lesson. He also employed lecturing and explanation on two distinct occasions. The teacher attempted to elicit answers and comments from students and constantly invited them to express their viewpoints, urging them to share their ideas (e.g., “you should say whatever comes into your mind” “Am I judging you? No! so speak” “Tell me what’s your opinion about the introduction”). Furthermore, the instructor strived to stimulate students’ critical thinking during each session (e.g., “explain more; but how?”). Additionally, the teacher Provided feedback whenever it was necessary, giving up the traditional lecturer position at the front of the class, and granting personalized feedback by moving around rows addressing individual issues and problems. Moreover, the teacher attentively listened to students’ complaints whenever they brought that up. It was noted that the issue of sessions’ time limit was brought up again “The problem of time prevents us from undertaking certain activities”.

- **Students (gr2)**

A significant proportion of students were actively engaged during the sessions, providing answers, responding to their colleagues, and expressing their own thoughts. Students also engaged in higher-order reasoning and critical thinking tasks, identifying and addressing different issues and inquiring about the appropriate methods to resolve them. During and upon completing the exercise, students request assistance from the teacher. It is also worth noting that during certain periods of sessions in which the teacher adopted the lecture format, students were observed to be passive, listening to the teacher while some of them were taking notes.

1.2. Oral

- **Teacher T5**

The teacher relied on methods that involved engaging students in the learning process through various interactive activities and exercises. Among those strategies are presentations that the students should perform after selecting a topic of their choice, which resonates with their individual preferences and inclinations. Another activity involves presenting students with various images or pictures and subsequently prompting them to articulate their emotions, reactions, and personal opinions in a structured manner. Additionally, the teacher allowed students to partake in critical debates on different topics from their choices. During the classes, the teacher assumed the role of an attentive observer, diligently overseeing the classroom dynamics and strategically navigating through the rows, providing assistance and guidance to students as needed. The instructor took the responsibility of guiding and organizing the discussions within the classroom. Furthermore, he attempted to engage students in reflective dialogue by eliciting personal experiences related to the topics at hand, and prompted the conversations through strategic questioning to initiate and stimulate the discussions. While students needed to make choices regarding the topics, the teacher suggested extra ones to choose from. Timely feedback was granted to students as they engaged in different activities. The teacher further shared his own opinion in response to the students' request.

- **Students gr1**

Students exhibited high levels of motivation, enthusiasm, and engagement, as evidenced by their active participation and eagerness to contribute to classroom discussions throughout the majority of the sessions' time. In addition, the students expressed their interests and entertainment regarding the topics presented by the teacher, sharing their opinions on some of them. Moreover, they took the initiative to form collaborative groups to complete different tasks. The students actively participated in dialogues about different subject matter, with each individual articulating their unique point of view. Students seemed to be able to organize and come up with a variety of topics that caught the teacher's interest. Some students

sought guidance and counselling from their educator while preparing for the activities. The active participation of all students is evident in their contributions to the ongoing conversations throughout all sessions. The students were seen to counterargument in response to propositions put forth by the instructor during the debate. Students expressed their interest in knowing the teacher's opinions regarding different issues. Moreover, they demonstrated the ability to establish connections between the pictures provided during the session and their own personal experiences in the real world, sharing their related prior experiences pertaining to their childhood. The students have conveyed their satisfaction with the sessions. Additionally, they proposed that the teacher provide more topics for the discussion.

- **Teacher 13**

The teacher reminded students of the objectives of the lesson on two separate occasions during the four sessions. The employed instructional content aimed to engage students through various active learning strategies, including role-playing activities, oral presentations, and eliciting students' perspectives on thought-provoking quotations to initiate meaningful discussions and debates. The educator assumed the roles of organizer and facilitator within the classroom setting; this is exemplified by her involvement in orchestrating roleplays, allocating students' turns to carry out the presentations, and intervening when necessary to ensure that time constraints are adhered to. Additionally, she assumed the roles of advisor and role model by providing guidance on effective strategies for executing a successful roleplay and providing tips on how to perform effective presentations. The teacher's approach involved creating an environment that embraces a certain level of noisiness, thus allowing students an atmosphere conducive to active engagement and collaborative work among each other. During the role plays and presentations, the teacher sat down among the students, giving the stage to the presenters affording them the spotlight, while diligently observing and taking pertinent notes. Students were afforded the opportunity to select the topics of their individual interests. In the course of the discussions, the teacher made deliberate efforts to engage inactive students who were displaying low levels of participation

(e.g., “Girl there, you are sleeping! wake up and join us”). Furthermore, the educator administered constructive feedback towards the end of each session.

- **Students gr2**

students are afforded the opportunity to select their peers for collaborative presentations. Once these partnerships are formed, students engaged in discussions around carrying out and optimising their performance in relation to the assigned oral presentations. The collaborative work in pairs culminated in students engaging in presentations before their peers. When dealing with quotations that they must comment in, a considerable proportion of students started sharing their opinions and asking questions. Consequently, this prompted additional students to offer remarks on their peers' responses, thereby engendering a conversation that swiftly evolved into a debate. Students that were given remarks to be active joined in the conversations. Students demonstrated reflective skills as they referred to real life situations and contextual examples to demonstrate and defend their points of views. Students selected different varieties of performances such as a roleplay, presentations explaining a topic movie review; all of which led to other students offering their perspectives on the content.

1.3. Didactics

- **Teacher T1**

During the first observational session, the teacher mainly relied on lecturing and imparting information for the majority of the time, she then explained what she would expect from her students in the upcoming exam, emphasizing that she would like to see critical thinking and incorporation of personal opinions in the answers. In the subsequent observational session, the teacher expressed her dissatisfaction with students' performance in the exams, giving them harsh feedback in a stern tone. She then decided upon reflection, that she would change her method to be more autonomous for students as she deemed her previous method to be ineffective. The educator made sure to explain the new active roles for her students (e.g., “I will not give you ready made lessons anymore”; “You will prepare the lessons by yourself with my assistance”; “You will not come to the class as tourists

from now on, but with already acquired knowledge”; “Through my guidance and discussion you will add your notes to the lessons”). The teacher then administered constructive feedback to her students, highlighting significant areas of concern within their examination papers. She then proceeded to give individual personalised remark to students upon returning their papers, accompanied by general recommendations to enhance the level of their academic writing skills. The teacher articulated the future academic expectations and tried to motivate students while listening to their comments and discussing them. She then attempted to soothe the prevailing atmosphere by employing humour. The subsequent sessions started with the teacher checking if the assignments are done, urging those who have not done them to address their shortcomings in the upcoming sessions to avoid potential academic repercussions. The teacher promoted an instructional approach wherein students were encouraged to articulate the central component of the lesson, while concurrently receiving guidance on how to rephrase and enhance its comprehensibility. The teacher then gave her definitions and engaged in discussion building on both perspectives while Inviting students to voice their opinions on whether they agreed with her or not. The instructor provided authentic contextual illustrations and scenarios that were directly related to the lessons. The educator expressed her satisfaction and pleasure with the change in the teaching approach. The end of instructional sessions is marked by the dissemination of the next assignments and homework.

- **Students gr1**

In the initial instructional session, students assumed a predominantly passive role, engaging in receptive listening as the teacher delivered the lecture, while interactions were limited to occasional queries by students seeking clarification. In response to the instructor's feedback and remarks provided during subsequent session, wherein the examination papers were handed back, students engaged in discussions pointing out the challenges encountered and areas of confusion experienced during the exams. Thereafter, they proceeded to demand the advice and guidance of the teacher in order to enhance their performance and address the problems at hand. In response to the teacher's decision to implement a new student-

centred instructional approach that emphasises student agency, some students have expressed reservations and doubt, suggesting that bringing individual contributions may lead to confusion within the learning environment. Over the following sessions, students brought their own contributions and information regarding the topics. They presented and discussed their different opinions from multiple perspectives. During the course of the discussions, students were observed engaging in critical reflection by drawing connections to real-life scenarios and articulating their perspectives. The students' active involvement was further evident through the majority's active participation in debates, where they defended their viewpoints, responded to their peers' arguments, and engaged in fruitful exchanges with the teacher. The students voiced their satisfaction with the new approach as they stated that they felt more involved.

- **Teacher T2**

Throughout the majority of the observational sessions, the instructor predominantly employed a transmissive approach, relying on explanations and lecturing as the primary mode of instruction. Occasionally, the teacher would interject with questions directed towards the students, seeking to ascertain their level of comprehension and gauge their understanding of the subject matter at hand. The teacher consistently supplemented her explanation with real-life examples that allowed for reflective contemplation. The covered topics allowed the teacher to grant practical pieces of advice that students may need in their own carriers. In certain instances, the educator would prompt students to engage in discussions and offer their perspectives on the subject matter at hand. One of the topics covered during the instructional pertained to SCL; in the course of examining the subject, the instructor shared her beliefs pertaining to the extent to which power-sharing is genuinely implemented within the Algerian context, as she stated that “teachers in Algeria don’t like to give students freedom”, the suggested root cause for that was that the teachers deemed unprepared to confront challenges posed by students, pointing out that sometimes they “lack the courage to do so”. On another note the teacher admitted that SCL is “difficult to implement here, but still feasible”, attributing the challenges to “unprepared and incompetent students”

and the lack of materials. Regarding the latter issue, she proceeded to explain claiming that “For instance, when I teach oral, I find it difficult to find authentic material to use”. The educator stressed on addressing the humanistic aspect of SCL as she stated that “The most important person in the learning process is a human being, so teachers need to consider the needs of this human being”

- **Students gr2**

The majority of students exhibited a predominantly passive role, as they attentively were listening to the teacher's lectures and note-taking throughout the duration of the sessions. A small percentage of students posed inquiries to the teacher during the instructional sessions. In addition, some participants occasionally made efforts to respond to questions posed by the teacher, while also a limited number of students provided commentary and made attempts to articulate their individual comprehension and points of view.

1.4. Translation

- **Teacher T7**

The teacher begins each lesson by outlining the subject and the objectives of the lesson. He then checks to see who has prepared at home and goes over the students' responses to homework. At times, the instructor began his courses with reading documents that needed to be translated while explaining the necessary techniques to do so. Alternatively, he often asked for volunteers to read the texts to be translated. Following the students' attempts, the teacher offers guidance and feedback, either in the form of individual comments and remarks or a breakdown of one of the students' answers on the board for the class to analyse. The instructor could also be seen walking between the rows, helping those who need assistance and guiding them in improving their responses. In addition, upon reflecting on students' answers, the teacher provided general observations, recommendations, and tips to the students regarding strategies for enhancing the efficacy of their translation attempts. The instructor occasionally posed inquiries to students in order to assess their understanding and familiarity with the subject matter. Furthermore, the instructor frequently requested students' opinions on various

translation attempts, and allowed students the choice to work in pairs or individually.

- **Students gr1**

Based on the observations, the majority of the students did not bring their homework to class. During most sessions, students assumed voluntary roles wherein they answered teacher's questions, presented their translation attempts on the board, or orally reading passages of texts for translation. Several students actively contributed to the teacher's explanation by offering additional insights, expressing their viewpoints, and participating in meaningful discussions related to the topic at hand. When presented with the decision between engaging in individual work or participating in group work, the student opted for collaborative learning.

- **Teacher T14**

In two of the four sessions, the instructor initiated the session by introducing the subject matter. The teacher heavily relied dictating passages for students to be translated as well as dictating the lesson content itself. Furthermore, he occasionally posed questions requested students to engage in translation quizzes. The educator reminded students in the third session that she had uploaded homework assignments to the Moodle platform. During all of the observational sessions, the teacher explained the techniques of executing translations, imparting insights and providing illustrative instances. He attempted to supplement the explanations with tips and examples. Whenever students inquired about questions regarding the subject matter, the teacher responded and addressed the issues at hand. Moreover, the educator offered constructive feedback and expressed admiration for the calibre of a select few inquiries posed by the students. The instructor conceded and acknowledged the technical issues pertaining to the Moodle platform.

- **Students gr2**

The students spent a substantial portion of their sessions time transcribing the teacher's dictations and taking notes as they passively listened to her explanations.

A small number of students proffered questions to the educators regarding areas of knowledge that eluded their comprehension. The translation quizzes were undertaken by the students, with only a limited number demonstrating an active willingness to present their answers. Few Students answered teacher's questions and commented on both the translation attempts made by their peers and the teacher's explanation. Students attributed their failure to complete the homework to technical difficulties encountered using the Moodle platform.

1.5. Civilization

- **Teacher T4**

The teacher commenced one of the observational sessions by verifying if the students had adequately prepared the lessons. During all of the observational sessions, he, for the significant portion of the allocated class time, relied on lecturing and explaining. In instances where students wanted to ask questions to the teacher by raising their hands, it was observed that the he frequently declined to interrupt his ongoing explanation until the entirety of his ideas had been conveyed (e.g., Let me finish then we continue with the questions). The educator often delivered the lesson by reading from handouts that he had already delivered, and then asked students to follow while he was reading "e.g., Can you just follow me in the handouts?". Occasionally, he asked students questions about the lesson and attempted to make them reflect. During one specific instructional session, the teacher imparted guidance and gave advice to the students, aiming to raise their awareness regarding the importance of acquiring knowledge on different subjects for their intrinsic benefits and prompted them to read more. "You don't have to only worry about passing with minimum knowledge"; "Any ordinary university student should be interested in reading lessons which are open access".

- **Students gr1**

Throughout the vast majority of the observational sessions, it was observed that students quietly sat down and listened to the teacher's lectures, and passively followed reading from the materials provided in the form of handouts. There was a noticeable lack of student inquiry and participation in meaningful discussions

pertaining to the content. In three observed instances, students who raised their hands declaring that they wanted to ask questions, soon withdrew after they went unnoticed by the teacher or upon receiving the response that their inquiry would be addressed at a later time. In the latter case, once the teacher did indeed return the students and asked for the question, in most cases, the learner had already forgotten about it. The majority of the observed student population exhibited indications of disengagement and boredom, as evidenced by audible expressions of dissatisfaction, instances of yawning, and interpersonal communication during instructional time, while only a few did answer the teacher's questions.

- **Teacher T12**

The session took place within the confines of an amphitheatre, which is a typical environment for lecturing. The instructor initiated the instructional sessions by briefly addressing previously covered content. During her explanation, she relied on aids in the form of projected slides to clarify the lessons of the subject matter. The teacher occasionally gave questions pertaining to the lesson, affording students the opportunity to work individually or in pairs, however; during the initial session, collaborative work was not permitted as a precautionary measure due to the COVID-19 pandemic as the teacher explained: "usually in such conditions I would ask students to work in pairs, but because of the pandemic we can't this time". The teacher was receptive, inviting, and attentive to students posing questions, for instance when a student raised her hand saying "Can I ask a question?" the teacher replied with a smile "of course you can; you can ask two if you want". Additionally, the teacher inquired about the students' exams performance across various modules and attentively listened to their complaints and opinions. In her turn, the teacher gave advice regarding effective learning strategies, inviting students to read more at home. Moreover, she emphasized the importance of critical thinking as she invited students to answer her exam based on their own understanding and analysis, rather than simply regurgitating information presented in the classroom "Don't repeat what I say in exams; use your own words and rely on your own awareness"

- **Students gr2**

During the majority of the observational sessions, students were predominantly passive as they attentively listened to the lecturer's presentation while simultaneously following along with the accompanying slides. Occasionally, a subset of students asked questions related to various aspects of the lessons being taught. In certain instances, students were required to engage in the task of reading textual materials that were disseminated to them. Additionally, some of them were observed engaging in active participation by contributing related information they had independently researched at home. For instance, one student articulated “Miss while I was searching about the topic I found that...”.

1.6. Cognitive psychology

- **Teacher T3**

In the first observational session, the teacher relied, for a major part of the course, on reading from written materials that she had distributed to the class, and explained various theoretical constructs afterwards. Conversely, in the subsequent remaining sessions, the teacher developed the lessons based on students' inquiries and responses, as well as extensively drawing upon authentic real-life scenarios for analysis and reflection. This was evident as the educator addressed students that stimulated their engagement (e.g., “look at the window, what do you see?”). The educator consistently employed instructional strategies aimed at fostering active critical thinking and analysis among students for three sessions. These strategies included eliciting responses based on students' prior knowledge, posing higher-order questions to stimulate cognitive engagement, and encouraging students to express their perspectives on various aspects of the lessons (e.g., “Speak your opinion, do you have any questions?”). To illustrate, the educator presented visual representations and encouraged students to engage in a collaborative process of making meaning of the drawings to facilitate a deeper understanding of the concept being taught at the time “the gestalt theory”. The instructor additionally provided contemporary examples derived from real-world occurrences to clarify some lesson concepts (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic). She also frequently checked for students' understanding of the lessons. It is worth

noting that the teacher typically exhibited a highly strict demeanour in relation to tardiness and students engaging in conversation during class.

- **Students gr1**

Even though there were occasional occurrences in which students passively sat down and listened to the teacher's explanation, while following from the provided handouts when asked to; a substantial proportion of students actively participated in dynamic exchanges with the teacher. This active engagement manifested through students posing inquiries or providing responses, thus elaborating a meaningful exchange. Students were observed sharing their opinions and providing their input regarding some quizzes. This included relating personal experiences to the lesson content offering their interpretations of pictures presented by the instructor, or making educated guesses about the significance of different geometric shapes in the provided pictures. The majority of students conveyed their satisfaction with the instructional sessions in which they were active. However, in instances where students encountered a lesson that was unfamiliar and presented a challenge, namely in the fourth observational session, the majority of them exhibited a passive role, demonstrating limited engagement by refraining from providing comments or answers, despite the teacher's explicit invitation to do so.

- **Teacher T10**

The educator frequently initiated the observational sessions by articulating the intended learning objectives, thereby establishing a foundation for the ensuing lesson. The format of the instructional sessions was a blend of lecturing delivered by the teacher, drawing upon real-life situations for reflective analysis; and also active engagement through participating in cognitive and critical thinking tasks. The educator made efforts, through all of the sessions, to foster student engagement through the consistent use of questioning, primarily focusing on higher-order thinking skills. Additionally, the teacher employed problem-solving activities, such as puzzles, as a means to effectively illustrate the lesson content. Furthermore, engaged she engaged in meaningful exchanges with the students, leaving space for them to break down their understanding of the lessons. The

teacher consistently encouraged students to speak and be active during class time, while also inviting and promoting divergent thinking during their responses (“think outside the box in your answers”). In addition, she praised students for their valuable contributions and their ability to identify and implement effective solutions to the quizzes. During the correction of the exam session, the instructor invited students to share their level of contentment with the assigned grades, both in her module and the others. She proceeded to attentively listen to students’ complaints, addressing the exam-related major issues expressed by the students. Following the exchange between the teacher and the students on examination settings and criteria, the educator exhibited self-reflection on the assessment process, voicing her thoughts as she said: “we have to review all the assessment system; it focuses only on grades”. The educator thereafter declared that she would try to provide tips on how to achieve more satisfactory results in studies, as she said “Before the next semester I am going to give you some tips on how to succeed in your studies”; an example of those tips was when she addressed students lacks “I would highly recommend that you consider revisiting your writing and grammar skills”.

- **Students gr2**

While most of the classroom attentively listened and took notes during the teacher’s lecturing, a notable proportion of students consistently demonstrated active participation in discussion throughout the entirety of the instructional sessions, giving lengthy explanations of different concepts of the lessons. The learners frequently posed questions of a critical nature that were relevant to the lessons being discussed and answered the educator’s queries. A notable level of interest and active participation was apparent among the majority of students while attempting to solve the problem in the form of a puzzle, indicating a positive level of engagement. Furthermore, a noteworthy subset of students demonstrated the ability to present solutions that were deemed satisfactory and creative by the teacher. They also shared and discussed their comments, opinions, and ideas on different topics of the lessons. Upon being given an opportunity to express their views on the examinations, a significant number of students raised complaints with

regard to certain aspects of the examination format, as well as their perception of teachers' mishandling of the grading process.

1.7. Sociolinguistics

- **Teacher T10**

The instructor initiated the four observational sessions by introducing the topics and checking whether the students had reviewed the lessons posted on the Moodle platform. Additionally, the instructor checked the students' comprehension of the preceding lessons. During the initial observational session, the educator conveyed her frustration regarding students' lack of preparedness for the lesson posted on Moodle. However, she also acknowledged their explanation of encountering technical difficulties with the platform. Subsequently, the instructor informed students that she will explain the lesson, expressing that she had initially different intentions for the session “I hoped that you prepared the topic as I wanted to give you a small evaluation, but since you have not I will explain first”. During the subsequent observational session, the teacher explanations were based on students' interactions and responses to questions in addition to real-life contexts intended to foster reflective thinking. Across the entirety of the instructional sessions, the teacher made deliberate efforts to foster student engagement in cognitive processes by prompting them to generate analytical responses to the lesson content. She expressed a desire for her students to engage in higher-order thinking skills by synthesising their own answers rather than reading answers from pre-existing documents (“No, don’t read! answer using your own words”. The teacher emphasised the importance of student engagement, expressing her intention to reduce her own speaking time, as articulated during the second observational session: "From now on, I will be less talkative". Although the instructor provided a limited number of exercises during the third and fourth sessions, she explicitly communicated that “Usually we do exercises in the classroom, but due to the time restriction we can’t, so please try to look for answers”. The teacher consistently provided feedback to her students, making sure to explain that the intention of doing so is for them to develop “I am correcting you now because I’ve seen such mistakes in the exams, so you can avoid them in the future”

- **Students gr1**

During the designated periods of observation, it was noted that a significant number of students adopted a predominantly passive role, with the majority merely listening attentively to the teacher during her lectures. Few students made an effort to occasionally participate in the lessons either by addressing inquiries posed by the instructor or by asking their own questions. Notably, some of these questions were focused on connecting the concepts being taught to their own lives. Or additionally answering questions raised by the teacher. A limited number of students occasionally provided commentary and expressed their perspectives regarding various concepts of the courses. The students expressed their complaints regarding the technical challenges they encountered while using the Moodle platform, blaming those issues for not accomplishing the homework.

- **Teacher T17**

Throughout the duration of the observational session, the instructor predominantly utilised a conventional lecture approach. The lecturing comprised the instructor reading from handouts while the students followed along, followed by an explanation of the content, attempting to illustrate it with examples and real-life context. The educator insinuated that participation in activities would be unattainable due to time constraints: "We have no time for exercises". During her lectures, the instructor directed her attention exclusively towards a single group of students while neglecting to acknowledge the others. For instance, in the second session, she maintained eye contact with a single row for an estimated duration of six consecutive minutes. It is noteworthy to mention that the instructor strictly prohibited latecomers and reprimanded those who failed to prepare the lesson and disturbed the classroom throughout the session for a considerable duration.

- **Students gr2**

Throughout the observational sessions, students remained inactive for the large majority of the time, listening to the teacher's lecturing and following up on the handouts. Significant proportions of the students manifested overt indications of annoyance and boredom that were apparent through their body language such as

averting their gaze and displaying facial expressions of irritation, in addition to engaging in whispered conversations while the teacher was explaining. Nevertheless, students appeared to pay closer attention when real-world context and examples were reflected upon to give elucidation. The level of interaction in terms of asking questions or making comments was quite limited as it was observed only five times throughout the four sessions.

1.8. ESP

- **Teacher T1**

At the start of every observation session, the teacher assessed the completion of the students' homework, and if any students had not completed it, they would be asked to leave the classroom. In the initial observational session, the teacher handed out note documents about the lesson and requested the students to carefully examine the information provided and then compare it with their own notes. Following that, she began lecturing for around 38 minutes. In the following session, she communicated to the students her intention to adopt a more “student-centered approach” in which they should do more work. In this regard, she explained saying that: “I will not give you ready-made answers anymore, you combine my notes with yours to construct the lesson.”. The teacher made an observation to the class that she made this decision as she had found her lecturing method to be ineffective; she said: “From my reflection, the ready-made lessons don’t yield a good understanding”. She followed: “Your achievements in the exam gave me perspective into trying new methods”. For the rest of the sessions, the teacher provided the students with more opportunities to respond to questions and discuss with her and their colleagues issues that pertained to the subject matter of the lessons. As the students answered and engaged in conversations, the instructor offered comments and posed additional questions based on their remarks for further discussion. The teacher appeared to be quite receptive to the students' responses and inviting for their inquiries, which encouraged them to participate more actively in class discussions. The lessons for all of the following observational sessions were constructed based on the students' reflections and the analysis of questions and answers. The students who successfully answered some

of the challenging issues raised by the teacher were granted rewarding marks. The teacher occasionally offered advice pertaining to the lives of the students, aiming to enhance their awareness and responsibility. For instance, she posed questions such as “What is the reason you came here? What motivates u in what way” “Succeeding in your current studies will directly affect your success in life”. She also shared tips regarding techniques of essay writing and offered valuable suggestions to students in this particular area. Additionally, the educator articulated her expectations for the upcoming examination, emphasising the importance of employing critical thinking skills and original ideas: “I expect critical thinking in the exam papers while showing your stance and expressing your own ideas” “I do not accept stolen ideas”.

- **Students Gr1**

During the observational sessions, all students who arrived late to the classroom were not admitted. In the first session, only a small number of students had completed the assigned homework, and those who did not were reprimanded. Those who completed their homework took the time to read concise definitions of concepts related to the lesson. As the teacher commenced lecturing, the students went passive, silently listening to the explanations for the entirety of the remaining class time. It is worth noting that out of the entire students, only two actively participated in the classroom discussion by posing questions and providing comments to the teacher. In the second observational session, as the teacher indicated that she will shift towards a student-centred approach. As a result, a noticeable increase in student engagement was observed. The students actively engaged more in the learning process by posing inquiries and exchanging their thoughts and answers about the instructional content. During the course of the activity, several students engaged in a constructive exchange of comments and responses with their peers. This led to the development of back-and-forth conversations, where ideas were shared and discussed in a dynamic manner. Some students expressed their satisfaction with the newly adopted approach “I think learning this way is better”.

- **Teacher T11**

The educator started the observational sessions by providing an overview of the topic to be tackled and reiterating relevant concepts from the preceding courses. The instructional sessions were predominantly teacher-centred, wherein the educator did most of the talking, assuming the primary role of disseminating information through a lecture-based format. In relation to the topics covered during the sessions, the educator shared her perspective on various aspects of teaching approaches. She explained to students that the main role of the teacher in the classroom is to be a guide “the teacher's job is not to transfer knowledge but direct students towards it.”. Additionally, she expressed her expectations regarding her students, pointing out that they should not rely solely on her for acquiring knowledge “my students should not need me to teach them everything; they need only my guidance; they should be able to take charge of their own learning”. For that, she noted that students should acquire the skills for conducting thorough information searches “You need to know how to search for reliable information”. The teacher invited students to share their viewpoints, even if they contradicted her own, expressing her fondness for such instances (“I love it when I have students contradict my judgment”, “You are not empty vessels”, “Never take for granted what is presented to you... even if it comes from me”, “do not believe everything I say”). She, nevertheless, stressed that students should make a good case arguing for their alternative viewpoints with strong arguments “..., but if you want to challenge me bring some good theories or arguments”. The lecturer occasionally attempted to raise her students' awareness regarding their intrinsic value and the practicality of her advice in their future endeavours, even regarding their lives outside the classroom. For instance, after showing students tips and skills on how to conduct well-founded research for information, the teacher explained “These skills will not only be used in the classroom but outside it too which will help you in your workplace, making you a better employee”. The teacher also noted the importance of reflective teaching “We need as teachers to reflect on our teaching”; she then proceeded to convey her viewpoint concerning the educational system in Algeria, asserting that “We are not in a true LMD system, and it is impossible to

implement it now”. She continued to explain that “Crowded classrooms are really problematic and do not help”, additionally “the Algerian educational system is failing because it relies on memorisation not critical thinking”. The teacher continued to occasionally give advice to her students for the rest of the session, either about real life or about their studies, putting emphasis on critical thinking. On a few occasions, she made an effort to question her students and elicit their points of view regarding aspects of the lesson.

- **Students gr2**

The majority of students present during the observational sessions assumed a passive stance, mostly listening to the teacher’s lectures. A small number of students provided concise responses to the questions raised by the teacher regarding the lesson. Additionally, a few students presented inquiries to the instructor. Several students were observed displaying disengaged behaviours, such as having conversations with their peers, using their mobile phones, or directing their attention elsewhere, thus appearing distracted. The attention of the students was partly regained whenever the teacher connected the lesson to real-life situations.

1.9. Methodology

- **Teacher T8**

The teacher began the observational session by reviewing the content covered in previous sessions. The lessons consisted of detailed explanations presented in a lecture-style format, with occasional opportunities for students to answer questions. During the third observational session, the teacher chose to dictate certain parts of the definitions for some related concepts. Throughout her explanations, the teacher substantiated her lectures using tangible, real-life illustrations. During the second session, the educator took on the role of a model by demonstrating the proper methodology for conducting scientific research. Throughout the sessions, the teacher occasionally tried to elicit students' responses using cognitive inquiries “Based on the two different examples I provided, can you guess the answer?”. The teacher commended the students for their insightful

opinions and educated guesses whenever they shared them. The teacher focused on addressing the issue of time constraints when covering the material. The teacher constantly checked for students' understanding after her explanation “Is it clear so far? Are you sure?”, and she also commended the students for their insightful opinions and educated guesses whenever they shared them. The instructor pointed out to the issue of time constraints when covering the material.

- **Students gr1**

During the observational sessions, the students mostly remained passive, listening to the teacher's explanations, taking notes, or writing down the dictated information. Even when asked for responses, only a small number of students actively engaged in answering the questions, resulting in a low participation rate. In rare instances, few students provided comments and shared their opinions about the lessons.

- **Teacher T15**

The teacher began the observational sessions by discussing and reminding students of previous lessons. The instructional courses were structured around a PJBL. During the initial observational session, students were afforded the chance to deliver concise presentations they had prepared on topics of their choice. Subsequently, the students were informed that they would be required to complete a mini-research project before the conclusion of the semester. The teacher provided the students with the opportunity to select their own topics and collaborate in pairs or work independently, while also establishing specific page limits. The educator encouraged students to explore a wide range of topics and strive for originality, and then welcomed questions about the project-making process, while briefly addressing the less active students and pushing them to get involved. Afterwards, the instructor proceeded to deliver their lecture in a manner that provided practical guidance for conducting the project. The second session began with the teacher assessing the students' progress in their projects. Afterwards, he returned the exam papers and discussed the evaluation criteria for the second semester. The teacher also sought the students' input on the exam and engaged in discussions with them

about the problems in evaluation schemes. He then proceeded to ask questions about the lesson and expanded upon the answers to provide a thorough explanation. For the remaining two observational sessions, the teacher assessed the students' progress, inquired about their research methodology, and built his explanations based on their interactions and comments about their project development. It is worth noting that at times, the teacher provided explanations in a more personalised manner for a prolonged time, addressing only a select few students before moving on to others. In addition, his voice had a low volume, making it difficult for students in the back to hear and occasionally allowing for distractions.

- **Students gr2**

Throughout the observed sessions, it was evident that almost half of the students were actively inquiring about the methodologies involved in constructing their projects. They attentively listened to the teacher's explanation and provided comments, aiming to incorporate their insights into the project development process. The students assumed responsibility for determining the topics of their projects and selecting their peers. As the sessions progressed, a significant portion of the students did not actively participate in responding to the teacher's questions. Some students provided their perspectives on the exams, discussing the challenges they encountered and aspects they were dissatisfied with. It is worth noting that several students were visibly annoyed and frustrated with the teacher's exclusive attention to a small number of students and his low vocal volume while explaining. It was also evident that the majority of the students endeavoured to gather information that would assist them in accomplishing a successful project; their driving motive for that could be getting a good mark as voiced by several of them during and after the sessions.

1.10. Literature

- **Teacher T9**

The teacher began the instructional sessions by introducing the topics. The courses consisted of a combination of teacher-led lectures and engaging students in tasks

focused on analysing passages from novels and eliciting various interpretations. The teacher posed thought-provoking questions which encouraged students to engage in deep reflection and express their perspectives on the events depicted in the novel. After listening to students' answers, she provided them with feedback and insightful comments and shared her own perspective. The teacher determined the schedule for completing various tasks and allowed open discussions among students regarding their answers. The teacher frequently acknowledged students' requests for assistance while they were carrying out their tasks. It is worth noting that the teacher consistently maintained a stationary position at the front of the rows, speaking with a relatively subdued tone of voice.

- **Students gr1**

Throughout the observational sessions, students took notes whenever the teacher provided explanations for the lesson. During the analysis of the given novel passages, a significant portion of the classroom actively participated in collaborative efforts, trying to identify key points and engaging in fruitful exchanges of ideas. Occasionally, students sought assistance from the teacher regarding the tasks at hand. In several instances, students were actively involved in cognitive tasks that necessitated informed speculation. Although several students actively participated by sharing their answers, opinions, and ideas with the whole classroom; most students chose not to participate, even those who were observed engaging in discussions about the questions. It was observed that certain students, particularly those sitting in the back rows, displayed a lack of interest in the instructional material, engaging in personal conversations with their peers or diverting their attention to their smartphone devices.

- **Teacher T16**

During the observational sessions, the teacher relied on a highly interactive approach to teaching. She carefully designed sessions that fostered an interactive exchange of ideas, encouraging students to engage in meaningful discussions and collaborate with one another to construct knowledge. The educator began the lesson by reviewing the learning goals and initiating a lively discussion about the

selected novels. She engaged a large group of students with thought-provoking questions that encouraged analysis, reflection, and the expression of personal viewpoints (e.g., what do you think about the roaring twenties in the novel? before you go I need you to reflect on whether the writer is reliable or not and tell me next time we meet with justification of course; what was so great in your opinion about the novel?). The teacher demonstrated a genuine interest in the students' remarks, responding with encouragement and acknowledging their unique perspectives (e.g., that's a really interesting perspective). After listening to the students' responses, the instructor provided a comprehensive explanation of the lesson and shared her insights, further expanding on the students' discussion. She often provided guidance to students, emphasising the importance of original and higher-order thinking (e.g., avoid copy-paste responses; you should always develop your critical thinking). In fact, the teacher stressed the significance of critical thinking right from the initial observational session "We are here to criticise, be sceptical and question the information". During the subsequent sessions, the discussion gradually transformed into spirited debates, and the teacher allowed the participants to engage in them without any intervention. The teacher displayed a remarkable level of enthusiasm, a warm and welcoming demeanour, and an attentive ear.

- **Students gr2**

Most of the students displayed a high level of engagement and enthusiasm throughout the observational sessions. Students expressed divergent viewpoints regarding the novel, with some openly acknowledging their lack of enthusiasm for it. Most students were actively involved in continuous analysis, discussion, and debates. They displayed a proactive approach by engaging in a thoughtful exchange of questions, demonstrating a genuine curiosity about each other's perspectives as well as the teacher's insights.