People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
University of Algiers
Faculty of Arts
Department of English

Exploring English Language Teachers' Teaching Style: a case study at Blida University, English Department

Dissertation submitted to the department of English, University of Algiers, in candidacy for the degree of Magister in Linguistics and Didactics.

Presented by:
Ms. Hind SAIL -TERKI

Supervised by:
Prof. Faiza BENSEMMANE

2009

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Disclaimer

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my own investigation and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

Date: 21 / 04 /2009. Signed:

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Dedication

This humble work is dedicated to my parents, whose encouragements, confidence and patience have always been a continual source of inspiration and strength to me. It is also dedicated to my husband, my most loving supporter.

To my angel "Maria"…

Abstract

The present study is an attempt to investigate the teaching style of ten university language teachers teaching in the English department of Saad Dahleb University at Blida. It tries to identify the most dominant teaching style of these teachers and to see how aspects of learner-centredness operate within this dominant teaching style.

This study is exploratory. It makes use of three research instruments: two questionnaires to teachers and a questionnaire to students. The aim of using questionnaires is to assess the teachers' dominant teaching style from both teachers' and students' perspectives and to examine how learner-centred teaching principles are reflected in their teaching style. The questionnaire designed for teachers and for students include 26 items and it was adapted from an instrument initially used by Rong et al. (2005), called the Adapted Principles of Adult Learning Scale (APALS).

After analysing the responses of teachers' and students' questionnaires and comparing them, we noticed that teachers and students have matching views regarding the teachers' dominant teaching style. According to the teachers questioned, 7/10 teach in a traditional way while 9/10 also teach in a traditional way from the students' point of view. But the analysis of teachers' 'traditional' style of teaching revealed some learner-centredness that was evident from the teachers' responses to the 26 items of the APALS questionnaire and from their responses to the 6 questions of the second questionnaire.

The findings revealed that there are some learner-centred elements in the teachers' instruction in the sense that they tried to relate learning to students' experiences and establish a climate of trust between them and the learners. In addition, the students were encouraged to ask questions and get involved into discussions and debates especially in the Literature modules.

One implication of these findings is that teachers should be encouraged to adopt a more learner-centred teaching style. According to recent research, self-reflection plays an important role in identifying and modifying teachers' personal teaching style (Grasha 1996, Conti 2004). So, we provided three self-reflection activities suitable for university teachers of English. These self-reflection activities may help to identify the attitudes, values and beliefs that teachers associate with their teaching practices and to find alternatives and better their teaching style.

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Introduction

Many scholars like Rogers (1994) criticised the use of the teacher-centred teaching approach and other educationists like Tudor (1993), Conner (1997) and Weimer (2002) have opened new perspectives for teachers calling them to adopt more learner-centred teaching principles. Being aware that university teaching may include more aspects and strategies of teacher-centredness, we thought it might be useful to explore aspects of learner-centredness that are claimed by university teachers of English teaching at Blida University.

In other words, assuming that university teachers' teaching style is predominately teacher-centred, is there room for learner-centredness as some teachers claim? How do they focus on the student? What are the characteristics of this learner-centredness? This research deals with these aspects and attempts to describe teachers' dominant teaching style from both teachers' and students' perspectives.

In fact, our motivation to investigate this area of teachers' teaching style resulted from the large amount of literature on teaching style and learner-centredness and from a personal experience when I taught in the English department at Blida University. It happened that I attended a number of my colleagues' sessions and I noticed that although those teachers were teacher-centred, there were some features of learner-centredness in their teaching. And from our hypothesis that English language teachers' dominant teaching style is teacher-centred, we had this idea of examining more closely and as systematically as possible aspects of learner-centredness characterising their teaching. This resulted in the following research question:

1- What aspects of learner-centredness operate within English language teachers' dominant teaching style?

Having this purpose in mind i.e. examining aspects of learner-centredness in teachers' dominant teaching style, we thought of outlining our dissertation as follows: an introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. The five chapters were respectively entitled: Teaching Style, Learner-centredness, Structure of the Study, The Dominant Teaching Style and Aspects of Learner-centredness and finally Finding an Alternative Teaching Style Through Self Reflection.

Through the first two chapters, we will try to examine our research's two operational definitions or constructs i.e. teaching style and learner-centredness. Teaching style as a term is defined. In fact, many scholars like Fischer and Fisher (1979), Dun and Frazier (1990), Grasha (1996) and Conti (2004) tried to define it but we were given no definitive meaning. It is defined as a set of methods, a set of behaviours, a belief system in addition to behaviours and teachers' distinct qualities.

So, the word teaching style received a range of definitions but in our study it means: "the distinct qualities displayed by the teacher that are persistent from situation to situation regardless of the content" (Conti, 2004:78) We will adopt Conti's def because we believe that teaching style does not change each time the teacher changes his teaching content/context. Besides, Conti's definition is directly related to our research operational construct 'learner-centredness' since he identifies two types of teaching style: the Teacher-centred and Learner-centred teaching style.

In fact, Conti did not only define the word teaching style but he also provided teachers and researchers with an instrument or a questionnaire that he called PALS

(Principles of Adult Learning Scale). Conti suggests the use of this scale to find out about the dominant teaching style among teachers (be it teacher-centred or learner-centred) in any teaching context. And since we intend to use an adapted version of this scale in our research, we thought it is necessary to examine the original version PALS.

Another part of this first chapter will review research studies on teaching style; one of them by Wang et al. (2006) used the PALS and another one by Rong et al. (2005) used its adapted version. The aim is to compare these studies' results with our study's findings. The next chapter will be about the exploration of the term learner-centredness.

When examining the term learner-centredness or the learner-centred approach, we will review concepts related to Humanism and Constructivism since they are the roots of learner-centredness. We will examine how the Humanistic approach values the learner's feelings, knowledge and experiences and encourages their self-esteem. In addition, we will examine how the Constructivist approach views learners as active participants in the construction of their knowledge as they make sense of the world in which they live. All this would be achieved under a title: Learner-centredness within the Humanistic and the Constructivist Approaches.

Next, we will examine the role of the teacher as an authority and a learning councellor since we believe, like Tudor (1993) and O'Dwyer (2006) do, that the teacher remains a figure of authority in a learner-centred approach so that he is the knower or the source of knowledge and the organiser of his learners' learning activities

After examining the role of the teacher with special emphasis on his authoritative role, we will examine in detail his role as a learning councellor when dealing with the next title Aspects of the Learner-centred Teaching Style. Those aspects are grouped by Conti (2004) into seven factors:

1- Use of learner-centred activities.
2- Personalising instruction
3- Relating learning to students' experience.
4- Assessing learners' needs
5- Climate building
6- Participation in the learing process
7- Flexibility for students' personal development.

All the aspects of learner-centredness mentioned above will be clarified and they will constitute a framework for our research so that we will examine how each of them i.e the seven factors, operate within university English language teachers' dominant teaching style.

In addition to examining aspects of learner-cnetredness, we will find out about the factors that may affect teachers' decision to adopt a learner-centred teaching style. As we will review in the last part of the second chapter, some of the factors may be related to teachers' nature i.e. their readiness to change and their beliefs and others may be related to students' nature and their readiness to participate in their learning, the availability of resources and class-size. The next third chapter will deal with the way we structured our research to find out about the teachers' dominant teaching style and aspects of learner-centeredness that characterise it.

In Chapter three, we will give details about what will constitute our study's population sample, research instruments and data collection procedure. The participants in this study will be university teachers of English (as a foreign language) teaching in the English department of Saad Dahleb/Blida University and students enrolled in the four years (first, second, third and fourth year) of the English degree course. The students will be students of the participating teachers. Participation in this study will be on a voluntary basis; for this reason, the number of teachers will depend on their willingness to participate in our study.

To collect data, we will adopt an instrument called Adapted Principles of Adult Learning Scale by (Rong et al. 2005). This instrument was an adapted version of a questionnaire called Principles of Adult Learning Scale originally developed by Conti in 1979. The APALS is a 26 item Likert scale which describes the frequency with which a teacher practises certain teaching behaviours. The participating teachers will be asked to fill in this questionnaire according to their teaching practices in class. The students of the former teachers will also be asked to fill in the questionnaire according to their teachers' teaching practices in class. In addition to the APALS, an open-ended questionnaire to teachers only will be used to cross-check answers from the APALS and to understand better how teachers actually teach in class.

Questionnaires to teachers will be handed out to be returned via the head of the English Department at Blida University after one week. The APALS questionnaires to students will be distributed on different occasions. Each Teacher will gather eight of his students in class. These students will be selected on a voluntary basis and they will

be asked to fill in the questionnaires. All the questionnaires to teachers and students will be included in appendixes

Data obtained from the APALS will be analysed statistically after calculating some mean scores. Data obtained from the Teachers' open-ended questionnaire will be organised categorically and coded. Patterns and themes from the perspectives of the teachers will be identified, analysed and interpreted. All the results concerning the dominant teaching style and aspects of learner-centredness will be presented, discussed and interpreted in the fourth chapter entitled: The Dominant Teaching Style and Aspects of Learner-centredness. The results of our study will also be compared to the findings of similar studies. In the last fifth chapter, we will deal with some pedagogical implications.

The aim behind undertaking this study is to try to confirm our hypothesis that university English language teachers are generally teaching in a traditional way while adopting some aspects of learner-centredness in their teaching. Another purpose of this research is to try to open new teaching perspectives for teachers calling them to adopt more learner-centred teaching principles.

In fact, before adopting any new learner-centred teaching principle, teachers need to know about their teaching styles. Scholars like Grasha(1996) and Conti (2004) consider that unless teachers reflect and analyse their current behaviours and try to identify the attitudes, values and beliefs associated with their practices, their understanding of their teaching style becomes limited.

Being convinced of the important role self-reflection plays in identifying and modifying teachers' personal teaching style; we intend to suggest three self-reflection

activities in the last chapter. The first self reflection activity is adapted from a self reflection activity originally developed by Grasha (1996). It can help teachers to identify the assumptions they make about teaching and learning. It can also help them understand their classroom practices. This activity includes a list of some learner-centred teaching principles in order to invite teachers to think about how to adopt them to modify or change their teaching style.

The second self-reflection activity is structured using the following guidelines to teachers provided by Grasha(1996:12-15)

1- Use a student rating scale to gather a baseline on how students perceive you

2- Identify aspects of your teaching that the evaluations suggest you are strongest or weakest in

3- Select specific behaviours that you would like to develop

4- Re-evalute your teaching and concentrate on those bahaviours you want to enhance to fine tune what you do

Following Grasha's four guidelines, we thought that the APALS questionnaire which will be used in our research might be useful as a rating scale to elicit information from students on how they view their teachers' teaching style. Teachers may ask their students to supplement their rating scales with written comments. These comments may help teachers understand the specific reasons for students' evaluations and offer them valuable suggestions for improvement.

The third self-reflection activity is taken from Grasha's(1996) self-reflection activity**.** It is based on exploring teachers' personal values and teaching. This activity includes a list of values which implicitly reflect some learner-centred and teacher-

centred values. The aim behind using this list is to invite teachers to reflect on how those values are reflected in their teaching practices and let them find their own way to enhance their teaching style.

These 3 self-reflection activities can take place at home and they can result in discussions with colleagues and students. They will hopefully help teachers reflect upon some aspects of learner-centredness such as:

- How to put their students in a position to decide about the teaching content.
- How to motivate their students
- How to build a favourable learning climate.
- How to include students' experience and bring their prior knowledge to assist learning.
- How to help students to define their learning goals.

The next first chapter will be devoted to the exploration of the term Teaching Style since it is our research's main operational definition.

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Chapter I: Teaching Style

1.1 Definition and Models

1.1.1 Fischer and Fischer (1979)

Teaching style has garnered much attention over the past forty years. Fischer and Fischer (1979:245) refer to teaching style as 'a classroom mode, a pervasive way of approaching the learners that might be consistent with several methods of teaching'. They identified seven types of teaching style: Task-Oriented, Cooperative Planner, Child Centred, Subject Centred, Learning Centred and Emotionally Exciting and Its Counterpart.

1.1.1.1 Task-Oriented

Task-Oriented teachers prescribe the materials to be learned and demand specific performance on the part of the students. Learning to be accomplished may be specified on an individual basis, and an explicit system of accounting keeps track of how well each student meets the stated expectations.

1.1.1.2 Cooperative Planners

Cooperative Planners plan the means and ends of instruction with student cooperation. They are still in charge of the learning process, but with their adult experience and professional background, they guide the students' learning. Opinions of the learners are not only listened to, but are respected. These teachers encourage and support student participation at all levels.

1.1.1.3 Child Centred

Child Centred teachers provide a structure for learners to pursue whatever they want to do or whatever interests them. In planning his lessons, the teacher always takes

a back seat to the interest and curiosity of the learner. This style is not only extremely rare but it is almost impossible to imagine in its pure form because the teacher is responsible in his classroom and not all learners' interests can or have to be encouraged.

1.1.1.4 Subject Centred

Subject Centred teachers focus on organised content to the near exclusion of the learner. By covering the subject, they satisfy their conscience even if little learning takes place. However, Learning Centred teachers have equal concern for the students and for the curricular objectives and the materials to be learned but they reject the over-emphasis of both Child-Centred and Subject-Centred styles. They instead help students, whatever their abilities or disabilities, develop toward substantive goals as well as toward autonomy in learning.

1.1.1.5 Emotionally Exciting and Its Counterpart

Emotionally Exciting and Its Counterpart (those who are not emotionally exciting) teachers show their own intensive emotional involvement in teaching. They enter the learning-teaching process with zeal and usually produce a classroom atmosphere of excitement and high emotion. The non-emotional teachers conduct classrooms where rational processes predominate, and the learning is dispassionate though just as significant and meaningful as in the classrooms of the emotionally more involved teachers.

1.1.2 Dunn & Frazier (1990)

Dunn & Frazier (1990) do not define teaching style as a set of methods but they view it as based on characteristic behaviours that teachers are engaged in for promoting

student learning. Without being specific about what these behaviours may include, they argued that such behaviours can help learners acquire basic knowledge and skills, develop a love of learning, learn how to learn, release and foster creativity and develop an increasingly positive self image.

1.1.3Grasha (1996)

Grasha (1996) remarks that teaching style represents a belief system in addition to behaviours that the teacher exhibits in class. To this end, he outlined five teaching styles that were according to him pervasive across a variety of disciplines and classroom environments. Thus, he stresses the point that 'everyone who teaches possesses each of the five teaching styles to varying degrees' (p.153). These five styles include the Expert, Formal Authority, Personal Model, Facilitator, and Delegator.

1.1.3.1 Expert

Expert teachers possess knowledge and expertise that students need. They strive to maintain status as an expert among students by displaying detailed knowledge and by challenging students to enhance their competence. They are concerned with transmitting information and insuring that students are well prepared.

1.1.3.2 Formal Authority

Formal Authority teachers possess status among students because of their knowledge. They are concerned with providing negative and positive feedback, establishing learning goals and expectations and rules of conduct for students. They are also concerned with the correct, acceptable, and standard ways to do things and with providing students with the structure they need to learn.

1.1.3.3 Personal Model

Personal Model teachers believe in ‘teaching by personal example’ and establish a prototype for how to think and behave. They oversee, guide and direct by showing how to do things and encouraging students to observe and then to emulate the instructor’s approach.

1.1.3.4 Facilitator

Facilitator teachers emphasise the personal nature of teacher-student interactions. They guide and direct students by asking questions, exploring options, suggesting alternatives and encouraging them to develop criteria to make informed choices. The overall goal is to develop in students the capacity for independent choices, initiative and responsibility. Teachers work with students on projects in a consultative fashion and try to provide as much support and encouragement as possible.

1.1.3.5 Delegator

Delegator teachers are concerned with developing students’ capacity to function in an autonomous fashion. Students work independently on projects or as part of autonomous teams. The teacher is available at the request of students as a resource person.

Grasha further combines the five styles in various groupings to form four blends of teaching styles or what he calls "clusters" (see table 1). In each cluster there are styles which are dominant (Primary Teaching Styles) and others which play a secondary role (Secondary Teaching Styles).

Table 1: Grasha's Four Teaching Style Clusters

	Primary Teaching Styles	**Secondary Teaching Styles**
Cluster 1	Expert/ Formal Authority	Personal Model/Facilitator/Delegator
Cluster 2	Personal Model/Expert/ Formal Authority	Facilitator/Delegator
Cluster 3	Facilitator/ Personal Model/ Expert	Formal Authority/Delegator
Cluster 4	Delegator /Facilitator / Expert	Formal Authority/ Personal Model

1.1.4 Conti (2004)

Conti (2004) for his part defines teaching style as 'the distinct qualities displayed by a teacher that are persistent from situation to situation regardless of the content' (p.78) He identifies two types of teaching style, the teacher-centred and the learner-centred teaching style.

1.1.4.1 The Teacher-centred Teaching Style

For Conti, using a teacher-centred teaching style implies for the teacher to design an environment which stimulates the desired behaviours that the learners must exhibit and discourages those that have been determined to be undesirable. Acceptable forms of the desired behaviour are defined in overt and measurable terms. An example of this in language teaching is 'practising drills' where the learners' answers can be either true or false and hence, the teacher can overtly measure or score them.

1.1.4.2 The Learner-centred Teaching Style

Conti adds that using a learner-centred or collaborative teaching style assumes that learners' potential for individual growth is unlimited. As they interact with their surroundings, they give their own interpretations of reality. Consequently, behaviour is

the result of personal perceptions. Their motivation is internal and their experiences play an important role in their learning. In this process, learners are expected to be active and to take responsibility for their actions.

All the previously mentioned definitions and models of teaching style demonstrate that scholars have failed to reach consensus on a definitive meaning of teaching style. Fisher and al. (1979) provide a simplistic definition of 'teaching style' as it is defined in terms of teaching methods. This definition is inappropriate to our study since we believe that a teaching style is far more complex than a teaching method.

Dunn et al.(1990) defined teaching style as a set of behaviours without specifying which behaviours a teacher should perform to promote students' learning, help learners' acquire basic knowledge and skills and develop a love of learning. Their definition is rather vague and could not be used for this study.

Unlike Fisher et al. and Dunn et al., Grasha (1996) provided a more elaborate and adequate definition of teaching style. According to him, any teacher possesses each of the five teaching styles reviewed earlier but with varying degrees. He defined teaching style as something general and inclusive which does not specify the teaching content or the teaching context. However, his definition was not directly related to learner-centredness and thus, it could not serve the aim of our study to explore learner-centredness in teachers' dominant teaching style.

In contrast with Grasha, Conti's (2004) definition is directly related to the concept of learner-centredness. He defined teaching style in terms of the binary

distinction between teacher-centred and learner-centred teaching style and it seems quite appropriate to this study.

To explore aspects of learner-centredness that characterise teachers' dominant teaching style, Conti suggests to assess seven factors or parameters. These factors are: Learner-Centred Activities, Personalizing Instruction, Relating to Experience, Assessing Student Needs, Climate Building, Participation in the Learning Process and Flexibility for Personal Development. Each factor is viewed as 'a major component of teaching style' (Conti 2004:80). These factors will be examined after calculating some scores that result from Conti's PALS (Principles of Adult Learning Scale) questionnaire to teachers described below.

According to Conti (2004), the learner-centred teaching style is reflected in each of the previous factor's name so that 'high scores in each factor represent support of the learner-centred concept implied in the factor name. Low factor scores indicate support of the opposite concept' (p.80) For example, if a teacher scores high in the first factor called Learner-Centred Activities, this means that he encourages students to take initiative and responsibility for their own learning. However, if the teacher scores low on this factor, this means that he is adopting a more teacher-centred mode of instruction using a teacher-centred methodology, content and evaluation techniques. A description of each factor is provided in section 1.2.

To assess these seven factors, Conti suggests the use of a 44-questionnaire that he originally developed in his doctoral thesis in 1979. This instrument is called the 'Principles of Adult Learning Scale' (PALS). It is meant to assess teachers' teaching practices in an adult learning context such as university. This instrument seems to be

the most suitable for our study as it does not only classify teachers' teaching style as being totally teacher-centred or totally learner-centred, but it provides degrees of teacher's commitment to one of the two styles (strong, very strong or extreme). In addition, the PALS can help to identify aspects of learner-centredness which may characterise teachers' teaching style. This scale will be examined thoroughly in the next part.

1.2 The Principles of Adult Learning Scale (PALS) as developed by Conti (1979)

A number of studies employed the Principles of Adult Learning Scale (PALS) instrument to find out about the perceived teaching style among teachers in different settings. Originally, Conti (1979) developed the PALS, a 44-item instrument which measures the frequency with which a teacher practices teacher-centred or learner-centred teaching styles. High scores on PALS indicate support for a learner-centred approach. Low scores reveal support for a teacher-centred approach. Scores in the middle range disclose an eclectic approach that draws on behaviours from each extreme.

Conti suggests that teachers' teaching style can be assessed on a six-point Likert type scale ranging from 'always' to 'never'. The teacher's response indicates the frequency with which he practises the behaviour in the item. The scale can be completed in 10 to 15 minutes. Tests on its construct validity, content validity and reliability proved PALS to be a highly reliable and valid rating scale to examine teachers' teaching in different adult teaching contexts. (Spoon & Schell, 1998)

Scoring in this model involves converting the values for the positive and negative items and then summing the values of the responses to all items. Scores may

range from 0 to 220. The mean for PALS is 146 with a standard deviation of 20. The teacher's score can be interpreted by relating it to the mean. Scores above 146 indicate a tendency toward the learner-centred mode while lower scores imply support of the teacher-centred approach.

Scores deviating with one standard deviation from the mean 146 (between 126 and 166) indicate a strong commitment to a specific teaching style. Scores that are in the second standard deviation of 20 to 40 points different from the mean indicate a very strong and consistent support to a teaching style. Scores that are in the third standard deviation and are at least 40 points from the mean indicate an extreme commitment to a style.

The scores provided by the PALS are a useful indicator of the teacher's dominant teaching style. The overall PALS score can be used further to identify aspects of learner-centredness that may characterise the teacher's teaching style. Those aspects are reflected in seven factors mentioned earlier, i.e. Learner-centred Activities, Personalising Instruction, Relating to Experience, Assessing Student Needs, Participation in the Learning Process and Flexibility for Personal Development.

The first factor 'Learner-Centred Activities' reflects the extent to which a teacher supports a more collaborative mode by practising behaviours that encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. The teacher who scores low on this factor supports a teacher-centred mode of instruction. He favours formal testing over informal evaluation techniques, exercising control on the classroom by assigning quiet desk-work, using disciplinary action when needed, and determining the educational objectives for students. The teacher sees value in practising one basic

teaching method and supports the conviction that most learners have a similar style of learning.

However, if a teacher scores high on the first factor, he supports a collaborative mode and rejects teacher centred behaviours. He practises behaviours that allow student to initiate actions and encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning. The focus then in the classroom is upon the learner.

Factor 2 is 'Personalising Instruction'. If the teacher scores high on this factor, he does a variety of things that personalise learning to meet the unique needs of each student. Objectives are based on individual motives and abilities. Instruction is self-paced. Various methods, materials and assignments are utilised. Lecturing is viewed as a poor method of presenting subject material to the learner. Cooperation rather than competition is encouraged.

Factor 3 is 'Relating to Experience'. If the teacher scores high on this factor, he plans learning activities that take into account his students' prior experiences and encourages students to relate their new learning to experiences. To make learning relevant, learning episodes are organised according to the problems that the students encounter in everyday living. However, focus is not just on coping with current problems or accepting the values of others. Instead, students are encouraged to ask basic questions about the nature of their society. When this is screened through experience, such consciousness-raising questioning can foster a student's growth from dependence on others to greater independence.

Factor 4 is related to 'Assessing Student Needs'. If the teacher scores high in this area, he would treat a student as an adult by finding out what each student wants and

needs to know. This is accomplished through heavy reliance on individual conferences and informal counselling. Existing gaps between the students' goals and their actual levels of performance are diagnosed. Then, students are assisted in developing short-range as well as long-range objectives.

Factor 5 is 'Climate Building'. Scoring high on this factor implies that the teacher favours setting a friendly and informal climate as an initial step in the learning process. Dialogue and interaction with other students are encouraged. Periodic breaks are taken. The teacher attempts to eliminate learning barriers by utilising the numerous competencies that his students already possess as building blocks for educational objectives. Risk taking is encouraged, and errors are accepted as a natural part of the learning process. In the classroom, students can experiment and explore elements related to their self-concept, practise problem-solving skills, and develop interpersonal skills. Their failures serve as a feedback device for the teacher to direct future positive learning.

Factor 6 relates to 'Participation in the Learning Process'. While Factor 2 focuses on the broad location of authority within the classroom, this factor specifically addresses the amount of involvement of the student in determining the nature and evaluation of the material content. If the teacher scores high on this factor, he has a preference for having his students identify the problems that they wish to solve and for allowing them to participate in making decisions about the topics that will be covered in class. The teacher encourages an adult-to-adult relationship between teacher and students; he also involves the students in developing the criteria for evaluating classroom performance.

Factor 7 is about 'Flexibility for Personal Development'. If the teacher scores low on this factor, he sees himself as a provider of knowledge rather than as a facilitator. The teacher determines the objectives for the students at the beginning of the programme and keeps to them regardless of changing students' needs. A well-disciplined classroom is viewed as a stimulus for learning. Discussions of controversial subjects that involve value judgements or of issues that relate to a student's self-concept are avoided.

If a teacher scores high on factor 7, he rejects this rigidity and lack of sensitivity to the individual. He views personal fulfilment as a central aim of education. To accomplish this, flexibility is maintained by adjusting the classroom environment and curricular content to meet the changing needs of the students. Issues that relate to values are addressed in order to stimulate understanding and future personal growth.

Each factor is represented by a number of items that make up the 44-item PALS questionnaire. Factor scores are calculated by adding up the points for each item in the factor. Conti (2004) explains that high scores in each factor represent support of the leaner-centred approach. Low factor scores indicate support of the teacher-centred approach.

1.3 Research Studies on Teaching Style

1.3.1Rong et al (2005)

The first research study on teaching style was undertaken by Rong et al. (2005) from Arizona University. The aim of this research was to investigate the teaching styles of teachers in a large south-western university in the USA. They examined the following points: the dominant teaching style of a sample of university teachers, some

aspects of learner-centredness that are easy for teachers to achieve in class and the variables that influence teachers' teaching style.

The population of Arizona University consisted of a group of twenty one (n=21) university teachers who taught in a diversity of course types. Fourteen (n=14) teachers taught language courses including English language courses and seven (n=7) taught content courses like business courses.

To assess teachers' teaching style, an adapted version of Conti's (1979) original Principle of Adult Learning Scale was used. It is called the APALS or Adapted Principle of Adult Learning Scale. APALS is a 26 item questionnaire which requires respondents to indicate the frequency with which they practise some behaviours (from never to always). A high score on APALS indicates a learner-centred approach while a low score indicates a teacher-centred one.

Statistical analysis via computer software was used to analyse data. The teacher's overall teaching style was determined by a composite score calculated from each individual item results. To determine which of the seven factors described earlier and which represent learner-centred principles is easy for teachers to achieve, a mean score by each factor was calculated. The higher the mean score was, the more easily it was for teachers to practise the factor's learner-centred principles.

The findings of this research revealed that 4 out of 21 university teachers were very strongly teacher-centred, 13 out of 21 were less strongly teacher-centred and 4 out of 21 were less strongly learner-centred. Thus, the majority of teachers (17 out of 21) proved to be teacher-centred.

The results also indicated that Climate Building (Factor 5) was the easiest for teachers to achieve with a mean of 4.4 out of a total of 5. This implies that teachers participating in this study favoured setting a friendly and informal teaching climate. However, Flexibility for Personal Development (Factor 7) was the hardest for teachers to accomplish with a mean of 2.02 out of a total of 5. In other words, teachers found it difficult to adjust classroom environment and curricular content to meet the changing needs of their students. Besides, teachers did not give importance to students' personal fulfilment or growth.

1.3.2 Wang et al. (2006)

Another research using PALS was done by Wang et al. (2006) from California State University. The aim was to find out whether learner-centred principles could be practised in distance education in China. The researchers utilised Conti's PALS (1979) to determine the dominant teaching styles of teachers. (i.e. learner-centred or teacher-centred). Also, a series of ten Yes/No questions were added to complement the quantitative survey.

The PALS questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 40 teachers at the major universities of Beijing and Shanghai. The participants included teachers who teach adults a variety of subjects on the radio or TV. Some taught vocational education and English on the Internet. Others taught correspondence courses via regular surface mail. Thus, all teachers were Chinese distance education teachers.

Data collected in this study were analysed using statistical analysis via computer software. Using Conti's scoring method for the PALS instrument, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for participants' responses. The mean responses for

these participants on each of the seven factors described earlier were calculated. In addition, responses to the Yes/No questions distributed to the teachers were examined to complement the quantitative results.

The findings showed that Chinese distance education teachers scored high on factor 2 or Personalising Instruction (2.57 out of a total of 5), factor 3 called Relating to Experience (3.38/5), factor 4 called Assessing Students' Needs (3.16/5), factor 5 called Climate Building (3.93/5) and factor 6 Participation on the Learning Process (2.88/5). However, they scored low on factor 1 called Learner Centred Activities (2.48/5) and factor 7 called Flexibility for Personal Development (1.92/5).

These results demonstrate that Chinese distance education teachers taught their courses in a relatively learner-centred mode of instruction; they scored very high on factors 3, 4 and 5. These scores implied that teachers planned learning activities that took into account their students' prior experiences and needs. To achieve that, they relied on individual meeting and informal counselling. Besides, their teaching climate was friendly and informal.

Nevertheless, Chinese distance education teachers featured a teacher-centred form of instruction. This teacher-centred teaching approach did not involve any behaviour like negotiating curricular priorities with students, informally evaluating students instead of exams or involving students when planning lessons.

In fact, the responses to the Yes/No questions corroborated the responses to the PALS questionnaire. For example, to the question "Do you take into account your learners' prior experiences when planning your lessons?" 31 out of 40 of Chinese university teachers answered 'yes'. Thus, the majority reported that they took into

account their students' prior experiences when planning their lessons. Specifically, the study's results on assessing 'Relating to Experience' of the PALS demonstrated that the teachers scored quite high on this factor.

Although the literature considers the learner-centred approach as the most appropriate mode of instruction to meet learners' needs and expectations (see section 1.4), the two previous studies reflected another reality of teaching in USA and China. The instructional orientations of university and distance education teachers have a non-collaborative orientation. So, the use of the teacher-centred teaching style seems to be quite common in formal university setting and distance education. As Conner (2005:1-2) rightly remarks: 'A century after Dewey proposed learner-focused education, most formal education still focuses on the teacher.'

Taking the two previous studies as a reference for the results produced with the APALS and PALS instruments, we thought it might be appropriate to examine the teaching style of English Language teachers at Blida University using the same framework and to discuss the extent to which their teaching style is learner-centred. Since learner-centredness is one of the operational definitions of this study, the next part of this literature review will be devoted to the exploration of this construct.

Chapter 2: Learner-centredness

2.1 Learner-centredness within the Humanistic and the Constructivist Approaches

Learner-centredness, also referred to as learner-centred approach, student-centred approach or collaborative mode, is "a specific philosophical approach to teaching" (Nunan, 2004:215) whose main focus is on engaging the learner in the learning process, whereas in the teacher-centred approach, focus is on the teacher.

Weimer (2002) defines learner-centredness as an approach which focusses on students' needs, what and how they are learning and the conditions that contribute to their learning. In the same vein McCombs et al. (1997:7) states that learner-centredness is:

> 'A perspective that couples a focus on individual learners (their heredity, experience, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities and needs) with a focus on learning (the best available knowledge about learning and how it occurs and about teaching practices that are most effective in promoting the highest levels of motivation, learning and achievement for all learners). This dual focus, then, informs and drives educational decision-making.'

Thus, learner-centredness is an instruction that focuses on what learners are doing and this results in the building of responsibility in learning.

Nunan (2004) argues that the philosophical reasons for adopting a learner-centred approach to teaching was informed by research into learning styles and strategies (Willing 1988, Oxford 1990) as well as conceptual and empirical work in the

area of learner autonomy (Benson 2002). However, the philosophical movements that underlie the concept of learner-centredness are found in the Humanistic approach (Carter 1993, Tudor 1993) and the Constructivist approach (Jonassen 1991, Roberts 1998).

According to Carter (1993:38), the humanistic approach to language teaching adopts classroom strategies which are student-centred. It values the learner's feelings, knowledge and experiences and encourages self-esteem and confidence in the student. Humanism stresses that by lowering the affective filter of learners, namely, their anxiety and fear of making errors, a good and lasting learning climate is created.

For Tudor (1993:22-23), the humanistic movement stresses the importance of qualities such as understanding, personal assumption of responsibility and self-realisation. From this perspective, language learning is seen as an activity which involves students as complex human beings, not simply as language learners. Language teaching should therefore exploit students' affective and intellectual resources as fully as possible, and be linked with their continuing experience of life.

The humanistic movement in education has always impressed on the personal and subjective feelings of learners and what learners as whole persons go through as they try to learn. Confidence building, creating an anxiety-free atmosphere for learning and emphasizing what learners know are the features that characterize humanistic teaching. This emphasis on learners' affective involvement in the learning process is typical in learner-centredness.

Jonassen (1991) notes that the roots of learner-centredness are also found in constructivism, a term which refers to theories of knowledge and learning such as.

Individual or Cognitive constructivism and Social constructivism. Cognitive constructivism initially evolved from Piaget's work. It conceptualizes learning as the result of constructing meaning based on an individual's experience and prior knowledge. On the other hand, Social constructivism grew from the work of individual constructivists as well as Vygotsky and others who took a social and cultural perspective of knowledge creation. They believe that learning occurs via the construction of meaning in social interaction, within cultures, and through language. This implies that learners are active participants in the construction, renovation and demolition of knowledge as they make sense of the world in which they live.

In the same vein, Roberts (1998) argues that the constructivists emphasise that learning involves active construction and testing of one's own representation of the world and accommodation of it to one's personal conceptual framework. Hence, all learning is seen to involve re-learning and re-organisation of one's previous understanding and representation of knowledge. Jonassen et al. (1995) argue that unless new knowledge becomes integrated with the learner's prior knowledge and understanding, this new knowledge remains isolated and does not transfer to the new situations, hence, cannot be used effectively in new tasks.

In considering the characteristics of the constructivist approach to teaching and learning, Fardouly (1998) emphasises that the learner is both an individual and a social participant in the sense that he decides what he needs to learn by setting personal learning goals and constructs for himself meaningful knowledge as a result of his own activities and interaction with others. According to Fardouly, learning strategies

include library research, problem and case-based learning, doing assignments and projects, group work, discussions and fieldwork.

Being influenced by Humanism and Constructivism, the learner-centred approach values the learners' feelings, knowledge and experiences and encourages their self-esteem and confidence. In addition, it views them as active participants in the construction of their knowledge as they make sense of the world in which they live. These learner-centred principles are far from being practised in traditional classes where the teacher is the authority. The next part will discuss the role of the teacher in teaching.

2.2 The Role of the Teacher as an Authority and a Learning Counsellor

According to Rogers (1994:209), 'traditional/conventional education' and 'person-centred education' may be thought of as the two poles of a continuum and every teacher or institution of learning could locate itself at some appropriate point on this scale. Rogers was in favour of the learner-centred mode. He described it as 'a growth-promoting climate' (1994:213) where learning tends to be deeper, proceeds at a more rapid rate than in the traditional teacher-centred classroom. For him, a teacher-centred mode of instruction compromised a number of characteristics.

In the teacher-centred approach, the teacher is the possessor of knowledge and the students are recipients. The lecture and the textbook are the major methods of getting knowledge into the recipients. The teacher is the possessor of power and the students are the ones who obey. The authority figure (the teacher) is very central and rules his class by authority. Control and discipline are gained from the very first day.

Rogers adds that the teacher-centred approach is also characterised by the lack of trust between the teacher and his students. The teacher governs his students by keeping them in a constant state of fear through public criticism and a constant fear of failure to graduate. No opportunity is given to students to exercise choice or carry responsibility; they do not participate in choosing the goals, the curriculum or the manner of working. No place is accorded to the feelings and emotions of students, only their rational mind or intellect are welcomed.

For Conner (1997), the role of the teacher in the teacher-centred model is to assume responsibility for making decisions about what will be learned, how it will be learned, and when it will be learned. Tudor (1993:24) provides a more detailed definition of the role which the language teacher performs in most traditional modes of teaching. The teacher is a 'knower' and he is an 'activity organiser'.

The 'knower' teacher for Tudor is a source of knowledge in terms of both the target language and the choice of methodology. Namely, he is a figure of authority who decides on what should be learned and how this should be learned. The teacher who is an 'activity organiser', sets up and steers learning activities in the right direction, motivates and encourages students and provides authoritative feedback on students' performance.

More recently, scholars like O'Dwyer (2006) have considered that the authoritative figure of the teacher, as a transmitter of knowledge to students who do not know, is an old ideal in disrepute. For O'Dwyer, the ideal now in the teaching of English as a second or foreign language is for more democratic, student-centred approach, in which the teacher facilitates communicative activities using various

techniques such as group-work activities, discussions, games and role-plays, preparing listening, reading and writing activities that connect meaningfully with students' felt needs, as well as allowing more spontaneous conversations to take place.

Although O'Dwyer's concept of teacher's responsibility in fostering language practice seems to be highly learner-centred, he did not deny the traditional leading role of the teacher in 'modelling linguistic practice, and in providing instructions, corrections and guidance towards learning goals-albeit with less frequency as students' proficiency increases' (2006:12). He argues that 'there is strong justification for believing that collaborative, student-centred approaches to English education should compliment rather than conflict with an understanding of the teacher as an authority.'(2006:2)

We can see that the idea of the teacher as an authority is far from disappearing from the educational scene. Rather, scholars suggest integrating it into learner-centred approaches. Thus, Tudor (1993) argues that teacher's authoritative roles in the teacher-centred approach will persist in a learner-centred approach to teaching languages, but teachers will need to assume a further role, that of 'learning counsellor'. This implies extra-responsibilities for the teacher represented in the main five functions: preparing learners, analysing their needs, selecting methodology, transferring responsibility and involving them.

Those teachers' new responsibilities will be fully discussed in the next section when we review the seven parameters that characterise a learner-centred teaching style as suggested by Conti (2004). Those seven components will be examined in the third

chapter to find out the extent to which English teachers at Blida University assume a role of a learning counsellor.

2.3 Aspects of the Learner-centred Teaching Style

Conti (2004) tried to define the learner-centred teaching style in terms of seven parameters or what he calls 'factors'. According to him, the support of the collaborative mode is reflected in the names of those seven factors mentioned earlier in section 1.2. Although this may suggest that Conti was in favour of a fully learner-centred approach to teaching, in fact he was not. The results of his studies 'revealed that either style could be effective when practised to the proper degree in a given situation' (p.84).

The first factor characterising a learner-centred teaching style is called Learner-centred Activities.

2.3.1 Learner-centred Activities

'Learner-centred activities' is one aspect of the learner-centred teaching style. According to Conti, it reflects the extent to which a teacher supports a more collaborative mode by practising behaviours that encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and favour informal testing over formal evaluation techniques.

According to Tudor (1993), learning activities in a university can be more relevant if they are learner-centred i.e. if it is the students, as opposed to the teacher, who decide on the conceptual and linguistic content of these activities. Tudor believes that students' involvement and motivation will be greater if they can decide how

activities are structured. Brookfield (1986) also argues that people will make firm commitments to activities in which they feel they have played a participatory role.

Tudor (1993) comments that this does not mean that responsibility is wholly transferred to students. The teacher remains ultimately responsible for ensuring that effective learning takes place. Assessing how much and which areas of responsibility to transfer to students is thus a key aspect of the teacher's role and this involves evaluating three main points: what students have to contribute, how this can make learning more effective and how capable students are of assuming a constructive and responsible role in shaping their learning programme.

Tudor states that choosing a methodology in a learner-centred approach will operate in two stages. First, the teacher gets to know students' learning style, their attitudes to or experience of language learning. To do so, he uses his professional judgement to select the right teaching-learning mode.

Second, the students participate actively in the planning of their learning programme. To achieve such a goal, the teacher prepares his students to think critically about their learning experiences using concrete learning activities. What Tudor implies by learning activities is that the teacher negotiates the teaching methodology he is using with his students to enable them to learn better about themselves as learners. For example, the reasons for not enjoying laboratory or pair work.

The learner-centred teaching method described above by Tudor(1993) seems to be an ideal situation but is it possible that English teachers, at Blida or any other Algerian university, share decisions regarding the content and the form of teaching with their large number of students?

Nunan (1992) argues that a negotiated curriculum cannot be introduced and managed in the same way as one which is prescribed by the teacher or the teaching institutions. He adds that it particularly places the burden for all aspects of curriculum development (planning, implementation and evaluation) on the teacher. So, are university teachers of English capable to take such a burden? It does not seem to be an easy task.

2.3.2 Personalising Instruction

For Conti, this aspect reflects the extent to which teachers employ a number of techniques or strategies that personalise learning to meet the unique needs of each student, emphasising cooperation rather than competition.

According to Legutke & Howard (1991), forms of individualistic and competitive learning have been dominant in Western education for the last decade. Nowadays, teachers may employ more learner-centred learning and teaching strategies. For example, Freiberg & Driscoll (1992) suggest a continuum of strategies or what they call 'an instructional continuum' (p.46) for teaching and learning. These strategies may range from the most teacher-centred strategies like the use of lectures, questioning, drill and practice to the most student-centred ones like the use of role-play, projects and self-assessment and they should be part of any teacher's repertoire.

Thus, as Leigh and Mac Gregor (1992) argue, teacher-centred teaching strategies such as lecturing, listening or note-taking will live alongside other processes that are based on student's discussion and active work with the course material. According to them teachers who use the collaborative mode tend to think of

themselves less as expert transmitters of knowledge to students, and more as coaches or expert designers of intellectual experiences for students.

One of the learner-centred strategies which teachers may use to meet the needs of students is the project task or project work. For Legutke et al. (1991), Project work will result in 'learning groups whose members collaboratively seek outcomes that are beneficial to all those with whom they are cooperatively connected.'(p.219-20) Rogers (1994) defines the role of the teacher in cooperative learning groups as a consultant-facilitator and a resource to the groups.

Assuming that some learner-centred strategies may be part of university English teachers' repertoire, what possible strategies can they use? Do they use role-play, discussions and debates, project-work and/or self-assessment strategies?

2.3.3 Relating Learning to Students' Experience

This aspect reflects the extent to which a teacher emphasises learning activities that consider prior experience and encourages students to make learning relevant to their current experiences (Conti, 2004).

Likewise, according to Tudor (1993), in a learner-centred approach, language learning is seen as an activity which involves students as complex human beings, not simply as language learners. Language teaching should therefore exploit students' affective and intellectual resources as fully as possibly, and be linked to their continuing experience of life. Rogers (1994:213) for his part points out that the 'facilitator' teacher can also provide learning resources from within himself and his own experience and from books, materials or community experiences in addition to learners own resources which are based on their knowledge and experience.

Indeed a teacher can help his students to exploit their own experiences as sources of learning by creating situations where students' own experience influences the direction lessons take and gives added significance to their content. For example, students' prior experience of a deficiency in the English language can make them evaluate their language difficulties and play a role in setting their learning goals. Identifying those difficulties will help teachers decide which problem areas they need to focus upon in class (O'Dwyer 2006).

Moreover, a teacher can help students exploit their own experiences as sources of knowledge. In this context, Lambert et al (1998) argue that adopting a learner-centred approach means that learners can bring knowledge to their learning from beyond the classroom, such as from the environment, their interests and beliefs. This knowledge brings about engagement and personal responsibility in learning.

Lambert et al (1998) state that relevant and meaningful constructive learning engages learners in creating their own knowledge and understanding by connecting new learning with their prior knowledge and experience. In the same vein, Good and Brophy (1997) suggest that effective learning occurs when learners can create meaning by linking new information to what they already know. This helps in generating new combinations of knowledge which bring about personal meaning and perspective.

Linking with the above observations, Freiberg et al. (2000) state that one way teachers can foster and nurture linkages of old and new knowledge is by using cooperative activities, role-playing and simulations that make classroom teaching more student-centred. In using these various activities, academic diversity and social exchange within a subject is brought about, increasing its proximity to the real life

experience of students. Furthermore, linking new information to past experience promotes the learning of difficult and remote concepts.

However, as underscored by Kohonen (1992), there are many language teaching contexts where class size makes small and collaborative group work difficult to achieve as is the case of Algerian universities (e.g Blida University). Kohonen (1992) pointed out this serious problem of 'class size' but suggested no solutions to it.

2.3.4 Assessing Students' Needs

'Assessing Students' Needs' is about teacher's orientation toward finding out what each student wants and needs to know, a task often accomplished through individual conferences and informal counselling (Conti 2004). According to Burge (1989), learner's needs in a learner-centred approach are kept at the centre of the teaching/learning process. Tudor (1993) considers that learning is more effective when methodology and study mode are geared around student preferences and needs.

Brookfield (1986) believes that the role of the teacher is to involve students in diagnosing their own learning needs and encouraging them to formulate their own learning objectives. Holec (1980) also suggests getting students to identify their needs. He comments: "It seems unlikely, to say the least, that needs analysis can be successfully carried out by anyone other than the learner himself" (p.3).

Tudor (1993) specifies two main things for a teacher to do in a learner-centred approach to needs analysis and goal setting. The first is to assess how much students have the potential to contribute in their needs analysis. Tudor believes that what students can contribute to goal-setting depends largely on how clear their learning goals are. The teacher can then help students to formulate their insights in a

pedagogically useful form using a variety of techniques. An example is the use of questionnaires which can elicit information useful to the teacher and help students structure their experience.

Another technique consists of using learner diaries where students record their language use over a period of time. Despite the fact that such a technique can be extremely useful to the teacher, Tudor (1993) argues that learner diaries demand a fair degree of commitment and training and may not be quite reliable if the learner is untrained. Other techniques include the pooling of experiences among students (the use of conferences) and teacher-student consultation.

All these pedagogical implications of needs analysis on teaching are interesting. However, knowing that Algerian universities including Blida University have very large teaching groups, how can university teachers manage to analyse all their students' needs individually, if they ever think to do it?

2.3.5 Climate Building

'Climate Building' is about whether teachers set a friendly and favourable climate in the classroom and whether dialogue and interaction with other students are encouraged. In this factor, taking risks is also favoured and errors are seen as part of the learning process (Conti 2004).

Rogers (1994) stresses the point that students need to work within a facilitative learning climate. For him an atmosphere of caring and understanding is evident in the teaching operation. In the same vein, Brookfield (1986) and Weimer (2002) argue that it is important that teachers establish a climate of humane, physically and psychologically conducive to learning. To achieve this, Brookfield suggests for

teachers to arrange circular seating in the classroom, establish a climate of mutual respect and trust among all participants, emphasise collaborative mode of learning, be supportive to students and make learning a pleasant experience for them.

For Weimer (2002), the result of creating positive environments is to encourage students to become self-directed. A self-directed learner, according to Holec (1988), implies an autonomous learner who has the ability to take charge of his own learning. Thus, the role of university teachers is to create favourable environments which will encourage students to take responsibility of their own learning. Such an implication raises some questions related to our research such as: do Algerian university teachers care about creating a climate of humane in class? Do they believe that it is part of their role to help students become self-directed in their learning?

2.3.6 Participation in the Learning Process

'Participation in the Learning Process' implies that the teacher relies on students to identify the learning problem they wish to solve and allows them to participate in making decisions about the topics that will be covered in class (Conti, 2004).

Curriculum design in a learner-centred approach can be seen as a negotiable process or a collaborative effort between teachers and students (Nunan 2004). Breen et al. (2001) define negotiation as 'a discussion between all members of the classroom to decide how learning and teaching are to be organised' (p.1). This differs from traditional approaches to curriculum design where these decisions are made by experts such as needs analysts or course planners. Nunan (1989:19) expresses this idea in the following terms:

> "While a learner-centred curriculum will contain similar elements and processes to traditional curricula, a key difference will be that information by and from learners will be built into every phase of the curriculum process. Curriculum development becomes a collaborative effort between teachers and learners, since learners will be involved in decisions on content selection, methodology and evaluation."

This idea of curriculum negotiation seems far from being practised in Algerian universities given the large number of students a teacher may have in class. In addition, since curriculum development in a learner-centred approach is a collaborative effort between teachers and learner, its success largely depends on the motivation of students. So, are Algerian university students ready and motivated enough to participate in curriculum negotiation?

2.3.7 Flexibility for Students' Personal Development

According to Conti, 'Flexibility for Personal Development' reflects the teacher's self-conception as a facilitator rather than a provider of knowledge. Flexibility for students' personal development is maintained by adjusting the classroom environment and curricular content to meet the changing needs of the learners.

Schwartz and Pollishuke (1990) state that the main goal of a student-centred approach is to encourage students to develop greater decision-making and problem-solving skills and hence to promote greater independence. This approach, therefore, involves and engages learners' minds in creative activities such as those which develop thinking skills.

Bellanca et al. (1991) argue that thinking skills can best be acquired and applied in cooperative groups where students are more willing to engage in problem-solving tasks. The support and responsibility from group members enhances learning and leaves room for a favourable climate for risk taking and increased learning. Therefore, the learner-centred approach fosters cooperation rather than competition, as learners need to work collaboratively and have to use social and cooperative skills. This will result in developing students' sense of responsibility and transferring the learned skills into real life situations. Internal motivation becomes a drive so that learners will be encouraged to reach for higher objectives. In the case of English university students, achieving collaboratively some group-work may teach them for example, to use social and cooperative skills successfully and to reach higher objectives such as working in group for the sake of learning English and not for the sake of getting high grades.

Bellanca et al. (1991) further observe that the learner-centred approach enhances certain attributes in the learners and as a result promotes various life skills such as putting aside individual differences and reducing competition, practising interpersonal skills and hence developing feelings of individual self-worth , benefiting from exploring issues from different view points, developing a sense of community and cooperation as learners work with each other, considering interrelationships among subjects and having a positive attitude towards school and learning.

The aspects of learner-centredness discussed so far are: learner-centred activities, relating learning to students' experience, assessing students' needs, personalising instruction, a facilitative learning climate, students' participation in the learning process and flexibility for personal development. They express the view that

the teacher remains ultimately responsible for ensuring that effective learning takes place. Assessing how much, and which areas of responsibility to transfer to students is thus a major characteristic of the teacher's role. Essentially, this involves the teacher evaluating some points in terms of goal-getting and choice of methodology such as how capable students are of assuming a constructive and responsible role in shaping their learning and how this can make learning more effective.

Consequently, in a learner-centred approach, the teacher should act as both a figure of authority and a facilitator and to do this, according to Tudor (1993), he needs at least three main sets of skills: personal skills (i.e. maturity and human intuition), educational skills (i.e. the ability to develop students' awareness and shape their ability to make the most of their knowledge and experience) and course planning skills (co-ordinating, goal setting and choice of methodology). In fact, it is up to the teacher to decide how, when and which aspects of learner-centredness to adopt in class since many factors may influence his decisions.

2.4 Factors Affecting Teachers' Decision to Adopt a Learner-centred Approach

Tudor (1993) admits the fact that it is not an easy task for teachers to adopt a learner-centred approach and potentially involve students in most levels of decision making. In fact, many factors may contribute to making this approach difficult to implement. Some of them relate to the teacher's internal constraints, others are linked to external constraints like the nature of the students and the availability of resources. Some of these internal and external factors will be considered below.

2.4.1 Teacher's Internal Constraints

The need for a learner-centred approach in teaching is ever-increasing but its application in real situations is far more complex. Without doubt, teachers' readiness to change contributes to these situations. In this context, Weimer (2OO2:72) comments:

> "The effectiveness of the more learner-centred methods depends on faculty being able to step aside and let students take the lead, however having been at the centre so long, we (teachers) are finding it tough to leave that spot, even briefly. As a result, what happens in most college classrooms continues to be very teacher-centred, despite the interest in, support for, and some use of these more learner-centred methods."

In fact, teachers' beliefs play a crucial role in shaping their teaching style. On this point, Grasha (1996) notes that teachers' assumptions are like a double-edged sword. They may lead them to explore new ways of teaching and broaden their perspectives on what is possible or lead to rigid ways of teaching.

Despite theoretical works advocating the learner-centred approach to teaching and the special roles assigned to the teacher, there are factors which the teacher cannot control because they are not directly linked to his nature such as students' factors, availability of resources and class-size.

2.4.2 External Factors: Students' Nature, Availability of Resources and Class Size

Florez and Burt (2001) posit that sometimes, it is the learners who are hesitant to take charge of their own learning due to their educational experiences. These learners may have been taught that the teacher is the unquestioned expert. They may be resistant

to a learner-centred classroom where they are expected to develop goals and work in groups with other learners.

Tudor (1993) argues that the difficulty for teachers to achieve learner-centred teaching style may be due to the type of students they teach; it happens that students are less mature, less motivated, or have poorly defined learning goals. As a consequence, Tudor calls for teachers to make choices on the basis of their initial assessment of their students. For example, if a teacher judges that his students like or prefer to be treated like empty recipients in which he should pour facts or knowledge, he will hardly ever think of adopting a learner-centred approach.

Furthermore, it is sometimes not the students but some factors related to availability of resources and class-size which may affect teachers' decision to adopt learner-centredness in their teaching (Tudor 1993). Accessibility and availability of resources such as books, articles and different sources of information in a university library are crucial to learning in a learner-centred approach, especially when they must be available in the target language (Bolan et al. 2007). For example, university students studying English as a foreign language are expected to consult adequate English sources that are often difficult to obtain.

In this kind of resource-based learning, teachers may play a major role in tailoring resources and their location to the needs and abilities of their students. For example, a university teacher may help his students doing their projects by suggesting them to consult some useful books or websites.

Computer and Internet technology and its capacity for information access and retrieval can play a vital role in supporting the different aspects of learner-centred

learning (Pulist 2001). However, it would require the learners to have achieved a certain level of technological literacy. Blida university has tried to develop an internal policy for its main library 'La bibliothèque centrale' to enable graduate and post-graduate students to use the Internet for studies and research for a limited period of time (one hour daily). However, as there is an insufficient number of computers, given the huge number of students, many of them go outside the university to use the Internet at their own expenses.

An important factor, in addition to availability of resources, which may help to successfully achieve learner-centredness in class, is teaching small-size classes. Indeed one main problem that Algerian teachers often face in their profession is large classes. This situation is common to all educational contexts, be it the primary, secondary or tertiary levels. Sarıçoban (2001) describes some of the mostly occurring problems resulting from large classes.

Crowded classes create a feeling of discomfort for students who cannot move easily in the class and do their activities. Teachers may feel frustrated and tired, and may feel hopeless to manage and control their classes especially if students make noise. Teachers may not find enough room to do some of the activities successfully. They must speak very loudly so that students can hear them as clearly as possible.

In large classes, individual students receive less attention because teachers do not have time to help them all. They cannot provide rightfully accurate evaluation of all students since they do not have opportunity or time to listen to them. For example, when students practise speaking, teachers may not pay the necessary attention to their

pronunciation to see if it is right or wrong; it takes a long time to evaluate all students individually, too.

There is no doubt that the problems caused by large size classes in addition to the factors discussed earlier will cause teachers to think twice before taking any step towards learner-centredness.

In this chapter we explored the term learner-centredness as our research's second operational definition, its roots in Humanism and Constructivism, its implications on the role of the teacher as an authority and a learning councellor , in addition to the discussion of the factors which may prevent teachers from being learner-centred. The next third chapter will explain how we structured or designed our reseach

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1- We have used 'he' as the unmarked form to refer both to he and she indiscriminately

Chapter 3: Structure of the Study

3. 1 Research Design

This research is exploratory and descriptive since its main concern is to provide descriptions of phenomena that occur naturally, without the intervention of an experiment or an artificially contrived treatment (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). The context of the study is academic and the study focuses on the description of the teaching style of a group of teachers teaching all subjects and all years in the English department of Blida University.

The approach followed in this study is quantitative i.e. statistic and analytic in addition to a content analysis of questionnaire data. This study involves collecting data, analysing data, validating initial conclusions and finally discussing and interpreting them.

3.2 The Population Sample

The participants in this study are 10 university English degree teachers teaching at least one language/skills or content course in the English Department of "Saad Dahleb" (Blida, Algeria) as most of them teach up to three courses i.e. a total of approximately 12 hours weekly. We have ensured that our sample includes at least two teachers from each degree year: first, second, third and fourth year (see table 2 below). Participation to this study was done on a voluntary basis. The teachers were asked to complete the APALS questionnaire which involves 26 items and to return it one week later.

Table 2: Distribution of Skills and Content Courses across the Four Years.

Teachers	Courses/ Modules	Year of study
3	Linguistics	1,2,3
2	American Literature	2,4
1	British Civilisation	4
1	English Literature	4
2	Listening/American Civilisation	3
1	Speaking	1
Total:10		

Among those 10 teachers, 9 are female. Concerning their level of education, one teacher holds a doctorate, six teachers have a magister degree, and three others hold a licence (Bachelor's) degree. The respondents' teaching experience at the university ranges from four to twenty years, with a mean of twelve years. The demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in table 3 below.

Table 3: Demographic Variables of the Teachers of English

Demographic variables	**Gender**		**Qualifications**			**Teaching experience**		
	Female	Male	Licence	Mag	Doct	<5	5 -10	>10
Total: 10	9	1	1	6	3	5	2	3

As far as the student population sample is concerned, eighty students participated in this study: sixteen from year 1and 2 and twenty four from year 3and 4. The student sample is uneven across the four years because it depended on the number of the voluntary teachers. So, eight students participated with each of the 10 teachers.

And since we had an unequal number of teachers across the four years, we had an unequal number of students, too. But having a balanced student sample was not a necessity for our study since there is no comparison between groups. Rather, the study focuses on the dominant teaching style of all teachers. The following table (table 4) shows the distribution of both participant teachers and students.

Table 4: Teachers' and Students' Distribution

Degree year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Number of Teachers	2	2	3	3
Number of Students	8 x 2 =16	8 x 2= 16	8 x 3= 24	8 x 3= 24

3.3 Instruments of Data Collection

A questionnaire originally used by Rong et al. (2005) in an adapted version was used in this study. It contained 26 items and was administered to both the 10 teachers and the 80 students to find out about the teachers' dominant teaching style. In addition, this questionnaire was meant to find out about learner-centredness in the teachers' teaching style. A second questionnaire which contained 6 open-ended questions was handed out to the teachers to clarify the responses obtained through the first questionnaire. This latter is examined hereafter.

3.3.1 First Questionnaire to Teachers

As mentioned earlier in the Review of the Literature, we used Rong's et al. (2005) adapted version of the PALS called "The Adapted Principles of Adult Learning Scale" (APALS). The aim behind using this questionnaire was to identify teachers' dominant teaching style and assess aspects of learner centredness reflected in this style, whether it was teacher-centred or learner-centred.

The APALS (see Appendix 1) is a reduced version of the PALS. The original PALS was not used in this study because the 44-item questionnaire contains some items that are not appropriate to the Algerian Higher Education context. Examples are: item 3 “I allow older students more time to complete assignments when they need it” and item 4: “I encourage students to adopt middle class values”.

Using the same questionnaire, seven factors or parameters defined by Conti (2004:80) as components of any teacher’s teaching style were assessed to examine aspects of learner-centredness in teachers' dominant teaching style. These factors are: Learner-Centred Activities, Personalizing Instruction, Relating to Experience, Assessing Student Needs, Climate Building, Participation in the Learning Process and Flexibility for Personal Development and were discussed earlier in section 1.2. Table 5 below represents factors’ distribution in teachers’ APALS questionnaire. (see also Appendix 1)

Table 5: Factors' Distribution in Teachers’ Questionnaire

Factor	Teaching style components/factors	Item numbers
1	Learner-centred Activities.	1 -2 -3 -4.
2	Personalising Instruction.	5- 6 -7- 6-9
3	Relating to Experience.	10-11-12
4	Assessing Student Needs.	13-14 -15.
5	Climate Building.	16- 17.
6	Participation in the Learning Processes.	18- 19 -20- 21.
7	Flexibility for Personal Development	22-23- 24- 25-26.

The first factor is ‘Learner-centred Activities’. It includes items 1,2,3 and4 which are meant to identify the extent to which a teacher supports a more collaborative mode by practising behaviours that encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.

The second factor is ‘Personalising Instruction’ and is displayed through items 5,6,7,8 and 9. They reflect the extent to which teachers employ a number of techniques that personalize learning to meet the unique needs of each student, emphasizing cooperation rather than competition.

The third factor is ‘Relating to experience’. It includes items 10, 11 and 12 which are meant to reflect the extent to which a teacher emphasises learning activities that consider prior experience and encourages students to make learning relevant to their current experiences.

The fourth factor is ‘Assessing Student Needs’. It comprises items 13, 14 and 15. They assess teacher's orientation toward finding out what each student wants and needs to know, a task often accomplished through individual conferences and informal counselling.

The fifth factor is ‘Climate Building’. It includes items 16 and 17 which are meant to measure whether teachers set a friendly and favourable climate in the classroom, where dialogue and interaction with other students are encouraged, taking risks is also favoured and errors are seen as part of the learning process.

The sixth factor is ‘Participation in the Learning Processes’ and includes items 18, 19, 20 and 21. These items reflect the extent to which a teacher relies on students to

identify the learning problems they wish to solve and allows them to participate in making decisions about the topics that will be covered in class.

The last factor is 'Flexibility for personal development'. It includes items 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26 which are meant to reflect a teacher's self-conception as a facilitator rather than a provider of knowledge. Flexibility is maintained by adjusting the classroom environment and curricular content to meet the changing needs of the learners.

3.3.2 Open-ended Questionnaire to Teachers

To collect more data about how university teachers of English teach and to complement the results of the first questionnaire, an open-ended questionnaire including six yes-no open-ended questions (see Appendix 2) was administred to the ten teachers. The aim behind distributing this second questionnaire was to find out how far teachers are using learner-centred principles when teaching in class. The teachers' written verbal responses to this second questionnaire could reveal more information on how teachers teach in class.

Originally, this open-ended questionnaire was meant to be conducted as an interview. However, since teachers did not accept to be interviewed due to their busy time schedule, we decided to write down the 6 open-ended questions and include them in a second questionnaire to the teachers to clarify some of their answers to the APALS questionnaire. This enabled us to get their written responses to the questions and infer more information on their teaching style.

The open-ended questions inquire about areas of teachers' teaching practices in class in relation to the principles of learner-centredness. The first question: 'Do you

negotiate curricular priorities with your students at the beginning of the course/the year? Why or why not?' assesses the amount of students' participation in the learning process such as curricular negotiation. The second question: 'Do you take into account your learners' prior experience when planning your lessons? Why or why not?' examines the degree of importance teachers give to their students' experiences.

The aim behind using question number 3: 'Do you think it should be a goal of educators to help all learners become self-directed? Why or why not?' is to see if teachers believe in the self-directness and autonomy of their students. Question number 4: 'Do you believe that the lecture method is superior to facilitating learning? Why or why not?' examines the teaching methods of the teachers, especially, the use of the lecture method.

Question number 5: 'Do you use informal testing when assessing your students' learning? Why or why not?' is about teachers' method of assessment (the use of formal vs. informal testing). One more question, number 6 was added to assess teachers' learner-centred teaching practices in teaching English. This question is: Do you help your students to determine their learning objectives?

A content analysis was done of the data collected from these questions. The t3extual data was organised categorically and coded. Patterns and themes from the perspectives of the teachers were identified, analysed and interpreted (see Chapter 3).

3.3.3 Questionnaire to Students

Since triangulation demands that the researchers approach the data analysis with more than one perspective on possible interpretations (Allwright et al. 1990), students' perspective about their teachers' dominant teaching style was considered in this study. The Adapted Principles of Adult Learning Scale used for teachers was used for students too, with few changes. At the beginning of each item, the personal pronoun "I" referring to the teacher was replaced by the word "the teacher" to refer to the teacher as a third person (see Appendix 3). It was ensured that the eighty learners participating in this study are registered as students of the ten participating teachers so that they could assess their own teachers' teaching style.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The two questionnaires, the APALS and the open-ended one, were distributed by the researcher to the ten teachers teaching in the English Department at Saad Dahleb University in Blida. They were asked to take one week to fill in the questionnaires and return them to the researcher via the Head of the English Department at Saad Dahleb University.

The questionnaire to students was handed out on different occasions. Each teacher participating in the study gathered without any special selection 8 of his students in his own class and asked them to complete it in English. An exception was made for first year students who found difficulty in understanding many English words and concepts in the questionnaire. For this reason, the researcher explained each of the 26 items, when necessary in Arabic, to the students before they filled the questionnaire in English.

3.5 Method of Analysis of the Collected Data: Scoring the APALS' 26 Items

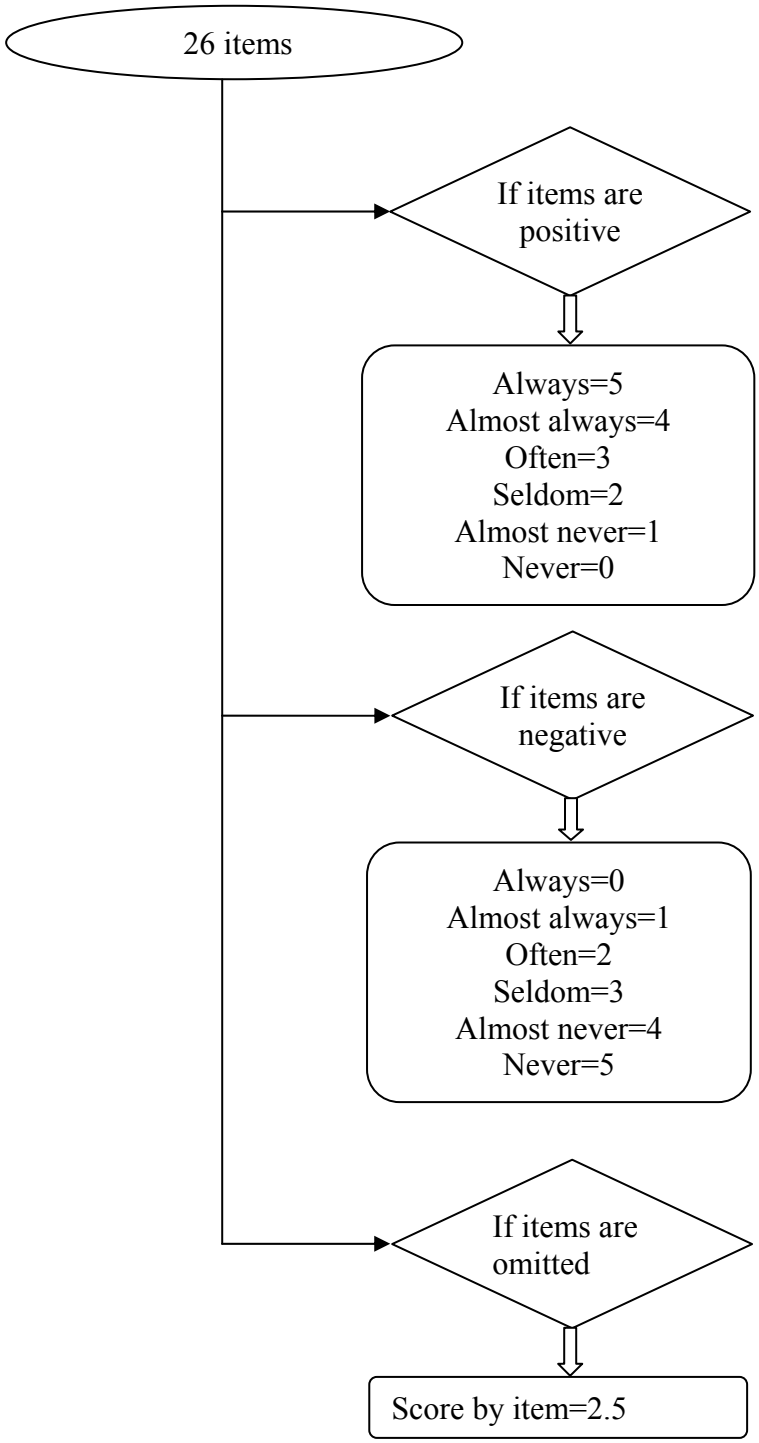
The data obtained through the APLS questionnaire to both teachers' and students' questionnaires were analysed. The teacher's overall teaching style was determined by a composite score calculated from each of the 26 items.

The survey instrument (APALS) contained both positive and negative items (see table 6 below), different values are assigned to these items. For the positive items, the following values were assigned: 'Always' equals five, 'almost always' equals four, 'often' equals three, 'seldom' equals two, 'almost never' equals one and 'never' equals zero. For the negative items, the following values were assigned: 'always' equals zero, 'almost always' equals one, 'often' equals two, 'seldom' equals three, 'almost never' equals four and 'never' equals five. Omitted items were assigned a neutral value of 2.5 (Conti, 2004:90). Figure 1 on the next page illustrates and summarises the method of scoring the 26 items obtained from teachers' and students' questionnaires.

Table 6: Positive and Negative Items Distribution in Teachers' Questionnaire

Positive Items: those which represent learner-centred teaching behaviours	**Negative Items:** those which represent teacher-centred teaching behaviours
6-10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21	1-2-3-4-5-7-8-9-22-23-24-25-26
Always= 5 Almost always=4 Often=3 Seldom=2 Almost never=1 Never=0	Always= 0 Almost always=1 Often=2 Seldom=3 Almost never=4 Never=5

Figure 1: Method of Scoring the 26 Items from Teachers' and Students' Questionnaires

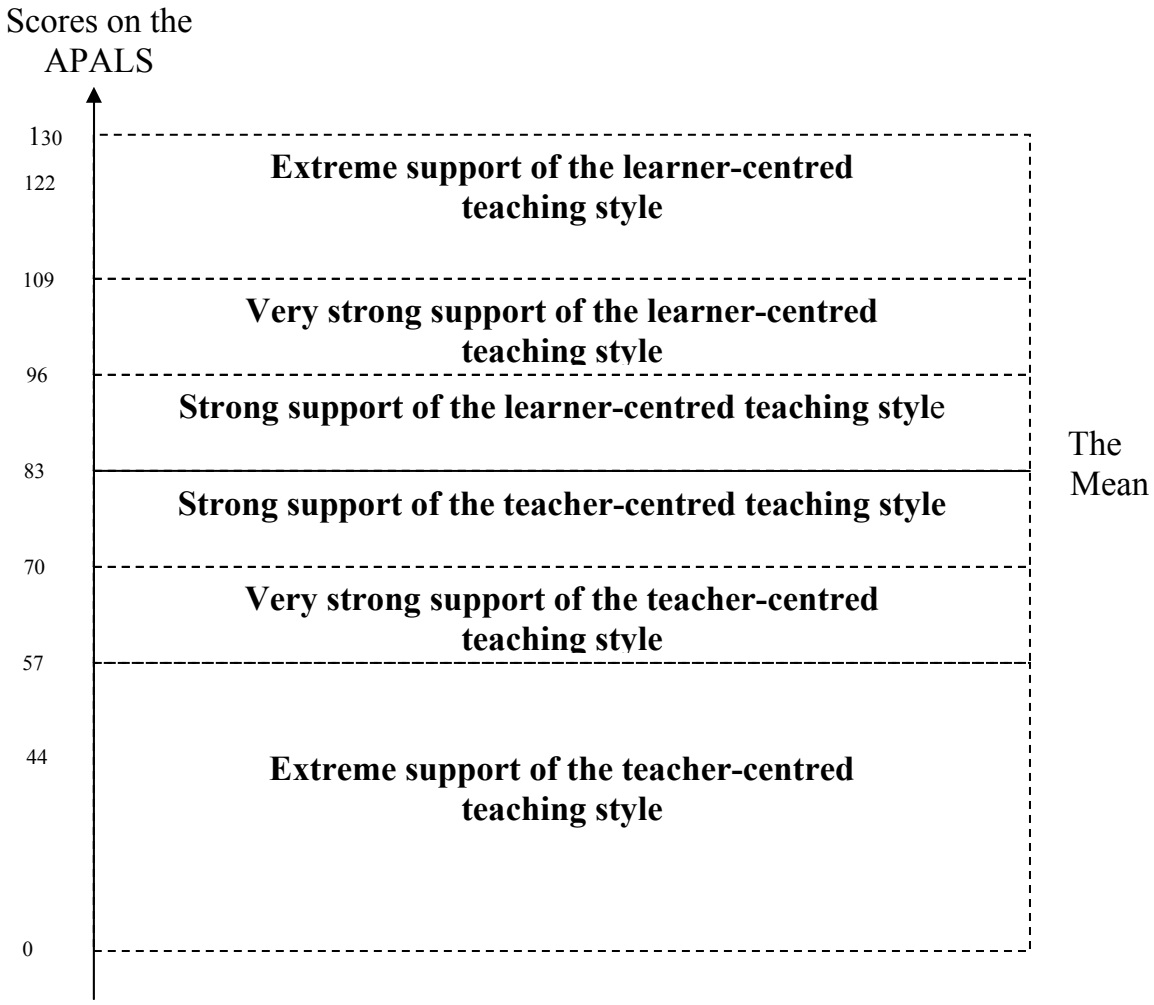


For the 26 items, the highest possible score was 130. The norms of these 26 items were established by Conti (Rong et al., personal communication, February 5, 2005: 83), who recommended using 83 as the norm with a standard deviation of 13

(s.d=13). High scores on APALS indicated support for a learner-centred approach. Low scores revealed support for a teacher-centred approach and scores in the middle range displayed an in-between approach that draws on behaviours from each extreme.

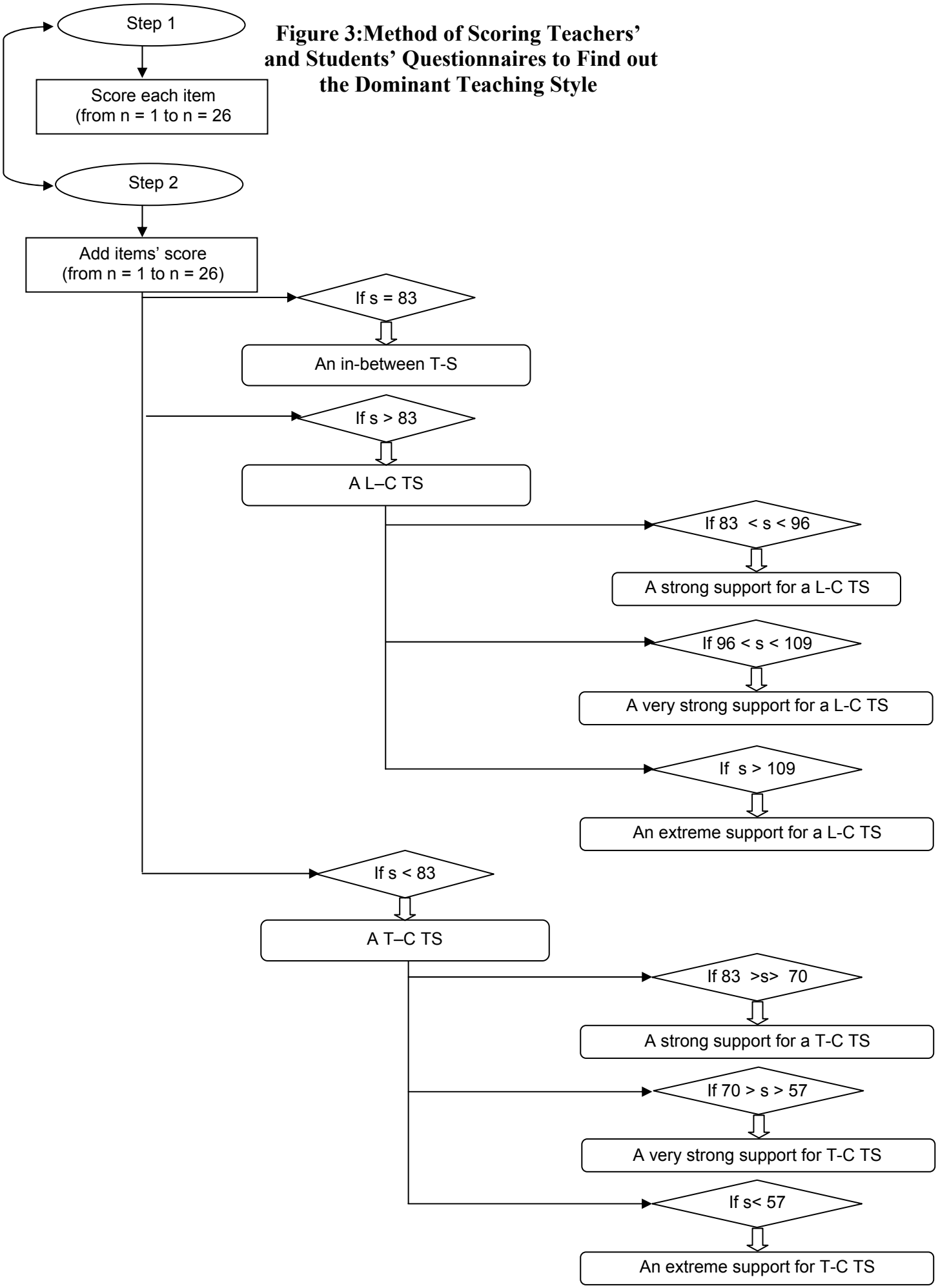
The number of standard deviations, in which a score could be above or below the established mean of 83, was used respectively to interpret the strength of commitment to a learner-centred or a teacher-centred teaching style (see figure 2). Scores deviating with one standard deviation from the mean 83 (between 70 and 96) indicated a strong commitment to a specific teaching style. Scores that were in the second standard deviation of 13 to 26 points different from the mean indicated a very strong and consistent support of a definitive teaching style. Scores that were in the third standard deviation and were at least 26 points from the mean indicated an extreme commitment to a style (see figure 2 on the next page).

Figure 2: The Strength of Commitment to the Teacher-centred or the Learner-centred Teaching Style



Steps of scoring the APALS are purely arithmetic and somehow complex. For this reason, in addition to what was explained before about the scoring method of teachers' and students' questionnaires and for the sake of clarity, we included below (figure 3) a summary of the steps of scoring the APALS. Note that S = score, L-C = Learner-centred, T-C = Teacher-centred and TS = Teaching Style

Figure 3:Method of Scoring Teachers' and Students' Questionnaires to Find out the Dominant Teaching Style



After we score each of the 10 teachers' and the 80 students' APALS questionnaire, we will find out the dominant teaching style of the 10teachers as a group. Then, we will be able to answer the first research question and infer the dominant teaching style of the ten teachers (teacher-centred or learner-centred) by comparing both teachers' and students' perspectives.

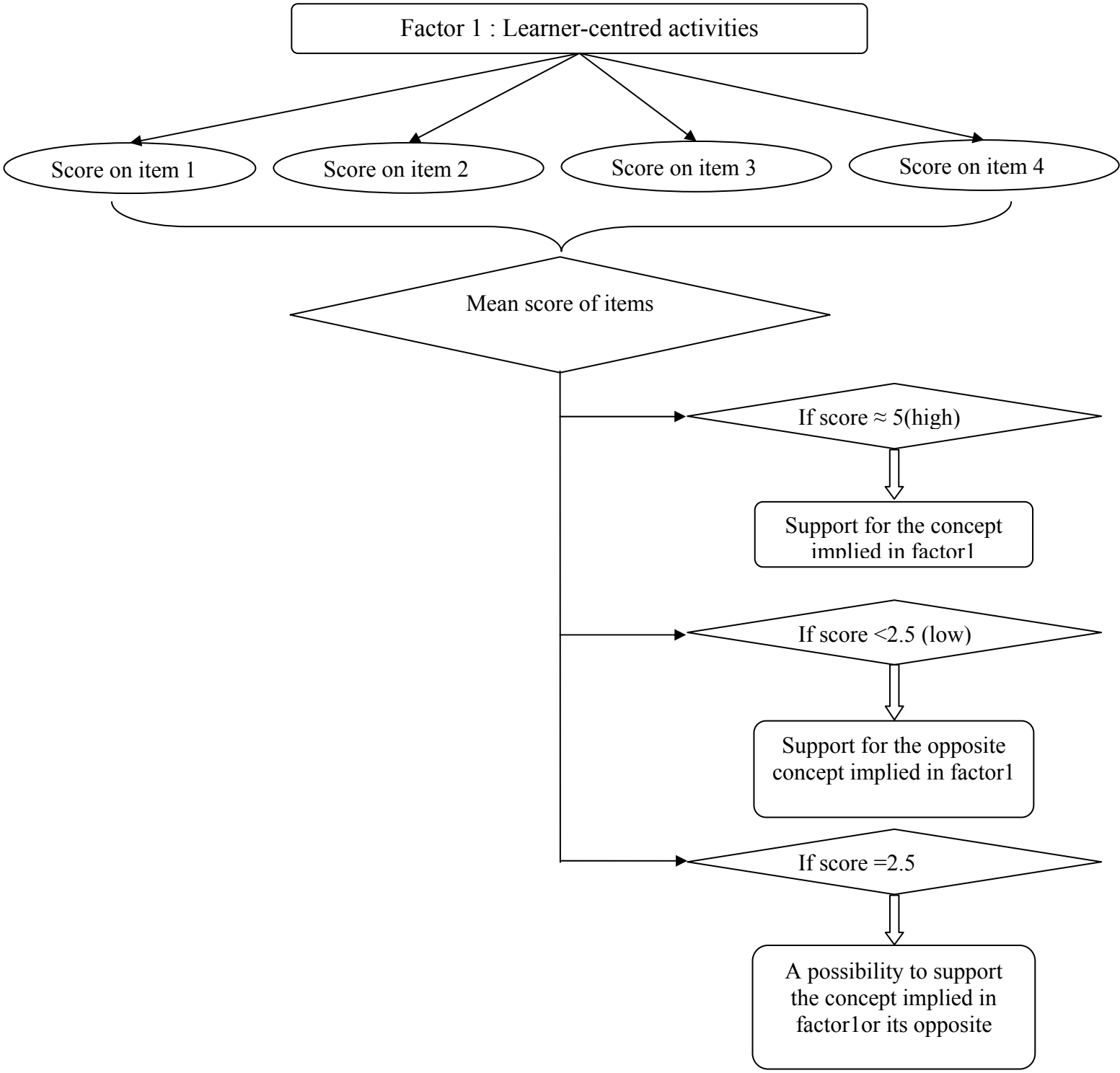
To answer the second research question: 'What aspects of learner-centredness operate within this dominant teaching style?' we will determine which factor among the seven factors of the APALS it is easy for teachers to achieve. This will enable us to determine which aspects of learner-centredness are easy for teachers to adopt.

The seven factors (Learner-Centred Activities, Personalizing Instruction, Relating to Experience, Assessing Student Needs, Climate Building, Participation in the Learning Process and Flexibility for Personal Development) constitute the basic elements that make up a teacher's general teaching style and if a teacher scores high for any of these factors, this indicates that he supports and tries to implement the learner-centred principle implied in the factor's name.

The mean score by each factor is calculated. A high mean score in the factor (the highest possible value mean=5) represents support for the concept implied in the factor name. A low mean score indicates support for the opposite concept. If a score nears the mean score (2.5), it may indicate support for the concept implied in the factor name; it may also indicate support for the opposite concept (Conti 2004).

To illustrate the scoring method for each factor, figure 4 provided below shows how to find out the mean score and ease of achievement for Learner-Centred Activities (Factor 1).

Figure 4: Mean Score and Ease of Achievement of Factor 1



We first calculate the mean score of the items that constitute factor 1 (the same thing is done for the other factors). Then, if the mean score approximately equals to 5, it means that the teachers' score is high in Factor 1 (Learner-centred Activities). This implies that learner-centred activities are practised in class. However, if the mean score is below 2.5, it means that the teachers' score is low in Factor 1. This implies that teachers construct teacher-centred activities in class. And if teachers' score nears the mean score (2.5), no clear judgement can be made.

After reviewing the research design, the population sample and data collection procedure using the APALS and the open-ended questionnaires, the next section is devoted to the presentation, analysis, discussion and interpretation of the results via teachers' dominant teaching style, aspects of learner-centredness characterising their teaching and factors affecting teachers' decisions to a adopt a learner-centred teaching style.

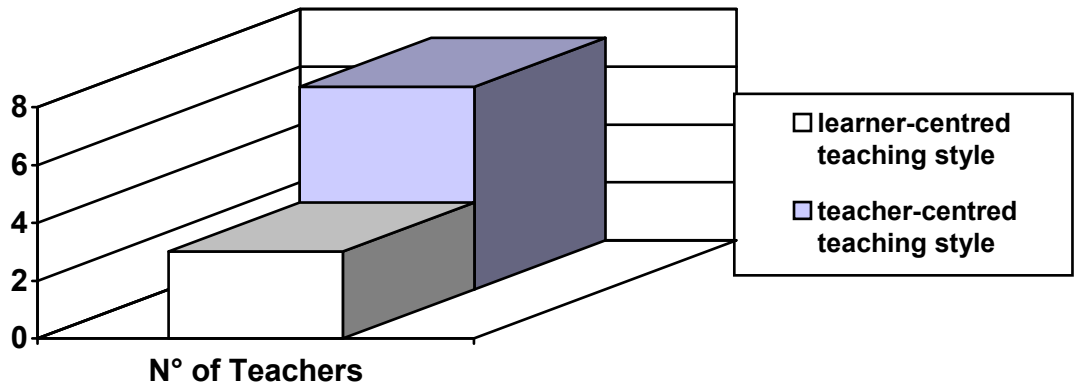
Chapter 4: The Dominant Teaching Style and Aspects of Learner-centredness

4.1 Teachers' Dominant Teaching Style

4.1.1. Teachers' Questionnaire's Results

We have already explained (in section 4.3.1) that if the mean of APALS composite rating exceeds the norm 83, this implies that teachers' teaching mode is learner-centred and if it is below this norm, it is teacher-centred. For the ten teachers, the mean score in this study was 73.75, that is, below the total mean score 83. This suggests that their teaching is teacher-centred.

Graph 1: The Dominant Teaching Style from Teachers' Perspective



An examination of each of the 10 teachers' scores reveals that 3/10 teachers achieved a total score that exceeds the APALS mean score. They had scores in the range of 83 to 96 (one standard deviation above the established mean). These results indicate that only 3/10 teachers use a learner-centered teaching style and 7/10 have a teacher-centred teaching style (see graph 1). Thus, according to the scores in teachers'

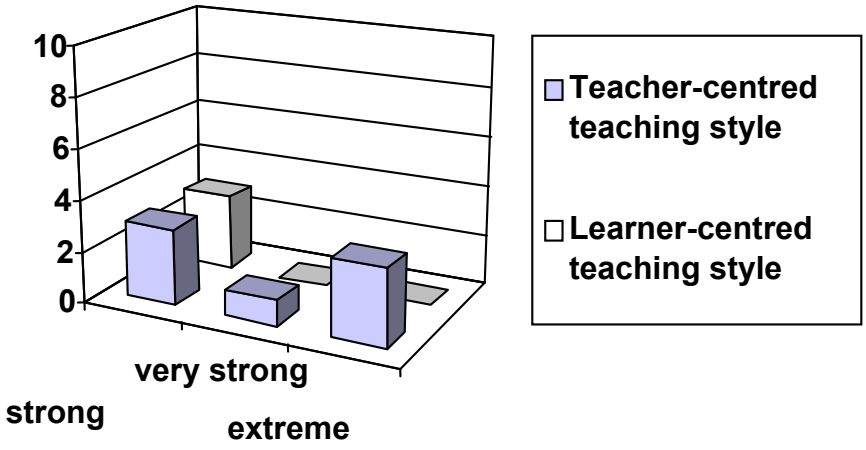
questionnaire reported in table 7 below, the dominant teaching style which characterises classroom practices of the teachers participating in this study is the teacher-centred teaching style

Table 7: Results from the Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers	Mean Scores	Mean compared to the norm	Teachers' teaching style	Degree of commitment to teaching style
1	78	< 83	T-c	Strong
2	53	<83	T-c	Extreme
3	51	<83	T-c	Extreme
4	87	>83	L-c	Strong
5	73.5	<83	T-c	Strong
6	71.5	<83	T-c	Strong
7	94	>83	L-c	Strong
8	67.5	<83	T-c	Very strong
9	43	<83	T-c	Exterme
10	86	>83	L-c	Strong
Total Mean	73.75	<83	T-c	Strong

T-c = Teacher-centred, L-c = Learner-centred

Graph 2: Teachers' Degree of Commitment to the Teacher and the Learner-centred Teaching Styles (Teachers' Perspective)



Teachers' degree of commitment to each style varied from one teacher to another. It appears that 3 teachers were 'extreme' supporters of the teacher-centred teaching style. One teacher was 'a very strong' advocator of this style and three others had a strong preference for the teacher-centred teaching style. On the other hand, it appears that no teacher supported the learner-centred teaching style, neither very strongly nor extremely. However, strong supporters of this style were 3 teachers (see graph 2 above and table 8 below).

Table 8: Teachers' Degree of Commitment to One Style or Another According to Teachers' Responses

Teaching Style	Teachers (n=10)
Learner-centred (strong)	3
Teacher-centred (strong)	3
Teacher-centred (very strong)	1
Teacher-centred (extreme)	3

4.1.2 Students' Questionnaire's Results

The results of the students' questionnaire indicate that students think that very few teachers used a learner-centred teaching style. The mean of students' composite rating for the sample of this study was 66.49, that is to say, below the total mean score 83. From the students' perspective, one teacher achieved a total score that exceeds the APALS mean score. He had composite scores in the range of 83 to 96 (one standard deviation above the established mean). Two teachers had composite scores in the range of 7O to 83 (one standard deviation below the established mean). Six teachers had composite scores in the range of 57 to 7O (two standard deviations below the established mean) and one teacher had composite scores below the range 57 (three standard deviations below the established mean).

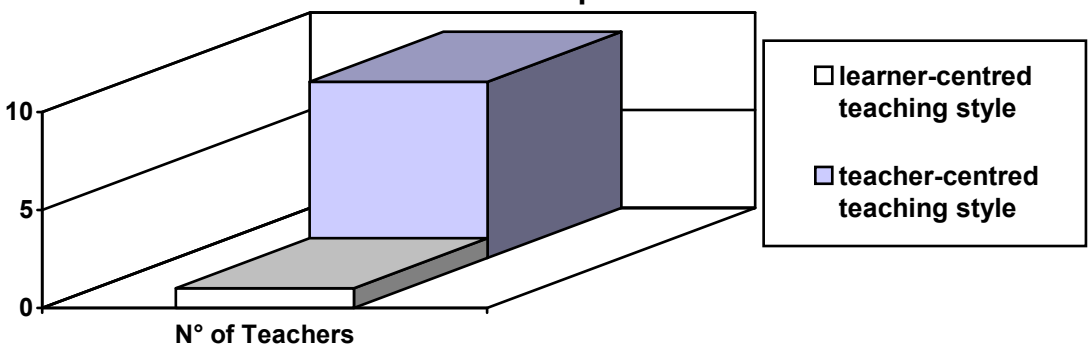
Table 9 below summarises the results from the students' questionnaire. We did not treat students' responses one by one but we put them into ten groups of eight students; ten groups correspond to ten teachers. In this way, we will be able to display the dominant teaching style of the ten teachers. To recall, for each of the ten teachers, a group of eight of their own students participated in the study.

Table 9: Results from the Students' Questionnaire

Numbering of students involved in the study	Mean Scores	Mean compared to the norm	Teachers' teaching style	Degree of commitment to teaching style
1 to 8	68.41	< 83	T-c	Very strong
9 to 16	60.2	< 83	T-c	Very strong
17 to 24	62	< 83	T-c	Very strong
25 to 32	57.8	< 83	T-c	Very strong
33 to 40	70.25	< 83	T-c	Strong
41 to 48	52.2	< 83	T-c	Extreme
49 to 56	81.6	< 83	T-c	Strong
57 to 64	65.4	< 83	T-c	Very strong
65 to 72	62.7	< 83	T-c	Very strong
73 to 8O	84.37	> 83	L-c	Strong
Total Mean	66.49	< 83	T-c	Very strong

T-c = Teacher-centred, L-c= Learner-centred

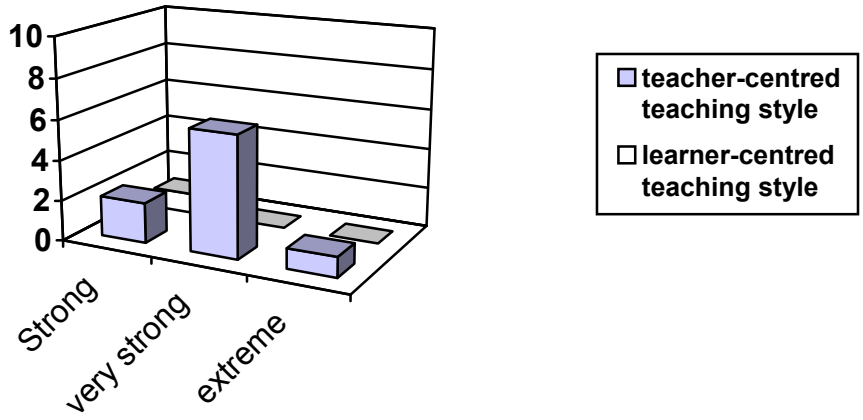
Graph 3: The Dominant Teaching Style from Students' Perspective



According to the eighty students questioned, a majority of teachers (9/10) fell within the scope of the teacher-centred teaching style (see graph 3).Thus, the dominant teaching style which characterises the classroom practices of the ten teachers from the students' perspective seems to be the teacher-centred teaching style.

According to the responses provided by the students, teachers' degree of commitment to each style varies from one teacher to another (see graph 4)

Graph 4: Teachers' Degree of Commitment to theTeacher and the Learner-centred Teaching Styles (Students' Perspective)



It appears that one teacher (1/10) is an extreme supporter of the teacher-centred teaching style. The majority (6/10 teachers) are very strong advocators of this style while 2/10 teachers have a strong preference for this style. On the other hand, it seems that according to the students, no teacher supports the learner-centred teaching style, neither very strongly nor extremely, with the exception of a strong follower of the learner-centred teaching style (see graph 4 above and table 10 below).

Table 10: Teachers' Degree of Commitment to One Style or Another According to Students' Responses

Teaching Style	Frequency
Learner-centred (strong)	1
Teacher-centred (strong)	2
Teacher-centred (very strong)	6
Teacher-centred (extreme)	1

4.1.3 Comparing Teachers' and Students' Responses

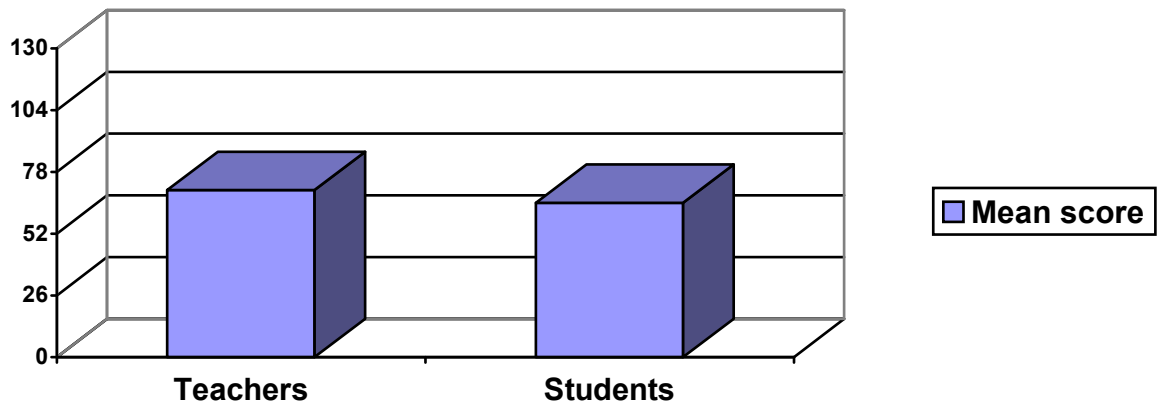
As is demonstrated in table 11 below, teachers' and students' responses are very similar. One can see that 7/10 teachers were viewed as teacher-centred and one teacher only as learner-centred by both teachers and students. However, two teachers are regarded as learner-centred by themselves and as teacher-centred by eight of their own students. This may be caused by the questionnaire's social desirability effect so that when answering the questionnaire, these teachers tried to give responses that would correspond to the researchers' expectations. In other words, they tried to represent themselves to the researcher in a way that reflects positively on them by showing their teaching as more learner-centred.

Table 11: Comparing Results from Teachers' and Students' Questionnaires.

Teachers	Teachers' teaching style(teachers' perspective)	Numbering of students involved in the study	Teachers' teaching style(students' perspective)	Comparing teachers and students' perspectives
1	T-c	1 to 8	T-c	**Same**
2	T-c	9 to 16	T-c	**Same**
3	T-c	17 to 24	T-c	**Same**
4	L-c	25 to 32	T-c	**Different**
5	T-c	33 to 40	T-c	**Same**
6	T-c	41 to 48	T-c	**Same**
7	L-c	49 to 56	T-c	**Different**
8	T-c	57 to 64	T-c	**Same**
9	T-c	65 to 72	T-c	**Same**
10	L-c	73 to 8O	L-c	**Same**

T-c = Teacher-centred, L-c= Learner-centred

Graph 6: Comparing Teachers' and Students' Mean Scores



A comparison of the total mean scores from the teachers' and students' questionnaires (see graph 5 on the previous page) demonstrates that their scores are quite close. They are both inferior to the norm 83 (see table 13 below). This enables us to answer the first question about the dominant teaching style of university teachers of English of Blida University and to state that it is teacher-centred.

Table 13: Total Mean Scores from Teachers' and Students' Questionnaires.

	Total Mean Scores	Mean compared to the norm	Teachers' dominant teaching style
Teachers' perspective	70.4	< 83	Teacher-centred teaching style
Learners' perspective	66.49	< 83	Teacher-centred teaching style

4.3 Aspects of Learner-centredness in Teachers' Dominant Teaching Style

4.2.1 The APALS' Results

To answer the second research question dealing with the aspects of learner-centredness operating within teachers' dominant teaching style, the mean score of each item was calculated to determine teachers' teaching practices in class. The items' mean scores for each teacher are reported in appendix 4.

After calculating the mean scores for each item, the mean scores for each factor were calculated. Through this method, we could assess how far teachers practise some aspects of learner-centredness in class. Table 14 to 22 display the teachers' responses to the seven factors. Table 14 below deals with 'Learner-centred Activities' (Factor 1).

Table 14: Mean Responses to Factor 1: Learner-Centered Activities.

Items	The Mean Compared to 5
1. I use methods that foster quiet, productive deskwork (the teacher instructs from the desk).	3.03
2. I get a student to motivate himself/herself by confronting him/her in the presence of classmates during group discussions.	2.6
3. I use one basic teaching method because I have found that most students have a similar style of learning.	2.5
4. I use tests as my chief method of evaluating students.	2.05
Total Mean	2.54

Table 14 shows that the highest score is on item 1 (3.03) compared to 5 (the highest possible score). This reveals that a large number of English teachers use methods that foster quiet, productive deskwork. Another slightly high score can be noted on item 2(2.6) which means that a small number only of teachers seems to favour exercising control on students' participation during group discussions. On the other hand, score on item 4 is quite low (2.05). This implies that teachers seem to favour informal evaluation techniques in class in addition to formal tests. The score (2.5) for item 3 reveals that it is not clear whether teachers use one teaching method or various methods.

As for 'Personalising Instruction' (Factor Two), the following responses were obtained (table 15 below).

Table 15: Mean Responses to Factor 2: Personalising Instruction

Items	The Mean Compared to 5
5. I adjust my instructional objectives to match the individual abilities and needs of the students.	3.55
6. I encourage competition among my students.	2.4
7. I give all students in my class the same assignment on a given topic	1.9
8. I use lecturing as the best method for presenting my subject material to students	1.9
9. I let each student work at his/her own rate regardless of the amount of time it takes him/her to learn a new concept.	1.8
Total Mean	2.31

Table 15 indicates that the highest score was obtained on item 5(3.55) which shows that a large number of teachers seem to base their instructional objectives on students' individual needs and abilities. However, low scores can be noted on different items. First, item 6(2.4) and this implies that it is cooperation rather than competition which is encouraged among students. Second, item 7(1.9) which suggests that students are given different assignments on a given topic. Third, item 8(1.9) which means that teachers use the transmitting method in addition to various methods, materials and assignments. Finally, item 9(1.8) which shows that it is the teacher who decides about how much time to spend on learning something.

As far as 'Relating to Experience' (Factor 3) is concerned, the results are displayed in table 16 below.

Table 16: Mean Responses to Factor 3: Relating to Experience

Items	The Mean Compared to 5
10. I encourage my students to ask questions.	4.9
11. I plan activities that will encourage each student's growth from dependence on others to greater independence	3.7
12. I plan learning activities to take into account my students ' prior experiences.	2.8
Total Mean	3.8

Table 16 indicates that the 10 teachers have very high scores in items 10(4.9) and fairly high ones in item 11(3.7). Scores on item 10 show that students are encouraged to ask questions resulting from their learning experiences. Scores on item 11 suggest that students are also encouraged to take charge of their own learning so that it becomes part of their own personal learning experience. A nearly average score is noticed in item 12(2.8). These results show that the teachers occasionally plan learning activities that take into account their students' prior experiences and encourage students to relate their new learning to prior experiences.

Regarding 'Assessing Students' Needs" (Factor 4), the following responses were obtained (table 17 hereafter).

Table 17: Mean Responses to Factor 4: Assessing Students' Needs

Items	The Mean Compared to 5
13. I help my students develop short-term as well as long-term objectives.	3.15
14. I help students find out the gaps between their goals and their present level of performance.	2.8
15. I have individual conferences to help students identify their needs.	1.8
Total Mean	2.58

Table 17 indicates that the teachers have a fairly high score in one item 13(3.15). This suggests that teachers often assist their students in developing short-range as well as long-range objectives. A nearly average score is noted in item 14(2.8). These results show that the language teachers occasionally attempt to diagnose existing gaps between their students' goals and their present levels of performance. However, their low scores in item 15(1.8) indicate that they do not rely on individual meetings and informal counselling in their teaching.

'Climate Building' (Factor 5) is one area that was also investigated through the questionnaire to teachers. The results appear in table 18 below.

Table 18: Mean Responses to Factor 5: Climate Building

Items	The Mean Compared to 5
16. I encourage discussion among my students.	4.6
17. I accept errors as a natural part of the learning process.	4.6
Total Mean	4.6

Table 18 above shows that the teachers have equally very high mean scores on both items: item 11(4.6) and item 12(4.6). These results suggest that teachers establish a friendly and informal climate in class where dialogue and interaction with other students are encouraged. Risk taking is encouraged, and errors are accepted as a natural part of the learning process. Learners can experiment and explore elements related to their self-concept and practise interpersonal skills. Failures serve as a feedback device to direct future positive learning.

As far as 'Participation in the Learning Process' (Factor 6) is concerned, table 19 contains the teachers' responses to the 4 items that make up this factor

Table 19: Mean Responses to Factor 6: Participation in the Learning Process

Items	The Mean Compared to 5
18. I allow students to participate in developing the criteria for evaluating their performance in class.	3
19. I have my students identify their own problems that need to be solved.	2.9
20. I allow students to participate in making decisions about the topics that will be covered in class.	2.1
21. I arrange the classroom so that it is easy for students to interact.	1.6
Total Mean	2.31

Table 19 indicates that the teachers have two fairly high scores in two items of Factor 6. These items are item 18(3) and item 19(2.9). These results suggest that an adult-to-adult relationship between teacher and students is encouraged since students have their word to say about how their performance is assessed in class. In addition, they can identify their learning problems. The teachers questioned have a quite low

score in item 20 (2.1) which implies that learners are often not involved in deciding about the topics to be covered in class. A low score is noticed in item 6 (1.6). Teachers do not seem to have altered classroom arrangement in order to make students interact better. The last factor to examine is Factor 7 'Flexibility for Personal Development'. Table 20 below describes the teachers' responses to this factor.

Table 20: Mean Responses to Factor 7: Flexibility for Personal Development

Items	The Mean Compared to 5
22. I avoid discussion of controversial subjects that involve value judgments.	3.9
23. I avoid issues that relate to the student's concept Of himself/herself.	2
24. I maintain a well-disciplined classroom to reduce interferences to learning.	1.95
25. I provide knowledge rather than serve as a resource person.	1.5
26. I keep to the course objectives in the syllabus that I supply at the beginning of the year in a handout/on the black board.	1.1
Total Mean	2.09

Table 20 shows that the English teachers have four low scores: item 23(2), item 24(1.95), item 25(1.5) and item 26(1.1) and only one quite high score on one of the 5 items that characterise teacher's flexibility for learners' personal development (i.e item 22= 3.9). Scores in item 22 show that the teachers avoid discussing controversial issues with their students. Scores in items 23, 24, 25 and 26 respectively demonstrate that teachers do not try to avoid issues in relation to students' self-concept or self-image. They do not seem to view a well-disciplined classroom as a stimulus for learning. They view themselves as facilitators rather than providers of knowledge. Although many of them seem to determine the learning objectives at the beginning of

the year, they change these objectives when necessary taking into account their students' needs.

After having examined the results for each of the seven factors described above and the items which characterise them, an overall table which summarises these results seems appropriate and appears below (table 21).

Table 21 Mean Responses of the Ten Teachers of English on the Seven Analysed Factors

	All Factors	Mean
1	5. Climate Building	4.60
2	3. Relating to Experience	3.80
3	4. Assessing Students' Needs	2.58
4	1. Learner-Centered Activities.	2.54
5	6. Participation in the Learning Process	2.40
6	2. Personalising Instruction	2.31
7	7. Flexibility for Personal Development	2.09

Table 21 indicates that the ten teachers have a very high mean score on Factor 5: Climate Building (4.60). This implies that this factor was the easiest for teachers to achieve so that it is easy for them to build a classroom climate that encourages learning. Score on Factor 3: Relating to Experience was fairly high (3.80). This suggests that teachers often tried to relate learning to students' experiences. The nearly average scores on Factors 4 'Assessing Students' Needs' (2.58) and Factor 1 'Learner-centred

Activities' (2.54) respectively showed that teachers occasionally used learner-centred teaching methods or assessed their students' learning needs.

Fairly low scores were noted in Factor 6 'Participation in the Learning Process' (2.4), Factor 2 'Personalising Instruction' (2.31) and Factor 7 'Flexibility for Personal Development' (2.09). This demonstrated that teachers did not often allow their students to participate in making decisions about the teaching methodology and content. In addition, teaching techniques/strategies were mostly not geared towards students' needs and abilities and the teachers did not act as facilitators for learners' personal development. The next section of this chapter will clarify better the ten university teachers' teaching practices

4.2.2 The Open-ended Questionnaire's Results

The open-ended questionnaire was meant to collect more data about how university teachers of English teach in class. More specifically, to clarify how some aspects of learner-centredness operate within teachers' dominant teaching style and why other aspects are not practised.

The written verbatim responses of the ten teachers of English turned around the following themes: Curricular Negotiation, Learners' Experience, Learners' Self-directness and Autonomy, The Use of Lectures, The Use of Informal Testing and Learners' Learning Objectives (see table 23).

Teachers' responses to the open-ended questionnaire revealed that 4/10 teachers believed they negotiated curricular content with their students. 6/10 teachers took into consideration their students' former experiences when they planned their lessons. A majority, 8/10 teachers believed it should be their goal to help their students to be self-

directed. A minority, 3/10 university teachers who believed the lecture method is superior to other methods. 4/10 teachers used informal testing when evaluating their students' performances. Finally, 6/10 teachers helped their students to determine their learning objectives (see Appendix 5)

According to teachers' responses to the open-ended questionnaire, few teachers (4/10) negotiated curricular priorities with their students but in fact none of them did so. An examination of the teachers' verbatim comments on this issue revealed that teachers confused the meaning of negotiation with letting students know the content of the course programme instead of making decisions about the content and form of teaching at classroom level via consultation between teachers and learners. Note the responses of the 4 teachers who stated that they negotiated curricular priorities with their students at the beginning of the year:

1-"*I often do it to make them aware of why they learn US Literature*."(US Lit, 2nd Year)

2-"*At the beginning of the year, the main priorities of my course are presented and negotiated with my students to make them aware about planning their objectives*."(Listening, 3rd Year)

3-"*Yes, I do because the students should be aware at the beginning of the year of the requirements and expectations waiting them*."(US Civ, 3rd Year)

4-"*I often do it when there is an opportunity. I think it is a very practical way to show the students that we TRUST them and we respect their decisions, then preparing them to become self-directed, 'mature' and independent learners. NB: Even when it is me who takes decisions I never make them feel so*." (US Lit, 4th Year)

We admit the fact that we took it for granted that the meaning of the term 'curricular negotiation' was clear to teachers but in fact it was not. The term needed to be defined beforehand. The absence of curricular negotiation was asserted by the quite

low score (2.1/5) in item 17 'I allow students to participate in making decisions about the topics that will be covered in class.' of the APALS.

As noted in Factor 6, the score (3/5) in item 15: 'I allow students to participate in developing the criteria for evaluating their performance in class' was fairly high; this contradicts with the previous comments and may suggest that many teachers negotiated the method of assessment with their students but in reality this was not true. In fact, item 15 was unclear or misunderstood by teachers and this may be due to the fact that the APALS instrument was not perfectly piloted or tested for clarity of item interpretation.

Other results from the open-ended questionnaire demonstrated that many teachers (6/10) took into account their learners' prior experience when planning their lessons. This result corroborate with the one obtained from the APALS in relation to factor 3 'Relating to Experience' in which teachers' score was fairly high (3.8/5).

A majority (8/10) of teachers believed that it should be the goal of educators to help all learners become self-directed and autonomous. Through teachers' fairly high score (3.7/5) in item 11 'I plan activities that will encourage each student's growth from dependence on others to greater independence' of the APALS, we understand that helping students to become self-directed is one of teachers' goals.

As far as the teachers' teaching method is concerned, 7/10 of them did not believe that the lecture method is superior to facilitating learning. These teachers used the transmitting method along with other teaching methods. The quite high score (3/5) in item 1 'I use methods that foster quiet, productive deskwork' of the APALS indicates that teachers rely on the lecture method in their teaching. Another low score

(1.9/5) in item 8 'I use lecturing as the best method for presenting my subject material to students.' suggests that other methods in addition to the transmitting method are used by teachers in their teaching.

Concerning the use of formal and informal testing, the findings demonstrated that few teachers (4/10) used informal testing when assessing students' learning. However, the low score(2.05/5) in item 4 'I use tests as my chief method of evaluating students.' may suggest that many teachers used informal testing in addition to formal tests but in fact, this was not true. This may be explained by the social desirability effect of item 4 so that many teachers wanted to represent their teaching to the researcher in a way that reflects their use of both formal and informal assessment tests.

In addition, it seems that many teachers (6/10) helped students to formulate their goals and this matches the result (3.15/5), obtained from the APLS in relation to item 13: 'I help my students develop short-term as well as long term objectives.' in Factor 4. The fairly high score (3.15) from the APALS suggests that indeed, many teachers help their students in defining their learning goals.

According to the results obtained from the open-ended questionnaire, several aspects of learner-centredness occur in the ten university teachers of English's teaching style. Those aspects can be summarised in the following teaching behaviours: many teachers took into account their students' prior experience when planning their lessons, they helped students to become self-directed and to determine their learning goals and finally, they used teaching methods other than the lecture method and informal testing in addition to formal testing. The implementation of these teaching behaviours in reality will be discussed in the next section.

4.3 Discussion and Interpretation of the Results

This section is devoted to the interpretation of the results presented in section 3.1 in relation to the first research question 'the dominant teaching style in the ten teachers' teaching style' and the second research question 'aspects of learner-centredness that operate in teachers' dominant teaching style'. This discussion reveals how teachers implement some learner-centred teaching practices in class despite their teacher-centred predominant teaching style.

Teachers seem to find it easy to build a climate that encourages learning and to relate learning to their students' experiences. Risk taking was encouraged, and errors were accepted as a natural part of the learning process. Learners could experiment and explore elements related to their self-concept and practice interpersonal skills and failures served as a feedback device to direct future positive learning

In fact, teachers tried to create a friendly learning climate by allowing and encouraging students to initiate debates and to ask comprehension questions but their classrooms resembled traditional classes where the teacher instructs from the desk and classroom arrangements are not altered.

To relate learning to students' experience**,** a majority of the teachers (6/10) took into account their learners' prior experience when planning their lessons. A first year teacher of Speaking admitted the usefulness of considering students' experience in planning lessons. She comments:

-"*Yes I do, because it will help learners to get interested in the topic and initiate debates.*"(Speaking, 1st Year)

A fourth year teacher of English Literature explained how she could bring the content of her lesson closer to learners' life experience. Below is the teacher's answer.

"*I do. In explaining drama lit. I try to bring the text as close as possible to the students' own field of experience. For example: Hamlet's problem and his mother's remarriage→ comparing this with real cases*."(Eng Lit, 4th Year)

A second year teacher of US literature discussed with her students their learning experience in literature at the beginning of the year. This may have served the teacher as a source of information useful for the planning of her lessons. This teacher's comment is:

-"*Yes I do. With second year students, we start the year with a general discussion about literature. I ask them questions such as: Do you like lit? Why or why not? What is your opinion about the role of lit in life? Do we find solutions to our everyday worries in novels…etc?*"(US Lit, 2nd Year)

In the same vein, another fourth year teacher of US literature explains:

-"*Yes, I do. My students and I speak openly about their prior experiences. We do so because as a literature teacher, it's important to know whether our students are familiar with literature or they have never opened a novel before. Moreover, sometimes it is important to correct some of the students' false Ideés fixes such as literary works are just about words*."(US Lit, 4th Year)

Thus, it appears that teachers of modules such as Literature and Speaking acted like what Rogers calls (1994:213) 'facilitators'. They provided learning resources from within their own experience and from books and novels. They encouraged the learners to contribute to their own learning by adding something of their own knowledge and experience. So, teachers but not all subjects' teachers planned lessons that took into account their students' prior experiences. They encouraged their students to relate their new learning to prior experiences

This study also revealed that a large number of teachers tried to base their instructional objectives on students' individual needs and abilities and attempted to diagnose existing gaps between their students' goals and their present levels of performance. It is worth to mention that it is not clear how teachers could assess their students' needs and abilities especially that they did not rely on individual meetings and informal counselling to do so. It seems that they used what Tudor (1993:26) calls their 'professional judgement' to decide on students' needs.

In addition to previous results, we found that a majority of teachers (6/10) helped students to formulate their goals and objectives from studying English especially through group discussions such as the following case of a second year teacher of US literature. He comments:

-"*Yes, I do. Students lack the sense of responsibility and sense of self-esteem. The learning objectives are not clear for all of them. I came to this conclusion because I like to discuss such matters with my students. What we can do is involving students more in their learning through individual or group projects and organise conferences when necessary*."(US Lit, 2nd Year)

As far as the teachers' teaching method is concerned, 7/10 of them did not believe that the lecture method is superior to facilitating learning. These teachers used the transmitting method along with other teaching methods such as the participatory method. Examine the following teachers' comments:

-*"I basically use the lecture method to teach linguistics. However, I try to get students involved in the lesson by asking them to answer questions or to give examples relevant to the content of the course."*(Linguistics, 2nd Year)

-*"I try to avoid it as much as possible. Even when I use it, it comes after a long discussion with the students. I ask them questions, they give answers or comment on each others' answers. Then, the lecture is a short synthesis of the discussion."*(US Lit, 2nd Year)

It seems that initiating debates and encouraging students to ask questions were teaching strategies used along the lecture method.

Concerning the use of formal or informal testing, the findings demonstrated that nearly half of the teachers (4/10) used informal testing when assessing students' learning. Informal testing for a second year teacher of US Civilisation consisted of a group-work evaluation. This teacher explains:

-"*I evaluate my students through formal tests and through group work projects"* (US Lit, 2nd Year)

Teachers' added comments in the APALS and their comments in the open-ended questionnaire proved very useful in clarifying many aspects about the application of the learner-centred approach in reality. In fact, what is recurrent in these comments and which seems to prevent teachers from being learner-centred in their teaching are the following points:

1. Students' nature
2. The nature of the module itself
3. Class size, lack of material resources and administrative constraints
4. The use of the lecture method and formal tests deeply rooted at university

Each point will be discussed in light of teachers' comments

1. Students' Nature

Although a majority of teachers (6/10) helped students to formulate their goals and objectives from studying English but apparently, teachers who felt responsible to help students to define their goals and those who did not, share the view that their students have no clear goals for learning English. Notice these comments:

- "*No, I don't. Few students have clear goals in their minds. If I am not exaggerating, a majority think that studying English is an easy way to get a degree. They don't invest their real potential in their studies.*" (British Civ, 4th Year)

-"*No, I don't but I ask them what is your goal from studying English and I discovered that students are lazy and think it's their right to pass! No motivation for studies as the large majority do not really fit their studies (not their own choice)*". (English Lit, 4th Year)

Some teachers also believe that their students are not motivated enough. And this hinders them, for example, from going through curriculum negotiation. Let us examine the following case: a fourth year teacher of English literature confessed that she could not go through a negotiation process of curriculum content with her students although she wished to do so. She put the blame on her non-motivated students. She argued:

-"*I like to do it but my students don't respond. 99% are just interested to get through*."(English lit, 4th year)

Interestingly, the same teacher doubted the ability of Algerian educators to help all students become self-directed and autonomous due to the passive nature of students. This teacher's comment is:

-*"Not all. The nature of our students is built through school on being directed and doing automatic work."*(Eng Lit, 4th year)

It seems that the non-determined and passive nature of the students, from teachers' point of view, prevents teachers from becoming more learner-centred in their teaching style. However, given the limited scope of our study, it would be interesting that a further research examines students' nature more closely, their potential to get involved in their learning and their own perspective on this topic.

2. The nature of the module itself

To relate learning to students' experience**,** a majority (6/10) of the teachers took into account their learners' prior experience when planning their lessons but this was not possible for all teachers due to the nature of the subject they taught. For example, in the case of a third year teacher of linguistics, it was quite hard to relate her lesson's content to her students' prior experience. This teacher argues:

-*"As a teacher of Linguistics, I try but it is not easy to do so. Just take the example of studying TG (Transformational Generative Grammar). I could only use some of the students' prior knowledge about Mathematics to explain how TG works.*"(Linguistics, 3rd Year)

We can notice that it is not always evident to bring students' prior knowledge to assist learning; it sometimes depends upon the subject matter being taught. For example, it is easy to establish this link when teaching Literature but it is more difficult in a Linguistics course.

3. Class size, lack of material resources and administrative constraints

From teachers' added comments at the end of the APALS questionnaire, we have come to the conclusion that the large-size classes constituted one of the main problems that teachers faced in their everyday teaching experience and which may have prevented them from assessing their students' needs. Examine the following fourth year teacher of English literature's comment:

-*"How can I adjust my teaching to match the individual abilities and needs of my students when I teach groups or classes that may include more than 60 students?!"* (Eng Lit, 4th Year)

The same fourth year teacher of English literature considered it impossible to use informal testing due to large-size classes. She comments: "*No, look at the situation at the university! Our classes are overcrowded…!*"

Another problem is the absence of material resources such as adequate rooms for teachers to have conferences with their students. A third year teacher of Linguistics comments: "Do you think I will find an empty room for my individual conference if I want to help my students?!"

Sometimes the constraints that prevent teachers from being more learner-centred are not linked to class-size or material resources but they are administrative. A third year teacher of US Civilisation argued that it is not an easy task to plan lessons according to her students' prior learning experience while she has to go through a prescribed curriculum. Her response is:

-"*Yes, I do. A previous diagnostic of learners' experiences in learning about US Civ is useful in lessons planning although there is a curriculum to be respected*" (US Civ, 3rd Year)

A third year Teacher of Linguistics commented that in addition to the refusal of her students' to go through any kind of negotiation, the syllabus content of Linguistics was prescribed to her by the administration. Her job was to complete the programme by the end of the year. Note the response of this teacher:

"*No, I don't. I just give my students some general guidelines about the programme of Linguistics to be covered during the year. This is due to the fact that I don't feel my students are motivated or interested in doing any kind of negotiation. Besides, I must stick to the programme given to us by the administration*" (Linguistics, 3rd Year)

The constraints related to class-size, resources and administration are some and not all the problems that Blida university teachers of English face in their daily

teaching life. It would be interesting to spot more light on this aspect through future research.

4. The use of the lecture method and formal tests deeply rooted at university

The transmitting method is deeply rooted in the teaching practices of university teachers in general. Previous results demonstrated that many teachers used methods that foster quiet, productive deskwork (see the score of item 1 in APALS)**.** A fourth year teacher of English literature commented on the appropriateness of this method with large-size classes:

-"*Not really, however with large groups it works better.*"(English Lit, 4th Year)

Another firmly fixed method of assessment is the use of formal tests. Notice this second year teacher of linguistics' comment:

-*"why bother? We don't have the means to test our students informally. So, I rely only on the tests set by the administration at the end of each semester.*"(Linguistics, 2ndYear)

In fact, due to large-size classes, only few teachers (4/10) used informal testing such as evaluating project-works.

With respect to previous results' interpretation, we can conclude that features of teacher-centredness still persist in teachers' dominant teaching style. Curriculum design as a negotiable process between teachers and students seems to be far from being applied in the Algerian context. Decisions regarding the content and form of teaching were more traditional, made by the administration or the teacher. So, no sharing between teachers and students occurred and no responsibility was transferred to students. The teacher remained a figure of authority; he was ultimately responsible for ensuring that effective learning took place.

Thus, teachers had a programme of what to teach from the beginning of the year and how much time to spend on teaching each part of the curriculum. The course programme was presented to students who had no word to say to change it. Teachers still relied on the use of the lecture method; this asserts the view of Leigh et al. (1992) that teacher-centred teaching strategies such as lecturing, listening or note-taking will not disappear but they will live alongside other processes that are based on student's discussion and active work with the course material. Besides, students were generally formally assessed.

The results of this research also demonstrated that English university teachers taught in a learner-centred mode to the extent that they tried to relate their teaching content to students' experience and to build a favourable learning climate in their classrooms. However, their classroom techniques did not really focus on the learner or include learner-centered activities and this may be due, as reported by some teachers, to the large-size classes. Some of them used project works as a method to assess students' performance and to get them involved in learning.

Interestingly, the results obtained in this study match the results of Rong et al.'s (2005) and Wang et al.'s (2006) research in the sense that the dominant teaching style is teacher-centred, factor 5 'Climate Building' is the easiest for teachers to achieve and factor 7 'Flexibility for Personal Development' is the hardest for them to accomplish.

The easiness in establishing a favourable learning climate may be explained by the fact that it requires from the teacher to use only what Tudor (1993) calls some 'personal skills' related to his maturity and intuition. However, favouring students'

personal development, by acting as a resource person and adjusting learning objectives and needs, the teacher needs to use additional skills such as 'educational and course planning skills' (Tudor, 1993).

To recall, the two previous studies were respectively undertaken in the USA and China. This fact may suggest that the teaching situation in Algeria is not very different from that in the US and China as teachers are still teaching in the traditional way although they are trying to incorporate aspects of learner-centredness in their teaching.

Behind the findings of this study lie significant implications for research and practice. At the moment, to implement collaborative, learner-centred principles to teaching languages in Algeria seems a dream yet to be realised. The praxis of teaching in Algeria cannot be understood alone because it is intrinsically linked to the nature of the Algerian culture, politics, and society.

Further research is needed to find out why Algerian teachers cannot be more learner-centred in their teaching. Based on the findings of this research, we found that some of the constraints were related to the nature of the students and the subjects, the size of the class, the administration, means availability and some deeply rooted university teaching practices such as the use of the lecture method and formal tests.

In the next chapter, we will suggest three self-reflection activities to help teachers at any level of instruction to enhance their teaching and become more learner-centred in their teaching style.

Chapter 5: Finding an Alternative Teaching Style Through Self-reflection

5.1 An Alternative Teaching Style

The previous findings of the study suggest that university language teachers are generally teaching in a traditional way. The pedagogical teacher-centred model has been criticised in the literature and modern educationists like Tudor (1993) and Weimer (2002) have opened new teaching perspectives for teachers, calling them to adopt more learner-centred principles. One way of doing it is to add more learner-centred teaching strategies to teachers' repertoire.

Grasha (1996) points out that Self-reflection plays an important role in identifying and modifying teachers' personal teaching style. Conti (2004) considers that unless teachers reflect and analyse their current behaviours, and try to identify the attitudes, values and beliefs associated with their practices, their understanding of their teaching styles becomes limited.

We assumed that few university teachers of English indulge in self-reflection on their own practices and as a consequence, we have suggested the use of self-reflection as an efficient means to invite university teachers of English to reflect upon their current teaching styles. This would be achieved through activities that would develop self-reflection in teachers in order to become more innovative in their teaching styles.

Being convinced that teachers are the agents of change and that they "… need activities that encourage processes of self-reflection" (Grasha, 1996:66), we have provided three self-reflection activities suitable for university teachers of English.

These activities can take place at home and they can result in discussions with colleagues and students.

These activities will hopefully help teachers reflect upon aspects of learner-centredness that are missing in their teaching such as:

- How to put their students in a position to decide about the teaching content.
- How to motivate their students.
- How to make instruction more self-paced
- How to include students' experience and bring their prior knowledge to assist learning.
- How to involve students in analysing their learning needs.
- How to help students to define their learning goals.

In fact, these aspects of learner-centredness have emerged from our own study and more aspects can be added to the previous list. To enable teachers to reflect on some of them, the first self-reflection activity is suggested hereafter.

5.1.1 Self-reflection Activity One

Grasha (1996) argues that a variety of personal assumptions about teaching and learning are possible. Some are grounded in teachers' everyday experiences in the classroom while others are assimilated from observing and talking to others about their teaching. Assumptions may be shared with others or they may represent teachers' unique perceptions about teaching and learning. Regardless of their source and whether or not they are shared, such beliefs play an important role in how teachers design and implement a variety of classroom processes.

The following self-reflection activity originally developed by Grasha (96:107) can help the teachers to identify the assumptions they make about teaching and learning. It can also help them to understand their classroom practices and to think about how to adopt learner-centred principles to modify or change their teaching style. A slight change was brought to Grasha's original self-reflection activity so that question 4: 'What new assumptions would you add that might enhance the nature and quality of your classes?' which is a too general question, was replaced by a much more precise question: 'What new assumptions from the list of learner-centred assumptions provided hereafter would you add that might enhance the nature and quality of your classes?'

Another modification was brought to Grasha's self-reflection activity. Originally, Grasha provided a list of some general teaching and learning principles. We adapted this list to the purpose of our activity i.e. inviting teachers to think about how to adopt learner-centred principles in their teaching style so that we kept only principles related to learner-centredness and we added to them other learner-centred principles already presented in the literature review (section 2.3)

Exploring your personal assumptions about teaching: A Self-Reflection Activity

1. What are three assumptions you make about teaching/learning?

For example:

- Students learn best when rewarded for their efforts.
- Students learn best by "doing".
- Teachers need to keep absolute control over a classroom.

Your Response:

Assumption 1

Assumption 2

Assumption 3

2. How does each of your assumptions appear in your course? Also state how each assumption facilitates and hinders your teaching style?

For example:

Students learn best when rewarded for their efforts: I use a point system to give students credit for all course assignments. Their final grade depends upon the number of total points they earned.

Facilitates

Helps students to do a variety of inside and outside class assignments. Students report they like the structure the point system provides and feel more in control of their grades.

Hinders

The system creates a dependence upon me to reward their efforts. It does not do

much for teaching them to learn for the sake of learning.

Your Response:

Assumption 1

Facilitates/ Hinders

Assumption 2

Facilitates/ Hinders

Assumption 3

Facilitates/ Hinders

3) What assumption(s) about teaching and learning need to be modified to enhance the nature and quality of your classes? What would you do to make this happen?

For example:

Teachers need to keep absolute control over a classroom: while I think I need to be in charge, I may be overdoing it a bit. I probably need to ask students how they would like to see class sessions organised to determine if changes are needed.

Your Response:

4) What new assumption(s) from the list of learner-centred assumptions provided hereafter would you add that might enhance the nature and quality of your classes?

For example:

Students can learn well through self-directed, self-initiated learning projects: Instead of always providing things for students to do on their own, I should give them the option of developing a course-related project they might like to pursue.

Your Response

List of assumptions
. Teachers are more effective if they act as resource person to their students . learning proceeds best if students collaborate with each other . learning proceeds best if teachers design activities that motivate students and lead them to participate in the learning process . a climate of mutual respect and trust is a good way to motivate students to learn . Learning becomes a pleasant experience if teachers are supportive to students . learning proceeds best if students are involved in mutual planning of methods and curricular directions . learning proceeds best if teachers stop directing learning and let students to do more discovering . learning proceeds best if teachers do more modelling with their students . Most students could learn quite well without having to listen to lectures. . Variety is the "spice of classroom life". . Students need to integrate and organize the information from class sessions and outside readings.

5.1.2 Self-Reflection Activity Two

Conti (2004:78) suggests that whatever style the teacher is adopting, whether drawing exclusively from one school (teacher-centred/learner-centred) or preferring an eclectic approach, "teachers must first identify their teaching style and then critically reflect upon their classroom actions related to that style". Thus, the aim of this second

self-reflection activity is to invite teachers to know about their current teaching style first and then reflect on how to include aspects of learner-centredness in their teaching style.

To structure this self-reflection activity, we followed the guidelines to teachers provided by Grasha (1996:12-15):

1- Use a student rating scale to gather a baseline on how students perceive you.

2- Identify aspects of your teaching that the evaluations suggest you are strongest and weakest in.

3- Select specific behaviours that you would like to develop.

4- Re-evaluate your teaching and concentrate on those behaviours you want to enhance to fine tune what you do.

In addition to the guidelines mentioned above, Grasha suggests that teachers ask their students to supplement their rating scales with written comments. In this way, they can indicate the specific reasons for their evaluations and offer concrete suggestions for improvement. He also advises teachers to involve colleagues to discuss ratings and have them respond to their plans.

Following Grasha's first guideline for teachers i.e. using a rating scale to elicit information from students on how they view their teachers, we thought that Conti's APALS (Adapted Principles of Adult Learning Scale) might be useful for this purpose.

So, in this second self-reflection activity, we suggest for teachers to use the APALS (see Appendix 3) and distribute it to their students in order to gather data on how learners perceive their teachers' teaching style. The teacher can ask students to

add their comments next to each item or by the end of the questionnaire. This may help teachers understand the specific reasons for students' evaluations and offer them valuable suggestions for improvement.

Through students' evaluation, the teacher can identify the extent to which his teaching style is teacher-centred or learner-centred. In addition, the teacher can examine students' responses on each of the 26 items which constitute the APALS rating scale and know better about the reality of his teaching in class. Then, he can decide which teaching practices he practices well and others that he needs to change. For example, if a teacher scores low on item 18: "The teacher allows students to participate in developing the criteria for evaluating their performance in class.", this implies that he performed weakly on this item and that he has to try to find a way to negotiate the method of evaluation with his students.

5.1.3 Self-reflection Activity Three

According to Grasha (1996), getting in touch with what teachers value can help them examine their teaching. Values influence the educational goals and instructional processes that teachers pursue. For example, the choice of lecturing or group projects reflects teachers' values about authority, autonomy and collaboration. Personal values also affect teachers' perceptions of the classroom environment and even events inside the classroom. For example, teachers who value principles such as autonomy and self-direction are pleased with students who demonstrate such characteristics. However; they can be less happy with students who are dependent and take little initiative.

What is suggested next is a self-reflection activity based on exploring teachers' personal values and teaching. It is taken from Grasha's self-reflection activity. No

change is brought to the activity except for the original list of values. Grasha's original list is given below in table 22. It contains all values suggested by Grasha in his self-reflection activity.

Table 22 : Grasha's list of values

Achievement	Independence	Rebellion	Affection
Dependence	Inferiority	Respect	Initiative
Alienation	Discipline	Integrity	Rigidity
Disorder	Safety	Security	Isolation
Efficiency	Intimacy	Justice	Autonomy
Truth	Honesty	Knowledge	Sharing
Freedom	Equality	Success	Trust
Comfort	Peace	Variety	Violence
Harmony	Conflict	Creativity	Wisdom
Excitement	Integrity	Influence	Work
Inclusion	Progress	Love	Chaos
Bravery	Practicality	Intuition	Rules
Charity	Choice	Dignity	Time
Boredom	Community	Disrespect	Privacy
Disorder	Life	Play	Winning
Responsibility	Selfishness	Connection	

However, the list of assumptions in the present self-reflection activity is shorter than the one presented in table 22 and it implicitly includes some learner-centred and teacher-centred values (see table 1 on p. 102). The aim behind suggesting such a list is to invite teachers to reflect about how these values are reflected in their teaching practices in class and to let them find their own way to enhance their teaching style. Hereafter is the self- reflection activity.

Exploring your personal Values and Teaching: Self-Reflection Activity
1. To see how this process works, select three of the personal values listed in table 1 and identify how each one appears in your style as a teacher. Focus on specific behaviours you engage in that reflect these values. For example, indicators of the presence of the value freedom might be: “students have an open reading list and read books of their own choice”. Or, “students interact with one another on course projects without direction from the teacher.” (Value 1) (Value 2) (Value 3) Also, consider how each value influences your goals and the choices you make as a teacher, your emotions, and your general perceptions of the classroom environment and your role as a teacher. For example, “I always allow time in a course for students to work independently on projects. When the students resist the freedom I give them, I find myself becoming angry. The students I dislike the most are those who want me to tell them what to do. I see myself more as a consultant and resource person to them. **2.** List the classroom goals and/or choices you make for each value. (Value 1) (Value 2) (Value 3) **3.** List one way each value effects your perceptions of classroom events. (Value 1) (Value 2)

(Value 3)

4. Give as example of how each value influences your emotions in class

(Value 1)

(Value 2)

(Value 3)

5. Select two new values at random from table 1. Ask yourself, "How could these values become integrated into my teaching style?"

(Value 1)

(Value 2)

Table 1

A List of Values

Dependence	choice	excitement
autonomy	influence	experience
initiative	success	learning
responsibility	autonomy	sharing
rigidity	knowledge	trust
rules	intimacy	respect
progress	creativity	self-esteem
affection	isolation	practice

Conclusion

The present case study aimed at exploring the reality of teaching English as a foreign language in an Algerian University context. It is assumed that university teachers generally teach in a traditional mode with some characterising features of learner-centredness. In fact, the main focus of this study is to find out about these learner-centred aspects. To do that, the following research question is addressed:

- What aspects of learner-centredness operate within university English language teachers' dominant teaching style?

The teacher population sample of this study consisted of ten university teachers of English who teach a diversity of English courses (language/skills and content). Out of ten, three were fourth year teachers of English Literature, American Literature and British Civilisation. Three others were third year teachers of Listening, American Civilisation and Linguistics. Two of them were second year teachers of Linguistics and American Literature and finally two first year teachers taught Linguistics and Speaking.

As far as the student population sample is concerned, eighty students took part in this study. All the students were taught by the participating 10 teachers. Sixteen students were in the first year, sixteen others were second year students. Twenty four in the third year and twenty four were fourth year students.

To assess teachers' dominant teaching style, an adapted version of Conti's (1979) original Principle of Adult Learning Scale called the Adapted Principle of Adult Learning Scale (APALS) was used with the ten teachers and eighty of their students. The APALS is a 26 item questionnaire which required respondents to indicate the

frequency with which they practise some teaching behaviours from never=0 to always=5. A high score on APALS indicates a learner-centred approach while a low score indicates a teacher-centred one.

The second purpose of this study, in addition to assessing teachers' dominant teaching style, was to explore aspects of learner-centredness that could have been identified within the dominant teaching style of the 10 teachers. The reason for exploring this feature of learner-centredness is based on our observation that some teachers try to introduce some learner-centred activities or adopt a learner-centred behaviour in their pedagogy. We believe it could be insightful to identify these features and come out with a teaching style model that is overtly and generally teacher-centred, with some interesting learner-centred aspects integrated in it.

To examine how learner-centred principles operated within teachers' dominant teaching style, APALS' scores have been examined in relation to seven factors which described the teacher's general teaching mode of instruction. These factors are: Learner-centred Activities, Personalising Instruction, Relating to Experience, Assessing Students' Needs, Climate Building, Participation in the Learning Process and Flexibility for Personal Development.

Each of the seven factors contains several items in the APALS that make up the teacher's learner-centred or teacher-centred teaching practices. A high mean score on any of the seven factors mentioned above indicated support for the concept implied in the factor's name. To clarify some unclear items or information obtained from APALS, six open-ended yes/no questions to teachers were added. These questions were meant to provide a better understanding of the following aspects: curricular negotiation, learner's

experience, learners' self-directness and autonomy, the use of lectures and the use of informal testing.

Results obtained from the APALS demonstrated that the dominant teaching style among the ten university teachers of English was the teacher-centred teaching style. Furthermore, teachers have a very high mean score in Factor 5: Climate Building. This implied that this factor was the easiest for teachers to achieve so that it is easy for them to build a classroom climate that encourages learning. Score in Factor 3: Relating to Experience was fairly high. This suggested that teachers often tried to relate learning to students' experiences. The nearly average scores in Factors 4 'Assessing Students' Needs' and Factor 1 'Learner-centred Activities' respectively showed that teachers occasionally used learner-centred teaching methods and assessed their students' learning needs.

Fairly low scores were noted in Factor 6 'Participation in the Learning Process', Factor 2 'Personalising Instruction' and Factor 7 'Flexibility for Personal Development'. This demonstrated that teachers did not often allow their students to participate in making decisions about the teaching methodology and content. In addition, teaching techniques were not mostly geared towards students' needs and abilities and the teachers did not act as facilitators for learners' personal development.

According to teachers' responses to the open-ended questionnaire, no teacher negotiated curricular priorities with his students. Many of them (6/10) took into account their learners' prior experience when planning their lessons. A majority (8/10) believed that it should be the goal of educators to help all learners become self-directed and autonomous. Seven teachers did not believe that the lecture method is

superior to facilitating learning; they used the transmitting method along with other teaching methods. Few of them (4/10) used informal testing when assessing students' learning but many of them (6/10) helped students to formulate their goals

An interpretation of these results in relation to the two research questions revealed how aspects of learner-centredness operated within the ten teachers' predominantly teacher-centred teaching style. In addition, it cast light on the constraints which may have prevented teachers from being more learner-centred.

Teachers found it easy to build a climate that encouraged learning by allowing and encouraging students to initiate debates and to ask comprehension questions. Risk taking was encouraged, and errors were accepted as a natural part of the learning process. Learners could experiment and explore elements related to their self-concept and practice interpersonal skills and failures served as a feedback device to direct future positive learning

Teachers easily related learning to their students' experiences especially in modules such as Literature and Speaking; they acted like 'facilitators'. They provided learning resources from within their own experience and from books and novels. They encouraged the learners to contribute to their own learning by adding something of their own knowledge and experience. In other subjects such as Linguistics, teachers found difficulty to plan lessons that took into account their students' prior experiences or to encourage their students to relate their new learning to prior experiences.

This study also revealed that a large number of teachers tried to base their instructional objectives on students' individual needs and abilities and attempted to diagnose existing gaps between their students' goals and their present levels of

performance. However, it is not clear how teachers could assess their students' needs and abilities especially that they did not rely on individual meetings and informal counselling to do so. It seems that they used what Tudor (1993:26) calls their 'professional judgement' to decide on students' needs.

As far as the teachers' teaching method is concerned, many teachers did not believe that the lecture method is superior to facilitating learning. They used the transmitting method along with other teaching methods such as the participatory method in which they initiated debates and encouraged students to ask questions. Concerning the testing method, teachers used formal tests along with some informal tests such as group work evaluation (projects).

Teachers' added comments in the APALS and their comments in the open-ended questionnaire proved very useful in clarifying many aspects about the application of the learner-centred approach in reality. In fact, what is recurrent in these comments and which seems to prevent teachers from being more learner-centred in their teaching are the following points: students' nature, the nature of the module itself, class size, lack of material resources, administrative constraints and the use of the lecture method and formal tests deeply rooted at university

It seems that the non-determined and passive nature of the students is a major factor that prevented teachers from becoming more learner-centred in their teaching style. In fact, many teachers share the view that their students have no clear goals for learning English and are not motivated enough to participate, for example, in curriculum negotiation. In addition to the nature of students, the nature of the subject matter being taught is another important factor to be taken into consideration.

In this study, it happened that the nature of the module being taught prevented some teachers from bringing students' prior knowledge to assist learning. For example, it was easy for teachers to establish this link when teaching Literature but it was more difficult in a Linguistics course. Large-size classes constitute another factor which disabled some teachers from evaluating their students' needs and using informal testing. Another problem is the absence of material resources such as adequate rooms for teachers to have conferences with their students.

Sometimes, the constraints that prevent teachers from being more learner-centred are administrative. Teachers could not plan lessons according to their students' prior learning experience because they had to teach following a prescribed curriculum. Other times, the constraints are related to some deeply rooted university teaching practices such as the use of the lecture method and formal tests.

Seemingly, even though some teachers discussed with and helped their students to define their learning objectives and a majority of them believed that it should be a goal of educators to help all learners become self-directed and autonomous, they could not act as real facilitators in the sense that they could not involve students in curriculum negotiation or bring learning close to students' needs and abilities or help their students in their personal development. Many teachers put the blame on their students for being passive and non-motivated to take responsibility for their own learning. It would be interesting that a further research takes into account students' point of view and investigates factors affecting their participation in the learning process.

In few words, we can say that the findings revealed that there were some aspects of learner-centredness in teachers' instruction such as establishing a climate of trust between teachers and students and relating learning to learners' experiences. But basically, teachers of English adopted a teacher-centred mode of instruction; they did not support teaching methodologies characterized by negotiating curricular priorities with students and involving students when planning lessons.

One implication of these results is that teachers should think about how to enhance their teaching style towards a more learner-centered teaching style. Three self-reflection activities were suggested in the last chapter to try to bridge the gap between theory and practice and bring something informative and significant that may help teachers achieve their own professional development.

However, due to the sample size of the study, further research in other Algerian university settings and with larger samples need to be conducted to investigate other English language university teachers' teaching style and/or factors that may influence their teaching mode.

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Appendix 1:

Adapted PALS Questionnaire to Teachers

Dear colleague,

The following survey contains 26 items. Please respond to the way you most frequently practise the action described in the item. You have 6 choices: Always, Almost Always, Often, Seldom, Almost Never, and Never.

Always	Almost Always	Often	Seldom	Almost Never	Never
0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

1. I use methods that foster quiet, productive, deskwork (the teacher instructs from the desk).
0 1 2 3 4 5
2. I get a student to motivate himself/herself by confronting him/her in the presence of classmates during group discussions.
0 1 2 3 4 5
3. I use one basic teaching method because I have found that most students have a similar style of learning.
0 1 2 3 4 5
4. I use tests as my chief method of evaluating students.
0 1 2 3 4 5
5. I adjust my instructional objectives to match the individual abilities and needs of the students.
0 1 2 3 4 5
6. I encourage competition among my students.
0 1 2 3 4 5
7. I give all students in my class the same assignment on a given topic.
0 1 2 3 4 5
8. I use lecturing as the best method for presenting my subject material to students.
0 1 2 3 4 5
9. I let each student work at his/her own rate regardless of the amount of time it takes him/her to learn a new concept.
0 1 2 3 4 5
10. I encourage my students to ask comprehension questions.
0 1 2 3 4 5
11. I plan activities that will encourage each student's ’growth from dependence on others to greater independence.
0 1 2 3 4 5
12. I plan learning activities to take into account my students ' prior experiences.
0 1 2 3 4 5

Always Almost Always Often Seldom Almost Never Never

13. I help my students develop short-term as well as long-term objectives.
0 1 2 3 4 5
14. I help students find out the gaps between their goals and their present level of performance.
0 1 2 3 4 5
15. I have individual conferences to help students identify their needs.
0 1 2 3 4 5
16. I encourage discussion among my students.
0 1 2 3 4 5
17. I accept errors as a natural part of the learning process.
0 1 2 3 4 5
18. I allow students to participate in developing the criteria for evaluating their performance in class.
0 1 2 3 4 5
19. I have my students identify their own learning problems that need to be solved.
0 1 2 3 4 5
20. I allow students to participate in making decisions about the topics that will be covered in class.
0 1 2 3 4 5
21. I arrange the classroom so that it is easy for students to interact.
0 1 2 3 4 5
22. I avoid discussion of controversial subjects that involve value judgments.
0 1 2 3 4 5
23. I avoid issues that relate to the student's concept of himself/herself.
0 1 2 3 4 5
24. I maintain a well-disciplined classroom to reduce interferences to learning.
0 1 2 3 4 5
25. I provide knowledge rather than serve as a resource person.
0 1 2 3 4 5
26. I keep to the course objectives in the syllabus that I supply at the beginning of the year in a handout/on the black board.
0 1 2 3 4 5

Please add any comments or remarks that you think might help this study.

……
……..
……..

Appendix 2

Second Questionnaire to Teachers

1. Do you negotiate curricular priorities with your students at the beginning of the course/the year? Why or why not?

……
……..

2. Do you take into account your learners' prior experience when planning your lessons? Why or why not?

……
……..

3. Do you think it should be a goal of educators to help all learners become self-directed? Why or why not?

……
……..

4. Do you believe that the lecture method is superior to facilitating learning? Why or why not?

……
……..

5. Do you use informal testing when assessing your students' learning? Why or why not?

……
……..

6. Do you help your students determining their learning objectives?

……
……..

Appendix 3

Questionnaire to Students

Dear student,

Please answer each question, according to your own opinion and learning experience. Thank you for your cooperation.

The following survey contains 26 items. Please respond to the way your teacher most frequently practises the action described in the item. You have 6 choices: Always, Almost Always, Often, Seldom, Almost Never, and Never.

Always Almost Always Often Seldom Almost Never Never

1. The teacher uses methods that foster quiet, productive, deskwork (the teacher instructs from the desk).

0 1 2 3 4 5

2. The teacher gets a student to motivate himself/herself by confronting him/her in the presence of classmates during group discussions.

0 1 2 3 4 5

3. The teacher uses one basic teaching method because he has found that most students have a similar style of learning.

0 1 2 3 4 5

4. The teacher uses tests as his chief method of evaluating students.

0 1 2 3 4 5

5. The teacher adjusts his instructional objectives to match the individual abilities and needs of the students.

0 1 2 3 4 5

6. The teacher encourages competition among his students.

0 1 2 3 4 5

7. The teacher gives all students in his class the same assignment on a given topic.

0 1 2 3 4 5

8. The teacher uses lecturing as the best method for presenting his subject material to students.

0 1 2 3 4 5

9. The teacher lets each student work at his/her own rate regardless of the amount of time it takes him/her to learn a new concept.

0 1 2 3 4 5

10. The teacher encourages hid students to ask questions.

0 1 2 3 4 5

11. The teacher plans activities that will encourage each student's ’growth from dependence on others to greater independence.

0 1 2 3 4 5

12. The teacher plans learning activities to take into account his students ' prior experiences.

0 1 2 3 4 5

Always Almost Always Often Seldom Almost Never Never

13. The teacher helps his students develop short-term as well as long-term objectives.
0 1 2 3 4 5
14. The teacher helps students find out the gaps between their goals and their present level of performance.
0 1 2 3 4 5
15. The teacher has individual conferences to help students identify their needs.
0 1 2 3 4 5
16. The teacher encourages discussion among his students.
0 1 2 3 4 5
17. The teacher accepts errors as a natural part of the learning process.
0 1 2 3 4 5
18. The teacher allows students to participate in developing the criteria for evaluating their performance in class.
0 1 2 3 4 5
19. The teacher has his students identify their own learning problems that need to be solved.
0 1 2 3 4 5
20. The teacher allows students to participate in making decisions about the topics that will be covered in class.
0 1 2 3 4 5
21. The teacher arranges the classroom so that it is easy for students to interact.
0 1 2 3 4 5
22. The teacher avoids discussion of controversial subjects that involve value judgments.
0 1 2 3 4 5
23. The teacher avoids issues that relate to the student's concept of himself/herself.
0 1 2 3 4 5
24. The teacher maintains a well-disciplined classroom to reduce interferences to learning.
0 1 2 3 4 5
25. The teacher provides knowledge rather than serve as a resource person.
0 1 2 3 4 5
26. The teacher keeps to the course objectives in the syllabus that he supplies at the beginning of the year in a handout/on the black board.
0 1 2 3 4 5

Please add any comments or remarks that you think might help this study.

……
……..
……..

Appendix 4:

Mean Scores from Teachers' questionnaires

by Each Item/ Each Teacher.

Items	T(1) Sc	T(2) Sc	T(3) Sc	T(4) Sc	T(5) Sc	T(6) Sc	T(7) Sc	T(8) Sc	T(9) Sc	T(10)Sc	**Mean by item**
1	1	3	4	5	5	4	1	1	4	2.5	**3.03**
2	5	2	0	2	2	4	5	5	0	1	**2.6**
3	1	2	5	2	4	0	1	1	5	4	**2.5**
4	2	2.5	5	0	1	5	1	0	4	0	**2.05**
5	3	4	4	2.5	5	2	3	3	4	5	**3.55**
6	4	1	2	3	3	5	3	1	2	0	**2.4**
7	3	1	2	5	0	0	1	2	2	4	**1.9**
8	0	1	3	2	5	4	1	1	3	0	**1.9**
9	0	3	3	3	0	2	1	1	3	2	**1.8**
10	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	**4.9**
11	3	3	4	3	4	4	2	5	4	5	**3.7**
12		3	3	3	5	4	1	1	3	4	**2.8**
13	2	4	4	2.5	4	3	2	2	4	4	**3.15**
14	3	2	4	1	2	5	1	2	4	4	**2.8**
15	1	3	3	2.5	2	2	1	1	0	2.5	**1.8**
16	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	**4.6**
17	5	4	5	3	4	5	5	5	5	5	**4.6**
18	2	5	5	2	3	3	1	1	5	3	**3**
19	0	4	4	4	4	2	1	1	4	5	**2.9**
20	2	1	3	3	4	0	0	1	2	5	**2.1**
21	0	2	4	1	1	2	0	1	4	1	**1.6**
22	5	4	4	5	5	5	1	4	4	2	**3.9**
23	0	2	4	1	5	2	0	0	4	2	**2**
24	1	1	4	2	3	0	1	1	4	2.5	**1.95**
25	0	1	3	2	4	3	0	1	2	0	**1.5**
26	0	0	2	2	2	2	0	0	1	2	**1.1**
Mean by teacher	**53**	**67.5**	**94**	**71.5**	**87**	**78**	**43**	**51**	**86**	**73.5**	***70.4***

T= Teacher

Sc = score

Appendix 4:

Content Analysis of Teachers' Data Collected from the Open-ended Questionnaire

Themes of the Questions	Yes/No Questions	Teachers' Verbatim Comments	Number of Teacher Responses
Curricular Negotiation	1. Do you negotiate curricular priorities with your students at the beginning of each course you teach? Why or why not?	-"I often do it to make them aware of why they learn US Literature."(US Lit, 2nd Year) -"I like to do it but my students don't respond. 99% are just interested to get through."(English lit, 4th year) -"At the beginning of the year, the main priorities of my course are presented and negotiated with my students to make them aware about planning their objectives."(Listening, 3rd Year) -"Yes, I do because the students should be aware at the beginning of the year of the requirements and expectations waiting them."(US Civ, 3rd Year) -"I often do it when there is an opportunity. I think it is a very practical way to show the students that we TRUST them and we respect their decisions, then preparing them to become self-directed, 'mature' and independent learners. NB: Even when it is me who takes decisions I never make them feel so." (US Lit, 4th Year) -"No, I don't. I just give my students some general guidelines about the programme of Linguistics to be covered during the year. This is due to the fact that I don't feel my students are motivated or interested in doing any kind of negotiation. Besides, I must stick to the programme given to us by the administration" (Linguistics, 3rd Year)	For Question 1, (4/10) university teachers negotiated curricular priorities with their students at the beginning of the year.

		-"No, I don't. I just give them the programme."(British Civ, 4th Year) -"No, I don't give the programme in order to avoid preparation from the part of the students. I prefer them to be spontaneous." (Speaking, 1st Year)	
Learners' Experience	2. Do you take into account your learners' prior experience when planning your lessons? Why or why not?	-"I do because they won't understand without it."(US Civ, 3rd Year) -"Yes I do. With second year students, we start the year with a general discussion about literature. I ask them questions such as: Do you like lit? Why or why not? What is your opinion about the role of lit in life? Do we find solutions to our everyday worries in novels…etc?"(US Lit, 2nd Year) "I do. In explaining dramatic lit. I try to bring the text as close as possible to the students' own field of experience. For example: Hamlet's problem and his mother's remarriage→ comparing this with real cases."(Eng Lit, 4th Year) -"Yes I do, because it will help learners to get interested in the topic and initiate debates."(Speaking, 1st Year) -"Yes, I do. A previous diagnostic of learners' experience in learning about US Civ is useful in lessons planning although there is a curriculum to be respected"(US Civ, 3rd Year) -"Yes, I do. My students and I speak openly about their prior experiences. We do so because as a literature teacher, it's important to know whether our students are familiar with literature or they have never opened a novel before. Moreover, sometimes it is important to correct some of the students' false Ideés fixes such as	For Question 3, (6/10) university teachers believed that the lecture method is superior to facilitating learning.

		literary works are just about words."(US Lit, 4th Year) -"As a teacher of Linguistics, I try but it is not easy to do so. Just take the example of studying TG (Transformational Generative Grammar).I could only use some of the students' prior knowledge about Mathematics to explain how TG works."(Linguistics, 3rd Year)	
Learners' self-directness and autonomy	3. Do you think it should be a goal of educators to help all learners become self-directed? Why or why not?	-"Not all the time."(US Civ, 3rd Year) -"It is. Because students in the long term must become self-independent and self-reliant."(US Lit,2nd Year) -"Of course it should be. We prepare learners to be future teachers. So, they have to acquire some self-reliance and individualism."(US lit, 4th Year) -"Not all. The nature of our students is built through school on being directed and doing automatic work."(Eng Lit, 4th year)	For Question 5, (8/10) university teachers believed it should be a goal of a educators to help all students become self-directed
the use of lectures	4. Do you believe that the lecture method is superior to facilitating learning? Why or why not?	-"I basically use the lecture method to teach linguistics. However, I try to get students involved in the lesson by asking them questions or examples relevant to the content of the course."(Linguistics, 2nd Year) -"I try to avoid it as much as possible. Even when I use it, it comes after a long discussion with the students. I ask them questions, they give answers or comment on each others' answers. Then, the lecture is a short synthesis of the discussion."(US Lit, 2nd Year) "Not really, however with large groups it works better."(English Lit, 4th Year)	For Question 3, (3/10) university teachers believed that the lecture method is superior to facilitating learning.
The use of informal	5. Do you use informal testing when assessing	-"No, look at the situation at the university! Our classes are overcrowded…!"(English Lit, 4th Year)	For Question 4, (4/10) university teachers used

testing	students' learning? Why or why not?	-"Why bother? We don't have the means to test our students informally. So, I rely only on standardised tests set by the administration at the end of each semester."(Linguistics, 2nd Year) -" I evaluate my students through formal tests and through group work projects"(US Lit,2nd Year)	informal testing when assessing students' learning.
Learners' learning objectives	6. Do you help your students determining their learning objectives?	-"No, I don't but I ask them what is your goal from studying English and I discovered that students are lazy and think it's their right to pass! No motivation for studies as the large majority do not really fit their studies (not their own choice.) (English Lit, 4th Year) -"Yes, I do. Students lack the sense of responsibility and sense of self-esteem. The learning objectives are not clear for all of them. I came to this conclusion because I like to discuss such matters with my students. What we can do is involving students more in their learning through individual or group projects and organising conferences when necessary."(US Lit, 2nd Year) - "No, I don't. Few students have clear goals in their minds. A majority, if I am not exaggerating think that studying English is an easy way to get a degree. They don't invest their real potential in their studies." (British Civ, 4th Year) -"Yes, I do. I want my students to develop a sense of accomplishment when studying. I feel that only the same group of 5 or 6 students in my class who show an interest in studying for the sake of studying."(Linguistics, 3rd Year) -" Yes, I do"(Speaking, 1st Year)	For Question 5, 6/10 university teachers helped their students determining their learning objective

عنوان البحث: دراسة الأساليب التعليمية

لعينة من الأساتذة الجامعيين للغة الإنجليزية

بجامعة سعد دحلب – البليدة-

ملخص الدراسة :

تهدف هذه الدّراسة إلى محاولة التعرّف على الأسلوب التعليمي السّائد لدى أساتذة جامعيّين للّغة الانجليزية في جامعة البليد ة باستعمال عيّنة تتكون من عشرة اساتدة و ثمانين من طلبتهم. هذه الدّراسة استكشافيّة وصفيّة و اعتمدنا في جمع المعلومات على ثلاثة استبيانات طبّق منها اثنان على الأساتذة و واحد على الطلاّب. لتقدير الأسلوب التّعليمي السّائد لدى مجموعة الاساتدة العشرة. كل من الاستبيانين يحتوي على 26عنصرا أخذت من استبيان يدعى Adapted Principal of Adult Learning Scale (APALS) استعمل في دراسة سابقة لـ Rong et al .(2005)

من خلال تحليل الاستبيانين و مقارنتهما لاحظنا أن لكلّ من الأساتذة و طلاّبهم وجهة نظر متماثلة فيما يخص الأسلوب التعليمي السّائد.إذ أن هذا الأخير هو الأسلوب المتمركز حول الأستاذ.حيث أنّ معظم الأساتذة يدرّسون بالطّريقة التّقليديّة .

إلى جانب دراسة الأسلوب السّائد تهدف الدّراسة إلى البحث في إمكانيّة استعمال الأساتذة لاستراتيجيّات تدريس متمركزة حول المتعلّم. و لتحقيق دلك، أضفنا استبيانا ثالثا للأساتذة المشاركين. متكوّن من ستة أسئلة مفتوحة للتعرّف أكثر على طريقة تدريسهم في القسم.

بعد تحليل نتائج هذا الاستبيان والاستبيان السّابق(APALS) اكتشفنا أن الاساتدة هم المسيطرون على طريقة التّعليم باستعمالهم الغالب لطريقة المحاضرة وعدم السّماح لطلبتهم مناقشة أهداف ومحتوى المنهاج او المشاركة في طريقة تقويم تعلّمهم.

مع كل هذا نجد أن هناك جوانب في طريقة تدريس الاساتدة تعتمد على المتعلّم. على سبيل المثال محاولة خلق جو من الثّقة بين الطّلبة و أساتذتهم Climate Building لإدماجهم أكثر في عملية التعلّم و تشجيعهم على طرح الأسئلة و المشاركة في النّقاش.إلى جانب محاولة الأساتذة ربط محتوى الدّروس بالتّجارب التّعليمية والحياتية للتّلاميذ Relating Learning to Learners ′ Experience

اكتشفنا أن الصّعوبة في تطبيق الطّريقة التّعليمية المتمركزة حول المتعلّم تعود إلى عدّة عوامل مرتبطة بطبيعة الطّلبة، المقياس المدرّس، حجم القسم، توفّر الوسائل، الإدارة و حتّى بعض الاستراتيجيّات التّعليمية المتجذّرة في الجّامعة كاستعمال طريقة المحاضرة و التّقويم السّداسي أو السّنوي

معظم الأساتذة يعتمدون على الأسلوب المتمركز حول الأستاذ و عليه اقترحنا ثلاثة تمارين تعتمد على التّفكير الذّاتي للأستاذ لمساعدته على اكتشاف أسلوبه التعليمي و تحسينه.