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**Investigating the Effectiveness of the Student Centered Teaching Approach in  
Boosting Students' Critical Thinking**

The Case Study of Master One at Chadli Bendjedid University, El-Tarf

Dissertation submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirement of the Master's Degree in "*Didactique de L'Anglais*"

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## **Dedication**

*“Don’t let the sun go down without saying thank you to someone, and without admitting to yourself that absolutely no one gets this far alone.”*

*-Stephen King-*

*I dedicate this work to:*

*First I want to thank me for believing in me and doing this all hard work*

*To my parents Mr.Ramdhan OUNNAS & Ms. Sabah LACHEB*

*To my sister **Zayneb** and sister in law **Safia***

*To my twin nephews **Iyad & Zayn***

*To my brothers **ABDOU, ABDERRAHMANE & RIAD***

*To my lovely best friends **Nour ,Samra & Istabrek***

*To the most organized and hardworking partner in this work, Ms.**Rimeh AYAT.***

*And to all whomever taught me a word and prayed for my success.*

***Thank you to the eternity***

***Ounnas Fairouz***

**Dedication:**

*“...and the last of their call will be praise to Allah, Lord of the worlds.”*

*Yunus 10.*

*Praise be to God, with love, gratitude and appreciation. I would not have done this without the favor of God. Praise be to God for the beginning and the end.*

*I dedicate this work to :*

*First, I want to thank me for believing in me and never giving up on my dreams.*

*To my beloved father Mr.**Kchida** and mother Mrs.**Soraya** who never stopped believing in me.*

*To my brother **Oussama**.*

*To my lovely sisters **Ikhlas** and **Ritej**.*

*To all my friends who were Always beside me giving advice and support me .*

*To my aunts, uncles and cousins*

*To the one who makes me laugh all the time Mr. **H**.*

*To the most kind ,organized and diligen partner in this work . I am honored to work alongside you,Ms. **Fairouz Ounnas**.*

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**-Alfred North Whitehead-**

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## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**SCTA:** student centered teaching approach

**SCT:** student critical thinking

**CT:** critical thinking

**PBA:** problem based approach

**SCL:** student centered learning

**%:** Percentage

## Abstract

The effectiveness of student-centered teaching approaches in enhancing critical thinking skills is a crucial aspect of education. This study investigates the impact of a student-centered approach on critical thinking skills in an English language learning setting. The research was conducted at a University of Chadli Ben djedid in Tarf province. It dealt with 46 EFL students of master one and all the teachers at the same university. The study employed a mixed methodology, using two questionnaires to gather data, which was then analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The main hypothesis of this research was that a student-centered approach would significantly enhance critical thinking skills. To test this hypothesis, the researchers examined the implementation of the student-centered approach in the classrooms, explored teachers' attitudes towards it, and evaluated the extent to which it improved the students' critical thinking abilities. The results revealed that the student-centered approach was fully implemented, and there was improvement in the students' critical thinking skills. Furthermore, the teachers expressed positive attitudes towards the approach. The study concludes with pedagogical implications and recommendations aimed at improving the quality of the teaching and learning process.

**Keywords:** Student-centered teaching approach, Critical thinking skills, EFL.

## ملخص

تعد فعالية نُهج التدريس التي يركز عليها الطلاب في تعزيز مهارات التفكير النقدي جانباً حاسماً من جوانب التعليم. وتبحث هذه الدراسة أثر نهج يركز على الطالب على مهارات التفكير النقدي في بيئة تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. وأجري البحث في جامعة شادلي بن جديد الطارف. وهي تتعامل مع 46 طالباً من طلاب سنة أولى ماستر وجميع الأساتذة في نفس الجامعة. واستخدمت الدراسة منهجية مختلطة استخدمت استبيانين لجمع البيانات، ثم جرى تحليلها كمياً ونوعياً. وكانت الفرضية الرئيسية لهذا البحث هي أن اتباع نهج يركز على الطلاب من شأنه أن يعزز مهارات التفكير النقدي بدرجة كبيرة. ولاختبار هذه الفرضية، درس الباحثون تنفيذ النهج الذي يركز على الطلاب في الفصول الدراسية، واستكشفوا مواقف الأساتذة إزاءها، وقيموا مدى تحسينها لقدرات الطلاب على التفكير النقدي. وكشفت النتائج أن النهج الذي يركز على الطلاب قد نُفذ تنفيذاً كاملاً، وأن هناك تحسناً في مهارات الطلاب في التفكير النقدي. وعلاوة على ذلك، أعرب الأساتذة عن مواقف إيجابية إزاء هذا النهج وتختتم الدراسة بالتأثيرات التربوية والتوصيات الرامية إلى تحسين نوعية عملية التدريس والتعلم.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** نهج التدريس المتمركز حول الطالب ، مهارات التفكير النقدي ،الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

## **Chapter One**

### **Introductory Chapter to the research**

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introductory Chapter to the Research**

#### **Introduction**

Critical thinking is a fundamental component of contemporary education, enabling students to effectively navigate the complexities of the modern world. In this context, student-centered teaching methods have garnered significant attention as a means of fostering critical thinking. This pedagogical approach shifts the focus from traditional teacher-led instruction to a more interactive and student-driven learning environment, where students are encouraged to take an active role in their learning process.

Student-centered teaching emphasizes active learning, collaboration, and real-world problem-solving, all of which are crucial for developing critical thinking skills. By fostering an environment where students take ownership of their learning, this approach aims to enhance their analytical abilities, creativity, and ability to evaluate information critically.

This chapter introduces the research study investigating the impact of the student-centered teaching approach on enhancing critical thinking of EFL students. It outlines the problem statement, research objectives, and the significance of the study. Additionally, it presents the research questions and hypotheses, describes the

methodology employed, and provides an overview of the study's organization and its potential limitations.

### **Statement of the problem**

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in student-centered teaching approaches for improving students' critical thinking skills. Despite the growing popularity of such methods, there is still a lack of understanding about how much student-centered teaching actually improves critical thinking skills. As a result, the primary goal of this study is to explore the impact of implementing a student-centered teaching (SCTA) strategy on the development of critical thinking abilities among students at Chedli Bendjedid University master one level.

### **Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of student-centered teaching approaches on enhancing students' critical thinking skills (SCTS) of EFL learners. This will be achieved by examining the relationship between student-centered teaching methods and the development of critical thinking abilities.

### **Research Significance**

This research work is significant and serves educators and learners in terms of:

- Exploring the impact of student-centered teaching approaches in enhancing critical thinking will shed light on educators' perceptions of this method and the challenges they encounter when fostering critical thinking skills.
- It reveals how effectively teachers implement student-centered approaches to cultivate critical thinking.
- It assists in discovering how well learners develop and apply critical thinking skills in the classroom.
- The research will aid decision-makers in understanding the current educational landscape and inform the best pedagogical strategies to enhance both the teaching and the learning of critical thinking skills across diverse educational settings.

### **Research questions**

**Q1:** What is the impact of student centered teaching approach in boosting Critical thinking skills?

**Q2:** What are the long-term effects of exposure to student-centered teaching approaches on students' lifelong critical thinking abilities and problem-solving skills?

### **Research Hypotheses**

H.1: Implementing a student-centered teaching approach, which incorporates personalized learning and builds upon students' previous

educational achievements, will lead to a significant improvement in students' critical thinking skills.

H.2: Exposure to student-centered teaching approaches in the classroom will have a positive long-term impact on students' critical thinking abilities and problem-solving skills, enabling them to better navigate complex challenges and succeed in their future careers.

## **Research methodology**

### **Research design**

The descriptive approach is adopted to fulfill the objectives of this study which are to evaluate the impact of student-centered teaching approach on critical thinking skills. On that account it is thought to be the appropriate approach to be used in this context. The research has been conducted following the mixed method in order to answer the research questions and validate the above hypotheses. The researchers have used mixed data collection tools represented in the use of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of student-centered teaching approach on critical thinking skills.

### **Participants**

The researchers have conducted a questionnaire in master one class of 46 students. This classroom is located in Chedli Bendjedid University at Taref province

during the academic year 2023/2024. The Students' questionnaire was administrated to a sample of 46 students. Additionally, the teachers' questionnaire was submitted to all teachers in the same university.

### **Data collection tools**

In order to attain the purpose of the research, the study uses the questionnaire as a source of evidence. Two questionnaires were administrated to Master 1 students and for all teachers at Chedli Bendjedid University to investigate the impact of student-centered teaching approach on critical thinking skills.

### **Limitations of the Study**

To enhance the investigation of this study, more robust tools such as interviews or even an experimental approach are required to assess the student centered teaching approach efficacy on students critical thinking. In addition the researchers were designed to work with all teachers of English department. Thus, we only got 10 teachers respond due to the busy period of students' exams preparations.

### **Organization of the study**

This dissertation comprises five interconnected chapters designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the study. The initial chapter serves as an introduction, outlining the research's background, problem statement, aims, and the significance of employing a student-centered teaching approach to enhance critical

thinking skills. It also includes the research questions, hypotheses, design, study organization, and limitations.

The second chapter delves into a literature review focusing on the student-centered teaching approach and critical thinking.

Chapter three is dedicated to the research methodology, offering a detailed account of the methods, approach, design, and data collection tools used throughout the research.

Chapter four presents the research findings, analyzing and interpreting data collected from questionnaires administered to both students and teachers.

The final chapter, linked to the previous one, discusses the findings, drawing out pedagogical implications and recommendations regarding the impact of a student-centered teaching approach on enhancing critical thinking skills.

### **Conclusion**

Critical thinking is an essential skill for students, and the implementation of student-centered teaching approaches in the classroom is intended to enhance this capability, which requires active engagement and personal involvement. The following chapter will delve deeper into the concepts of critical thinking and student-centered teaching.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of the Literature**

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of the Literature**

#### **Introduction**

In the pursuit of enhancing educational outcomes, innovative approaches have emerged to transform the learning landscape. One such approach is the Student-Centered Teaching method, which prioritizes active student involvement and engagement in the learning process.

This chapter is divided into two sections, the first section focuses on the Student-Centered Teaching Approach, emphasizing its modern educational approach that prioritizes active student involvement in learning. Furthermore, it highlights the benefits of student-centered learning. Additionally, it provides a comprehensive foundation for understanding the significance of student-centered teaching and its impact on student learning outcomes. The second section shed lightening the concept of critical thinking, exploring its various dimensions. Furthermore, it discusses the value of developing critical thinking skills in EFL/ESL classes, emphasizing the impact on communication skills.

#### **Student Centered Teaching Approach**

Student-centered teaching, often referred to as Project-Based Learning (PBL), is a modern educational approach that focuses on students taking an active role in their learning. It involves using technology and students' skills to reach higher educational standards (Zmuda, 2009). Student-centered learning is about making the classroom more engaging and

interactive, the teacher is considered a “guide on the side” assisting and supporting students to set learning goals.

Johnny Moyer (2010) states that “the trick is to have students learn while they are busy having fun”, Making learning and teaching more comfortable. This fosters trust, enabling students to openly share their thoughts and concerns, creating a supportive environment where they can discuss their feelings and any challenges they may be facing.

In student-centered learning, maintaining an authentic classroom environment is crucial, when situations arise that make students or teachers uncomfortable or lead to a loss of control, it can seriously hinder progress in learning. This often results in a lack of trust and openness in communication between everyone involved. Christopher Uhl (2010) discusses this concept in his work "Steering into the Curve," He states that it “is the power to transform classrooms from tedious, lifeless places to alive, authentic relationship-rich environments” (Uhl, 2010).

Student-centered learning has been shown to help students think more critically, solve problems better, improve their willingness to learn, and boost overall attendance. Using the curriculum effectively is crucial for students to succeed in a world shaped by technological advancements. As educators, we should utilize technology to make school more engaging and enjoyable for students, encouraging them to reach their maximum potential through innovative teaching methods.

As Learning goals are being crafted with a central focus on students, considering and accommodating their diverse needs and characteristics. This includes the diversity in the students' demographics, prior knowledge, ways of thinking, experiences, learning attitudes and skills, needs, and interests (Evertson & Neal, 2006; Hawker, 2000; Kagan, 2009; McCombs & Miller, 2007; Mowicki & Meehan, 1996; Yilmaz, 2008). Utilizing primary sources is an effective way to easily incorporate diverse perspectives into the learning process, (Schmidt, 2007; Skolnick et al., 2004; Wyman, 2005). Primary sources enable students to explore the past like detectives, immersing themselves in the event or era more authentically. This approach generates enthusiasm and inquisitiveness among student (Schmidt, 2007).

### **The Concept of Critical Thinking**

While definitions of critical thinking differ, “there is a basic essence or core of critical thinking that remains the same across all disciplines” (Hunter, 2014). This essence involves a type of thinking focused on acquiring knowledge about what to believe or how to act. It engages individuals in theoretical reasoning to determine facts, practical reasoning to decide on actions, reasonable thinking to have valid reasons for decisions, and reflective thinking to evaluate problems from various angles. Hunter suggests that these abilities are put into practice during critical thinking, aiming to understand and assess different perspectives shaped by diverse definitions and viewpoints of the same concepts. This process is crucial for

establishing adaptable evaluation frameworks that accommodate various ways of describing, explaining, and questioning phenomena.

Zulmaulida et al. (2018) highlight that having certain cognitive abilities and traits doesn't automatically mean someone will use critical thinking. They emphasize that true critical thinking is demonstrated by the outcomes achieved and how individuals apply their capabilities and traits in the process of thinking critically. This broader view considers not just having these qualities but also how they are put into action when engaging in critical thinking. They reference Glaser's (1942) foundational work, which underscores the significance of attitude, knowledge, and skills working together effectively for applying critical thinking in learning and problem-solving.

Critical thinking skills focus on one central idea: the skill to engage in logical thinking through *inquiry*. Critical thinking involves individuals being in control of their own thinking process and establishing suitable criteria and standards to evaluate their own thoughts. (Elder & Paul, 1994) Tasks and assignments used in class affect student's language perception . highlighting the crucial role teachers play in language education.

➤ ***The process of inquiry***

Inquiry requires not only the decision of what data to include but what data to exclude; what is relevant and what is irrelevant to the inquiry at hand (Dewey, 1938). Likewise, inquiry is as much concerned about agreements and disagreements, as well as comparing and contrasting different perspectives or ideas. Disciplined inquiry uses prior knowledge and as

Newmann et al. (1996), it encourages students to build on their existing knowledge to gain a better understanding of new concepts.

### **The Value of Developing Critical Thinking Skills**

In EFL/ESL classes, many things can affect how well students communicate. This includes how motivated they are, the atmosphere in the classroom, and other aspects of how they are taught and learn. Good teachers are able to give students challenges that help them learn better (Ur, 1996). The learner's capacity for critical thinking significantly impacts their communication skills, enabling them to excel in English communication. Encouraging critical thinking promotes autonomous learning, recognizing that language acquisition is a challenging journey. Both teachers and learners share the responsibility of maximizing opportunities for language practice within the classroom setting.

Critical thinking improves communication in English.

To develop critical thinking skills, it's important to set up the right environment and train individuals to enhance these skills. In a classroom focused on communication, the activities should also promote communication. In an effective language program, the goals should extend beyond just language skills to include fostering critical thinking in students (Brown,2004). The *Common European Framework of References for Languages and The Albanian National Curriculum of Foreign Languages* emphasize engaging learners in various practical activities that connect what they learn to real-life scenarios.

In a foreign language class, different language functions are categorized. The learning program provided includes specific objectives outlined in the table below:

**Table1.** Language functions and learning objectives

<i>Teaching and searching for information</i>
<i>Understanding statements, meaning and intention</i>
<i>Suggestions of action research or giving instructions</i>
<i>Questions about likes or dislikes, approval or disapproval of something, etc.</i>

( adopted from *The Albanian National Curriculum of Foreign Languages, 2000*)

Results from Lombardi et al.'s (2021) study on critical thinking development in European primary schools showed that infusion and immersion methods are commonly used in school programs to teach critical thinking skills that is, “as an explicit and implicit goal within standard subject-matter content instruction” Moreover, they mention that these methods are usually seen in the school's curriculum and teaching methods, which aim to inspire students to ask questions, work together in teams to solve problems, discuss different viewpoints, give feedback, share ideas, and utilize digital tools to find, analyze, and communicate information. As per their findings, in this type of curriculum design “students are engaged in dialogue and encouraged to think about analyze and evaluate diverse perspectives immersed in the subject”

Additionally, they suggest that *infusion* and *immersion* are the most successful techniques for both learning content and enhancing critical thinking skills. These methods are commonly seen as an integrated way of preparing and teaching critical thinking, often appearing in the curriculum as overarching themes or general skills.

➤ ***Infusion***

In the infusion method content is essential, so the critical thinking outcomes are clearly defined alongside the subject-related objectives. In this approach, students engage in learning activities that prompt critical thinking by using the subject material, with teachers guiding and assisting them in thinking deeply about the topics at hand. The goal is to encourage students to think critically within each subject matter where the general principles of critical thinking are explicitly formulated. (Abrami et al., 2014).

➤ ***Immersion***

In the immersion method, critical thinking is encouraged and applied throughout the course within the context of the subject being taught. However, the main emphasis is on the subject matter itself rather than explicitly stating the development of critical thinking skills as a specific learning goal. Students are immersed in the subject matter and learn to think critically without realizing that they are being trained to do so ; (Abrami et al., 2014).this approach is based on the idea that critical thinking can be taught through deep subject-matter instruction, where students are encouraged to think critically within the subject matter

➤ ***Mixed Method***

Within the mixed method there is a combination of general method with infusion or immersion. As such, the subject matter is taught separately while critical thinking skills are also being developed separately; however this is achieved within the subject matter, by using a different, additional learning thread focused on instructing the principles of critical thinking.

### **The context of teaching and learning**

Teachers not only teach language but also help students think carefully. When students read, they naturally use their thinking skills to understand, these skills are very useful when they write assignments. Recently, teachers focus on developing students' thinking abilities, which help them think, be creative, and feel confident. Teaching critical thinking is important at all school levels of studies from secondary and high school students to university students.

In modern education, various teaching methods are utilized to cultivate critical thinking skills among students, extending beyond foreign language instruction to other subjects. In EFL classrooms, learners are encouraged to connect knowledge and apply it practically. Language educators, following the language curriculum, engage students in communicative tasks, simulations, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks. Given that the primary goal of language acquisition is effective communication, the use of a proficient teaching approach is paramount to facilitate this process, it is very important to use an effective teaching methodology.

The shift from traditional language classrooms, which relied on translation methods, to communicative approaches emphasizes the importance of considering both the subject matter

and students' learning processes when designing and selecting teaching methods (Davis, 1997). Nowadays, learner-centered classrooms are practical. Learning and using the English language involve a process of negotiation. During lessons, students actively engage by taking notes and honing their listening and critical thinking skills. Teachers must carefully consider the most effective strategies to enhance their teaching methods, focusing on cultivating students' problem-solving abilities. Simultaneously, students need to embrace independent thinking for autonomous learning with effective training, they can become accomplished learners.

Various factors encourage and impact how well foreign language learners think critically .thus, thinking is essential for students to succeed in inquiry-based learning (Clark & Starr, 1991). The skilled teacher uses tasks to get students working together. For someone learning a new language, it's vital to boost critical thinking first then apply it to enhance language abilities. Finally, the review underscores the significance of using effective teaching methodologies to cultivate students' problem-solving skills and promote autonomous learning.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, the researchers discussed the valuable insights into the importance of student-centered teaching in promoting students critical thinking. After providing enough background literature on the key concepts of this work, the subsequent chapter will focus on detailing the research methodology.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methods**

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methods**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter offers a detailed account of the methodological phase of the study, detailing the chosen method, participant information, sample, data collection tools, research procedures that were followed to carry out the current research. Ultimately, it outlines the methods employed to analyze data for the purpose of addressing the research inquiries and validating the hypotheses.

#### **Method**

This study aims at investigate students' centered teaching method on students' critical thinking, as far as this research study is concerned, a descriptive research approach has been selected for this study. According to Waliman (2010) "Descriptive Analysis deals with describing phenomena that how we think something is. It attempts to examine a situation in order to describe the norm" (p.10).

This method gives a description of the existing situation and seeks to provide solutions and /or new facts. The researchers consider this approach to be the most appropriate for investigating and evaluating the critical thinking on students centered teaching classes. In order to address the research questions and test the hypotheses, the researchers employed the

descriptive method for data collection to offer a more comprehensive insight into the subject under investigation (Scammon et al., 2013).

### **Participants**

Participants play a crucial role in the success and efficacy of any human research study. To investigate the influence of the student centered teaching on students' critical thinking, the researchers chose to work with master one university students because at that stage they have an advanced level in the English language. In addition, the selection is also based on the fact that master one have already experienced the student centered teaching method in their learning. The population is also extended to include all teachers of English department teachers who were informed about the purpose of the research.

### **Students' Sample**

In this study, 46 master one students of Chedli Bendjedid University during the academic year 2023-2024 have been chosen as a sample. The researchers decided to work with this number of students. The sample includes 8 males and 38 females aged between 21 and 27 years old who were desired to participate in the study. Over and above, they have almost identical learning backgrounds since they have studied English for three years as a field.

### **Teachers' Sample**

This sample consists of all teachers of English department. The sample that answered included three males and seven females with a teaching experience that ranges from five to

more than ten years, so they would be most knowledgeable about the student centered teaching approach the efficiencies of their students.

Teachers were asked to respond to a questionnaire containing inquiries that align with the objectives of the research study.

### **Data Gathering Tools and Procedures**

Throughout this descriptive study, data have been collected through descriptive data collection instruments. The subject matter being studied necessitates the utilization of two questionnaires. which were designed for both master one students and their teachers . Shamsavar and Tan (2012) argue that questionnaires are the most reliable data collection tool when assessing attitudes in learning environments. Consequently, questionnaires are considered the most fitting tool to collect data for this research.

#### **Students Questionnaire**

A questionnaire of ten close-ended and open-ended questions distributed for forty six students of CHEDLI BEN JDID University department of English. The questions provided highlight their attitude toward the student-centered teaching on critical thinking skills and the overall learning experience.

In closed-ended questions, students were instructed to select the appropriate checkbox, whereas in open-ended questions, they were encouraged to share their thoughts freely and offer additional details regarding their answers. It took the students about half

twenty minutes to fill in the questionnaire. The students were so cooperative and showed a positive attitude towards participating in the study.

### **Teachers' Questionnaire**

The data collection process from this questionnaire involved several stages, starting with the questionnaire design, determining the distribution locations, sending reminders to respondents about submission deadlines, and ultimately gathering the completed questionnaires. The questionnaires were printed on papers and were handed to ten all teachers of Chedli Bendjedid University El Taref province. The teachers' questionnaire is composed of 8 questions; it is designed to obtain data about teachers if they use student centered teaching and the effect of this method on their students.

The questionnaire consists of both close-ended and open-ended questions. . In close ended questions, teachers had to tick the appropriate box for quicker and easier answers , The open-ended questions were included to elicit more detailed explanations and justifications from the participants regarding their answers. Additionally, the researchers provided instructions on how to respond to the questions and inquired about any challenges the participants might face. The participants were also informed about the research objectives to enhance their understanding of the topic. However, the researchers emphasized that the participants should provide unbiased responses. Furthermore, they were also assured that their identities would remain confidential.

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, this chapter focused on the methodology that was followed in this research. An explanation of a descriptive approach for data collection. The participants and samples were comprehensively detailed. Furthermore, the data collection tools and procedures were discussed. The next chapter will present and analyze the data to achieve the objectives of the research.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results**

## Chapter Four

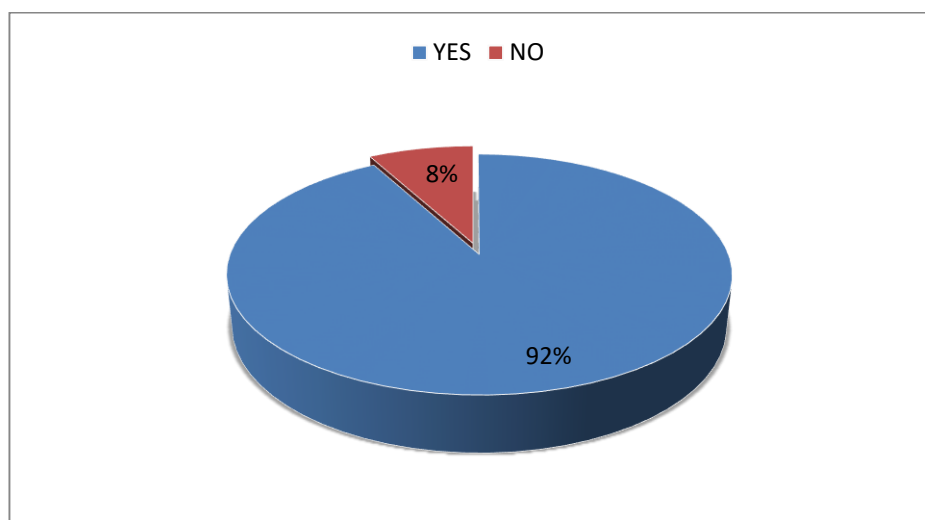
### Results

#### Introduction

This chapter is devoted to presentation of the results of the data obtained from the two questionnaires. It shows the impact of the Student Centered Teaching Approach (SCTA) in Students' Critical Thinking (SCT) .Thus, for the purpose of organization and clarity, the findings are analyzed with the aid of tables, charts, percentages and graphs.

#### Analysis of students' questionnaire

**Q1: Do you know what do we mean by student-centered teaching approach?**

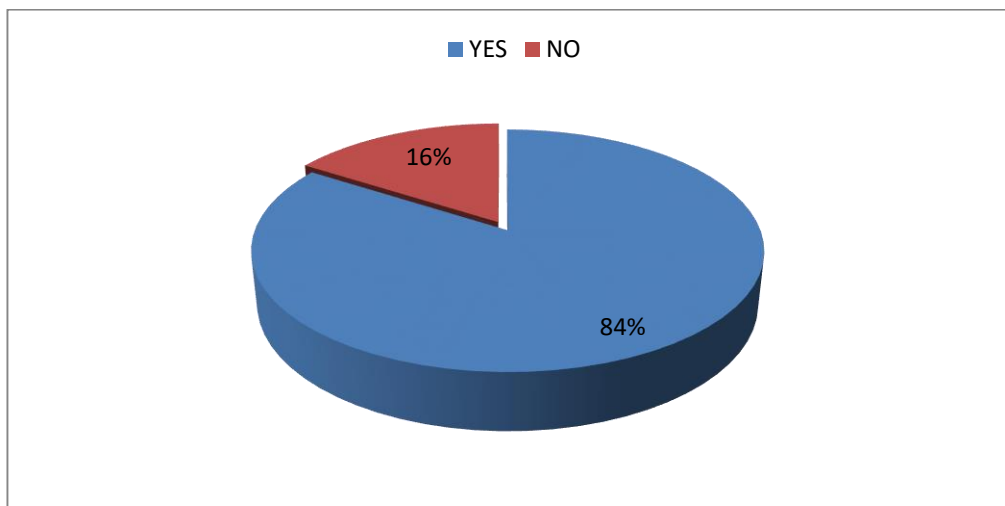


**Figure1. Understanding of SCTA among participants.**

The data presented in Figure 1 illustrates that the vast majority of participants, accounting for 92%, are well-acquainted with the student-centered teaching approach

(SCTA). Nonetheless, a small sample percentage of 8% of students seem to lack a complete understanding of this concept.

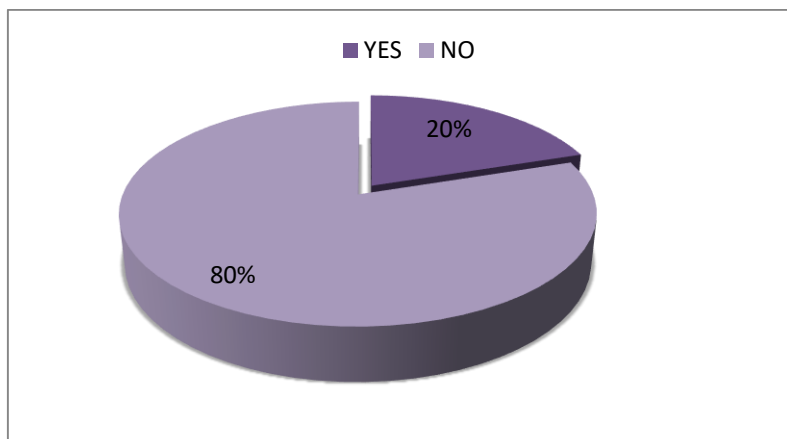
**Q2: Are You Being Taught Through SCTA?**



**Figure2.** Implementation of SCT among students

The results show that a significant majority of students (84%) are being taught through a student-centered teaching approach. However, it is also important to consider the (16%) of students who are not being taught through student-centered teaching approach. Overall, the results suggest that Student-Centered Teaching (SCT) is being used in the majority of classrooms.

**Q3: Do you think that SCTA is affecting your critical thinking?**



**Figure3.** Impact of student-centered teaching approach on CTS

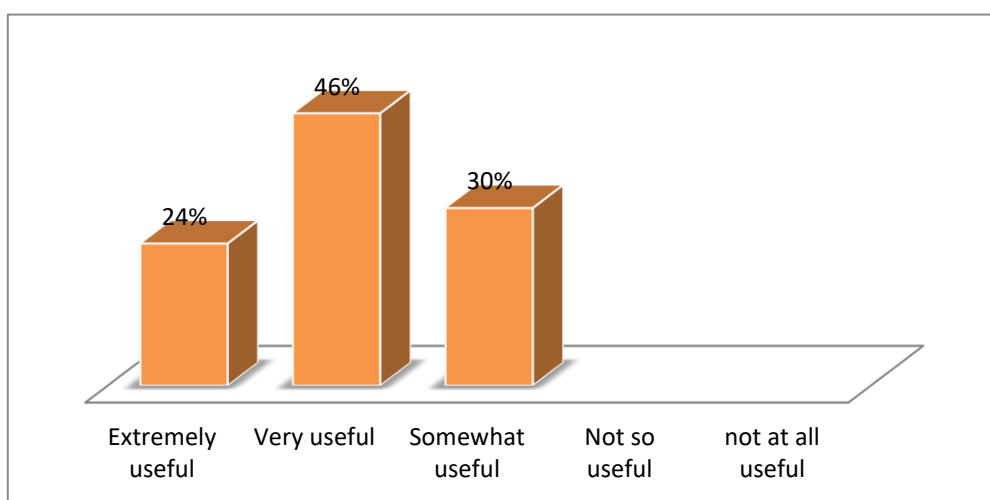
The pie chart above indicates that the majority of students (80%) believe that Student-Centered Teaching Approach (SCTA) has an impact on their critical thinking skills. It is important also to consider that (20%) of students who do not believe that student-centered teaching affects their critical thinking.

Expecting from the results that these students simply prefer a more traditional lecture based learning style or they are not given the proper support and guidance, they may not develop their critical thinking skills (CTS). The results suggest that student-centered teaching can be an effective way to promote critical thinking (CT).

**Q4: How effective do you find SCTA in enhancing CTS?**

**Table2.** Student Perception of the Effectiveness of SCT in Enhancing CTS

Options	Number	Percentage %
Extremely useful	6	24%
Very useful	12	46%
Somewhat useful	7	30%
Not so useful	0	0%
Not at all useful	0	0%
Total	25	100%



**Figure4.** Student perception of the effectiveness of SCT in enhancing CTS

The data given in table 2 reveals a significant agreement among students regarding the effectiveness of student-centered teaching in improving critical thinking skills (CTS). Specifically, 24% of students perceive this teaching approach as extremely beneficial, while an additional 46% consider it very useful. Furthermore, 30% find it somewhat useful, indicating a positive overall sentiment towards student-centered teaching. Notably, none of the students expressed that this approach was not useful at all. These results strongly indicate that student-centered teaching (SCT) holds promise as an effective method for fostering critical thinking skills among students.

**Q5: In what ways do you believe that SCTA has influenced your CTS?**

- Many students mentioned feeling more in charge of their learning, which empowers them to think critically.
- Several responses pointed to the importance of active participation like; discussions, problem solving and independent inquiry in developing critical thinking.
- Collaboration and exposure to different points of view were highlighted as ways student centered teaching (SCT) fosters critical thinking skills (CTS).
- Students mentioned that a deeper grasp of subject matter allowed them to analyze information critically.
- Many responses noted that student-centered teaching helped with communication skills, which is important for expressing and defending critical thinking (CT).

Overall, these responses provide a strong evidence that student-centered teaching has a positive impact on critical thinking skills. By encouraging active participation, fostering a sense of ownership and promoting diverse perspectives student-centered teaching equips students with the tools they need to think critically and become lifelong learners.

**Q6: Have you found that SCTA encourages you to ask more questions and seek deeper understanding of the subject matter?**

The results show two main categories of responses to the prompt about SCT:

- There are responses that simply state an agreement with a “yes”.
- And the other responses add a qualifier like “I think so”, “of course” remaining as basic confirmation.

The provided answers all land to the same point that SCT approach encourages asking more questions and seeking a deeper understanding.

**Q7: Can you describe a specific SC activity that you believe improved your CTS?**

The responses reveal a variety of activities that students found beneficial, highlighting different aspects of critical thinking development. The common activities mentioned are group discussions, debates, Presentations and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Projects.

**One of the students said:**

*“One student-centered activity that improved my critical thinking skills was participating in classroom debates.”*

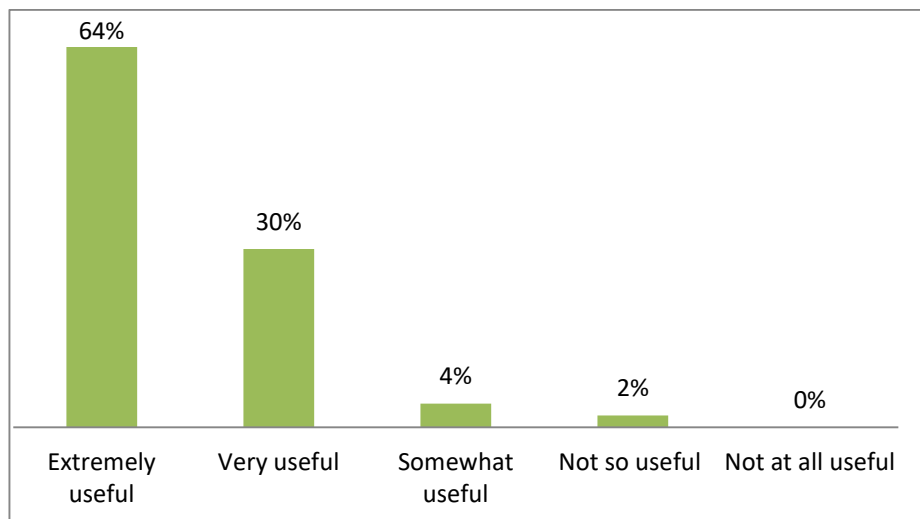
**Another one said:***“One student-centered activity that really improved my critical thinking skills was a group discussion and debate....”*

The responses demonstrate that student-centered activities offer valuable opportunities for developing critical thinking skills. Engaging in discussions, debates, projects, and presentations allows students to move beyond passive learning and actively participate in the learning process. This fosters critical thinking by encouraging them to analyze information, consider multiple perspectives, and solve problems creatively.

**Q8: Do you feel supported by your teachers in developing your CTS?**

**Table3.** Perception of teacher support in developing CTS among students

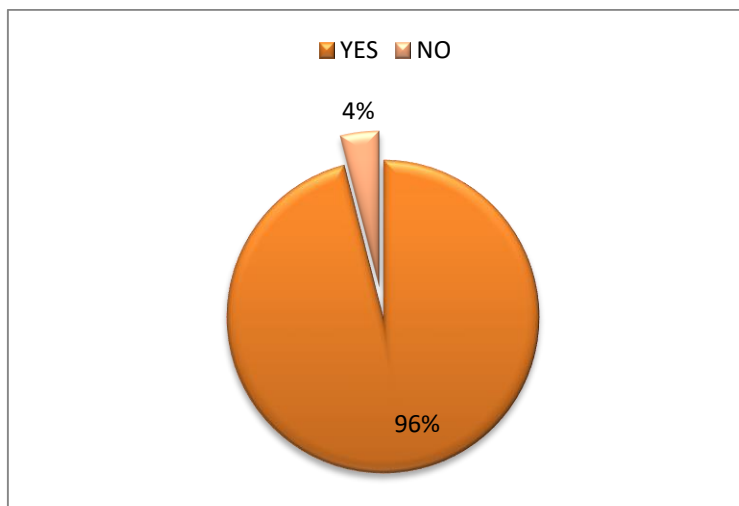
Options	Number	Percentage %
Extremely useful	15	64%
Very useful	7	30%
Somewhat useful	2	4%
Not so useful	1	2%
Not at all useful	0	0%
Total	25	100%



**Figure 5.** Perception of teacher support in developing CTS among students

Results show in table 3 that a majority of students (64% (15) students out of 25) found that their teachers were extremely useful in supporting their development of critical thinking skills. A portion of (30% (7) students) found it very useful. A very small minority (4% (2) students) found it somewhat useful. And an individual person in percentage of 2 mentioned that it is not so useful. No student find that their teachers cannot help in developing critical thinking skills. These results suggest that most students believe that their teachers are doing a good job on supporting them develop their critical thinking skills.

**Q9: Has SCTA increased your motivation to learn?**



**Figure6.** Impact of SCTA on student motivation to learn

The results are overwhelmingly positive, with 96% of students (24 out of 25) indicating that student-centered teaching (SCT) has increased their motivation to learn. Only 4% (1) disagreed. In other words, a very strong majority of students found that student-centered teaching increased their motivation to learn. This suggests that this style of teaching may be beneficial for many students.

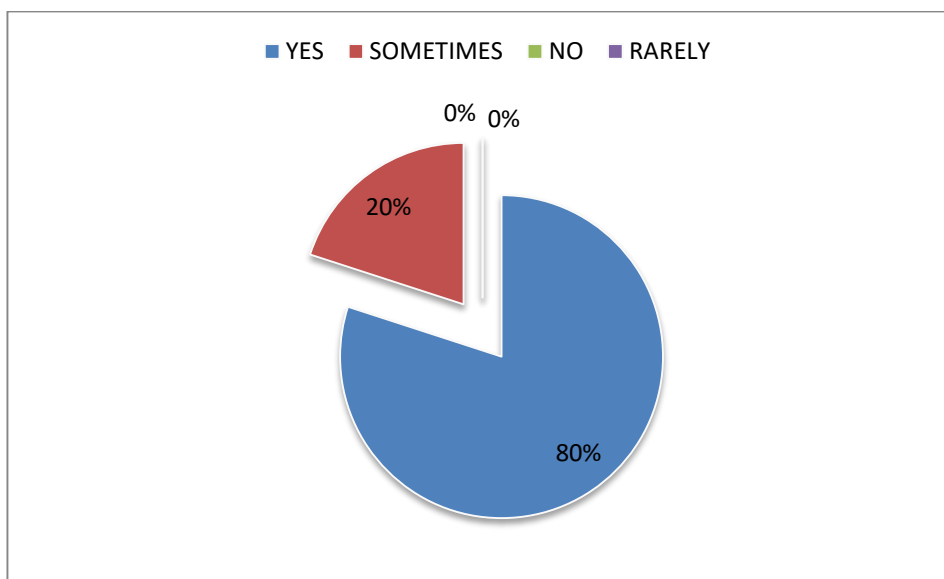
**Q10: Have you noticed any changes in your motivation and interest in leaning due to the student-centered teaching approach especially in your CT?**

The responses reflect various perspectives on the impact of student-centered teaching on motivation and critical thinking (CT). Students express a range of experiences from feeling more engaged and empowered in their learning to noticing significant improvements in their critical thinking skills (CTS). Collaboration and exposure to diverse viewpoints are

emphasized as crucial elements through which student-centered teaching cultivates critical thinking (CT).

### Analysis of Teacher' Questionnaire

#### Q1: Do you use student-centered teaching approach to teach?



*Figure7.* Extent of adoption of SCTA among teachers

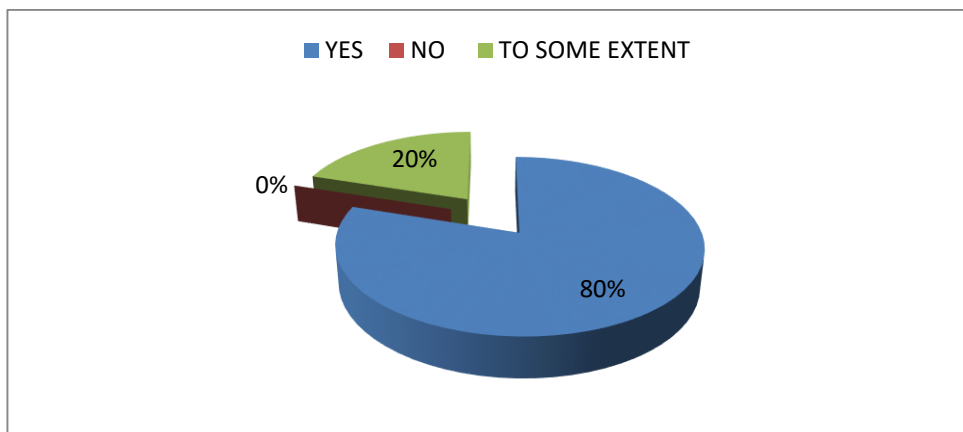
The majority of teachers, comprising 80%, affirm that they actively incorporate student-centered methods into their teaching practices. This suggests a prevalent acknowledgment and adoption of pedagogical approaches that prioritize student involvement, active learning, and personalized instruction. On the other hand, the 20% of teachers who indicated they use student-centered approaches (SCA) only sometimes might represent a subgroup with varying degrees of comfort or familiarity with these methods. It could also reflect situational factors such as time constraints, curriculum requirements, or specific teaching contexts that influence the feasibility of implementing student-centered practices consistently.

**Q2: How do you use SCTA, what type of activities do you use?**

According to the data collected, it is evident that a variety of interactive and engaging activities are employed to enhance student learning experiences. Teachers reported utilizing active and interactive learning methods such as games, problem-solving activities, and projects to foster student engagement. Activities like presentations, assignments, group work, debates, role-playing, and think-pair-share (TPS) tasks were highlighted as effective strategies to promote student involvement and critical thinking (CT). Furthermore, providing students with the freedom to interpret literary texts in their unique ways, encouraging active participation in discussions without fear of making mistakes, and tailoring classes to students' interests and needs were emphasized to create a motivating and conducive learning environment. Additionally, tasks like writing essays, problem-solving independently, asking and reformulating questions, and engaging in debates were mentioned as valuable approaches to stimulate student learning and encourage deeper understanding.

Finally, the emphasis was on creating a dynamic and student-centric classroom where learners are actively involved in their learning process through a variety of engaging activities and discussions.

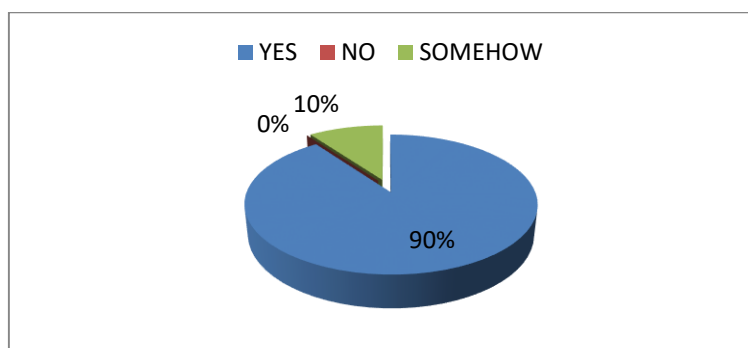
**Q3: Do you think that you are targeting CT in your teaching?**



**Figure8.** Percentage of teachers targeting critical thinking in their teaching

The data in the pie chart above represents 80% of teachers assert their active commitment to nurturing critical thinking skills among students and there is no indication from any respondents of a complete disregard for critical thinking (CT), highlighting a universal acknowledgment of its importance in contemporary education. However, the presence of 20% of respondents targeting critical thinking "to some extent"

**Q4: Do you think that your teaching approach is affecting your students' critical thinking?**



**Figure9.** Impact of teaching approach on students' critical thinking

The feedback from the questionnaire reveals that the vast majority of teachers (90%) believe that their teaching approach positively impacts their students' critical thinking skills, while minorities of (10%) hold a contrary view.

**If yes, in what way does it affect critical thinking?**

The teachers' responses shed light on the various ways in which their teaching methods influence critical thinking development. One teacher emphasized the importance of motivating students to take responsibility for their learning, fostering a sense of discovery. Another highlighted the cultivation of self-reliance and initiative in students through student-centered learning. Additionally, teachers noted how this approach raises students' awareness of their learning process, encourages research, and promotes the freedom to interpret and analyze literary texts independently, thereby enhancing critical thinking abilities. These insights underscore the value of student-centered approaches in nurturing critical thinking skills (CTS) by empowering students, promoting self-reliance, encouraging research, and allowing for independent analysis and interpretation of information.

**Q5: How do you perceive the impact of student-centered teaching approach on students thinking abilities?**

In response to this question, evidenced given by the data of the teachers, by empowering students to take responsibility for their learning in a suitable and motivating way, teachers foster a sense of suspense and discovery in students. This approach encourages students to

depend on themselves, actively engage in their learning process, and take initiative in exploring topics that interest them. As a result, students become more aware of their learning process, utilize their background knowledge and research skills to acquire knowledgeable information, and develop their critical thinking abilities. The freedom to search for information and think critically enables students to scrutinize new ideas deeply and develop a strong critical mind over time. The student-centered approach also provides students with the freedom to interpret and analyze literary texts using their own literary manners, which enhances their thinking abilities and vocabulary. By fostering analytical thinking, creativity, and autonomous reasoning, this approach goes beyond rote memorization and encourages students to think critically, analyze information. Students learn to recognize, analyze, and solve real-world problems by being allowed to investigate complicated issues. Overall, the student-centered teaching approach encourages critical thinking and helps students become independent learners who are better equipped to tackle complex problems and develop their thinking abilities.

**Q6: In what ways do you think that student centered-teaching enhances students' engagement and participation in the classroom?**

The results highlight several key ways in which student-centered teaching can enhance student engagement and participation in the classroom:

It is noted that in their student-centered classes, students take the lead, forming social groups and supporting each other to complete tasks more efficiently, while the teacher

primarily provides worksheets and activities. This shift in classroom dynamics, where students drive the learning process rather than the teacher being the sole authority figure, can foster a greater sense of investment and ownership over the learning experience. When students are empowered to guide their own learning, they become more actively engaged.

The responses underscore how student-centered teaching can create a dynamic, interactive and captivating educational environment by catering to students' needs, interests, and abilities. This approach suggest for empowering students, fosters collaboration and social learning, and cultivates a sense of motivation and self-direction, all of which contribute to increased engagement and participation in the classroom.

**Q7: How do you facilitate SCL in your classroom to promote critical thinking?**

According to the ten teachers, there are diverse range of strategies employed to facilitate student-centered learning and promote critical thinking in the classroom. Incorporating problem-solving activities and group discussions encourages collaborative inquiry, allowing students to explore concepts from multiple perspectives and develop their analytical skills. By allowing students to choose activities based on their interests, educators empower them to take ownership of their learning journey, fostering intrinsic motivation and engagement. Engaging students in discussions and research tasks prompts them to delve deeper into topics, encouraging independent inquiry and the development of research skills. Providing various readings and opportunities for interpretation encourages students to think critically about complex texts and themes, fostering creativity and imagination. Furthermore,

encouraging students to work in groups and present their work promotes peer learning and constructive feedback, enhancing communication and critical thinking skills. Overall, these strategies reflect a shift towards a student-centered approach where teachers act as facilitators, guiding and supporting students' exploration and discovery, ultimately nurturing a culture of inquiry and critical thinking in the classroom.

**Q8: What professional development opportunities have you pursued to improve your ability to implement student-centered teaching approach which enhances Critical Thinking?**

In response to this question, teachers added the following statements:

- Teacher 1: “teacher training workshops in Algiers. \_online teaching courses. \_conferences on modern ways of teaching \_ Cambridge University ELT press.”
- Teacher 2: “ using different technological tools ( AI) chat GPT ”
- Teacher 3: “ I looked for activities that promotes students’ critical thinking big independent learners”
- Teacher 4: “So it needs some experience and good management of Time and content”
- Teacher 5:“ it needs some experience and good management of time and content.”
- Teacher 6: “\_to focus on the communicative approach paradigm \_ to adopt new methods and approaches in teaching EFL students and taking into account students needs.”

- Teacher 7: "... raising real-life & vital present controversies, topics / issues of paramount interest / concern / importance."
- Teacher 8: "Tying a myriad of teaching methods led me to picking student-centered approach as suitable for them and to enhance their critical thinking, imagination and boost their learning competencies."
- Teacher 9: "Look for activities that support learners throughout their work and make them feel confident and motivated to learn and share information."
- Teacher 10: "Mainly the use of technology enhanced classroom And the AI use in adaptive learning."

Overall, these efforts underscore a commitment to ongoing learning and innovation in pedagogy to create engaging and effective learning environments that prioritize critical thinking and student-centered learning (SCL).

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter; the finding of the two questionnaires concerning the students' centered teaching approach and its impact on students' critical thinking in master one college students, and the students' answers were analyzed with the quantitative data analyses. The data collected through the method described in this chapter will be analyzed in the next chapter to address the research questions and evaluate the validity of the proposed hypotheses.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

## **Chapter Five**

### **Discussion and recommendations**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter's objective is to summarize and discuss the primary discoveries from the preceding chapter that pertain to the research objectives, aiming to address the research inquiries and validate or invalidate the proposed hypotheses.

#### **Discussion of the Obtained Results**

##### **Question One**

The first research question was set to discover how student-centered teaching approaches impact critical thinking skills of master one English students at Chedli Bendjdid University. This inquiry stems from the recognition that education is evolving beyond the mere transmission of knowledge towards fostering skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. Student-centered teaching, which prioritizes active engagement, collaboration, and inquiry-based learning, is believed to align closely with the development of these higher-order thinking abilities. It is worth mentioning that most of both the students' and the teachers' questionnaires aim to provide answers to this research question.

One of the principles that distinguish the SCTA from the other teaching methods and approaches is the roles of the teachers and the students in the classroom. The students in a SCTA classroom are expected to be more engaged, self-directed, and responsible for their

learning. According to the findings, the results from the student and teacher questionnaires paint a largely consistent picture regarding the implementation of student-centered teaching approaches in the classrooms. A significant majority of students (84%) report being taught through student-centered methods, indicating a widespread adoption of this approach. This aligns with the findings from the teacher questionnaire, where 80% of educators affirm actively incorporating student-centered practices into their teaching.

The high percentage of teachers embracing student-centered approaches suggests a strong recognition of the benefits and importance of engaging students actively in the learning process. By prioritizing student involvement, active learning, and personalized instruction, these teachers are creating classroom environments that are more conducive to meaningful learning and skill development. However, it was noted that not all students are experiencing student-centered teaching. 16% of students reported that weren't taught through this approach represent a subgroup that may be missing out on the potential advantages of student-centered learning. Similarly, the 20% of teachers who only sometimes use student-centered approaches could be influenced by various factors, such as comfort level, familiarity with the methods, time constraints, or specific curricular requirements.

It is demonstrated that a strong commitment to student-centered teaching among the majority of educators, which is positively reflected in the experiences of most students. However, there remains room for further adoption and consistent implementation of student-

centered practices to ensure that all students can benefit from this approach and develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and lifelong learning skills

Concerning the specific activities that student believe helping them to improve their Critical Thinking, it was discovered from the students' answers to question 7, activities such as group discussions, debates, presentations, and problem-based learning (PBL) projects were highlighted as particularly beneficial in improving their critical thinking abilities. These interactive and collaborative learning experiences allowed students to engage in active knowledge construction, challenge their own assumptions, and develop the skills to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.

The teacher responses further corroborate the implementation of a diverse range of student-centered teaching strategies. Techniques such as presentations, group work, debates, role-playing, and think-pair-share exercises were also emphasized as effective methods to foster student involvement, encourage active participation, and stimulate deeper understanding.

In the SCTA, students' Critical Thinking should be developed and feeling motivated to learn more. In accordance with the students' answers' to questions 9/10, 96% of students assumed that SCT has increased their motivation to learn, while only 4% disagreed. This emphasize that student-centered teaching is highly effective in boosting student motivation.

After collecting and discussing the related data, the first research question is answered and the first hypothesis that the SCTA properly implemented in the master one EFL classroom is successfully proven.

## **Question 2**

The majority of the questions in both the teachers' and the pupils' questionnaires seek to provide an answer to this question long-term impact of student-centered teaching approaches on students' critical thinking.

Question 5 from teachers' questionnaire sought to determine EFL teachers' attitudes towards supporting and development students' CT. The impact of a student-centered teaching approach on students' thinking abilities is profound, as evidenced from teachers answer. By empowering students to take charge of their learning in a personalized and engaging manner, teachers cultivate a sense of curiosity and exploration in students. This approach prompts students to rely on themselves, actively participate in their learning journey, and proactively delve into topics that intrigue them. Consequently, students become more cognizant of their learning processes, leverage their prior knowledge and research skills to acquire new information, and enhance their critical thinking skills. The autonomy to seek information and think critically empowers students to delve deeply into new concepts and cultivate a robust critical mindset over time. Moreover, the student-centered approach allows students the freedom to interpret and analyze literary texts using their unique perspectives, thereby boosting their thinking abilities and vocabulary. By providing analytical thinking, creativity,

and independent reasoning, this approach transcends mere memorization and encourages students to think critically, evaluate information, assess evidence, and make informed judgments. Through investigating complex issues, students learn to identify, analyze, and solve real-world problems. In essence, the student-centered teaching approach fosters critical thinking skills, equipping students to tackle intricate challenges and enhance their cognitive abilities effectively.

In conclusion, all the results above provide an absolute answer to the second question of the research: Exposure to SCTA positively impacts students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills leading to lifelong skill development, which validates our second hypothesis.

### **Discussion of the Findings in Relation to Previous Studies**

In the current study, it was found that master one EFL teachers who participated in the questionnaires demonstrated a strong commitment to student-centered teaching approaches. These findings are similar to what Latif et al. (2018) found in their study exploring the implementation of student-centered approaches in EFL classrooms at the junior high school level. Their research revealed that the participating EFL teachers had positive perceptions about student-centered learning and were actively incorporating student-centered practices into their teaching.

Specifically, Latif et al. (2018) reported that the teachers in their study recognized the benefits of engaging students actively in the learning process and were using techniques like group discussions, presentations, and problem-based learning to foster student involvement

and deeper understanding. This aligns with the current study's findings regarding the widespread adoption of student-centered approaches among the master one EFL teachers and their use of interactive, collaborative activities to promote critical thinking skills.

Finally, the consistency between these findings underscores the growing recognition among educators of the value of student-centered teaching in developing higher-order thinking abilities in students. Both studies demonstrate that when teachers prioritize active learning, personalized instruction, and student autonomy, they are able to create classroom environments that are conducive to meaningful learning and the cultivation of essential 21st century skills like critical thinking.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

Drawing from the findings discussed earlier, it is valuable to present some educational implications for the study, as outlined below:

- Provide teacher training on implementing student-centered pedagogy and assessment practices effectively
- Integrate information and communication technology (ICT) to support student-centered learning
- Foster a classroom culture that empowers students to take ownership of their learning
- Conduct further research on student-centered learning practices in diverse EFL contexts

- Emphasize analytical thinking, creativity, and independent reasoning over rote memorization.

### **Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies**

Based on the research findings, the researchers suggest to EFL teachers, EFL students, the Ministry of Education, and for further studies with the intention of improving the teaching-learning process.

### **Recommendations to the Teachers**

- Adopt student-centered teaching methods to enhance critical thinking skills.
- Utilize technology to support student-centered learning.
- Foster a classroom culture that encourages student autonomy.

### **Recommendations to the Students**

- Engage actively in student-centered learning activities.
- Develop critical thinking skills by analyzing texts from unique perspectives.
- Practice self-directed learning by setting goals and tracking progress.

### **Recommendations to the Ministry of Education**

- Provide teacher training on student-centered pedagogy.
- Integrate technology into EFL classrooms.
- Develop a framework for empowering student autonomy.
- Reform the EFL curriculum to emphasize critical thinking.
- Develop assessments that evaluate critical thinking skills.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

- Investigate student-centered learning practices in diverse EFL contexts.
- Examine the long-term impact of student-centered learning on critical thinking and language proficiency.
- Explore the role of technology in enhancing student-centered learning and critical thinking.

### **Conclusion**

The chapter summarizes the results from the questionnaires, which provide explicit answers to the research questions and validate the two hypotheses. The findings are discussed in relation to previous research on the topic and the pedagogical implications of the study. The chapter concludes by offering recommendations to teachers, learners, and the Ministry of Education, as well as suggestions for further studies to improve the quality of student centered teaching approach on students' critical thinking.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix A

### Students' Questionnaire

**Dear student**

The following questionnaire is part of our Master dissertation research project. We are investigating the effect of student-centered approach on students' critical thinking. Feel comfortable to answer the following questions.

Thanks in advance

1- Do you know what do we mean by student-centered teaching approach?

YES

NO

2- Are you being taught through student-centered teaching approach?

YES

NO

3- Do you think that student centered teaching is affecting your critical thinking?

YES

NO

4- How effective do you find student-centered teaching in enhancing critical thinking skills?

Extremely useful  Very useful  Somewhat useful

Not so useful  Not at all useful

5- In what ways do you believe student-centered teaching has influenced your critical thinking skills?

.....  
.....  
.....

6- Have you found that student-centered teaching encourages you to ask more questions and seek deeper understanding of the subject matter?

.....  
.....

7- Can you describe a specific student-centered activity that you believe improved your critical thinking skills?

.....  
.....

8- Do you feel supported by your teachers in developing your critical thinking skills?

Extremely useful       Very useful       Somewhat useful

Not so useful       Not at all useful

9- Has student-centered teaching increased your motivation to learn?

Yes       No

10- Have you noticed any changes in your motivation and interest in learning due to the student-centered teaching approach especially in your Critical thinking?

.....

.....

Thank You

## Appendix B

### Teachers' Questionnaire

**Dear teacher**

We are master students conducting research on the effect of student-centered approach on students' critical thinking. We will be grateful if you can answer the following questions.

Thank you in advance

1. Do you use student-centered teaching approach to teach?

YES

NO

SOMETIMES

RARELY

2. How do you use student-centered teaching approach, what type of activities do you use?

.....  
.....

3. Do you think that you are targeting critical thinking in your teaching?

YES  NO  TO SOME EXTENT

4. Do you think that your teaching approach is affecting your students' critical thinking?

YES  NO  SOMEHOW

5. If yes, in what way does it affect critical thinking?

.....  
.....

6. How do you perceive the impact of student-centered teaching approach on Students thinking abilities?

.....  
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7. In what ways do you think that student centered-teaching enhances students' engagement and participation in the classroom?

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8. How do you facilitate student-centered learning in your classroom to promote critical thinking?

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9. What professional development opportunities have you pursued to improve your ability to implement student-centered teaching approach which enhances critical thinking?

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Thank You