

وزارة التعليم العالي و البحث العلمي

MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE

UNIVERSITE MOULOU D MAMMERI TIZI-OUZOU

FACULTE DES LETTRES ET DES LANGUES

DEPARTEMENT D'ANGLAIS



جامعة مولود معمري تيزي وزو

كلية الآداب و اللغات

Domaine : Lettres et Langues Etrangères

Filière : Langue Anglaise

Spécialité :Language et Communication

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master in English**

**The Implementation of the Learner-Centered Teaching Strategies in
Algerian Middle Schools: A Case Study**

Presented by:

Ms. Tchatchi Lynda

Supervised by:

Pr. FODIL Med Sadek

Board of Examiners:

Chair: Mrs. TOUAT Kamila, MAA, Department of English, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou

Supervisor: Pr. FODIL Med Sadek, prof, Department of English, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou

Examiner: Mr CHETOUANE Madjid, MAA, Department of English, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou

Dedication

To All My Beloved Ones

My Family

All my Friends

My Beloved Nacer

Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to express my sincere and warm thanks to my supervisor Professor Fodil Mohammed Sadek for his professional guidance and assistance throughout the realization of this dissertation. I am very thankful for his patience and help despite all the obstacles faced. His advice and support are invaluable and without his encouragement, generosity and orientation this work could not be completed.

Special thanks go to English language teachers of the two middle schools Yahi Belaid and Ammeur Amar who allowed me to attend their lessons and I am also extremely thankful for the participant teachers who accepted to take part in the interview and answer my questions.

My greatest gratitude goes to the board of examiners who accepted to devote their precious time and efforts to read and examine this work in order to enrich it with their constructive criticism and comments.

I would like also to show my deepest gratitude to Sid-idris Nacer who always stayed by my side. I am very grateful for his help and support throughout the course of this dissertation.

Finally, I am grateful to everyone who helped me especially my family and my friends.

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to check the use of learner-centered teaching strategies in Algerian middle schools. It examines the extent to which the learner-centered approach is implemented in English language classes and the main obstacles faced by teachers. We relied on classroom observation and interviews to fulfill our investigation that took place in two middle schools namely Yahi Belaid middle school and Ameur Amar middle school. In order to analyze the collected data, we have made use of a qualitative research method to meet the objectives of this research which are merely evaluative. Accordingly, to discuss the outcomes of both classroom observation and the interview, we have used Weimer's five key changes to practice and the principles developed by the Educational Broadcasting Corporation in the workshop entitled "Constructivism as a Paradigm for Teaching and Learning". The results obtained in this investigation demonstrate that the implementation of the learner-centered approach in the Algerian middle schools has not reached its full development as the influence of the traditional ways of teaching still prevails. On the one hand, all the observations show that Algerian middle school classes are still dominated by the traditional teacher-centered ways of teaching despite MS English language teachers' efforts to shift to the learner-centered approach. On the other hand, the results of the interview reveal that there are different obstacles that prevent the good implementation of this new approach. It can then be considered therefore that despite the launching of the learner-centered approach two decades ago, it still needs adjustments and encouragement.

List of Abbreviations

- MS : Middle School
- Hp : Hypothesis
- Q : Question
- PBL : Project-Based Learning
- PBL : Problem-Based Learning

Table 01: The Results of Classroom Observation about the Implementation of the Learner-Centered Approach.

List of Figures

Figure 01: Interaction between Teacher and Learners

Figure 02: Interaction between Learners

Contents

General introduction

- Statement of the Problem.....01
- Aims and Significance of the Study.....01
- Research Questions and Hypotheses.....02
- Research Techniques and Methodology.....03
- Structure of the Dissertation.....03

Chapter one: The Review of the Literature

Introduction	05
I. The learner-centered teaching	05
I.1.1. Assessment.....	08
I.1.1.1. Formative assessment	08
a) Peer assessment	09
b) Self assessment	09
I.1.1.2. Summative assessment	09
I.1.2. The curriculum	10
II. learner-centered teaching strategies	10
II.1. Inductive teaching and learning.....	10
II.1.1. Inquiry-based learning	11
II.1.2. Problem-based learning	11
II.1.3. Project-based learning	12
II.2. Active learning	13
II.3. Cooperative and Collaborative learning.....	14
a) Cooperative Learning	14
b) Collaborative Learning.....	15
III. Construction learning	16
Conclusion	17

Chapter two: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction	19
--------------------	----

I. Procedures of Data Collection	19
I.1. Research Method	19
I.2. Data Collection Techniques	19
I.2.1. Classroom Observation	20
a) Context of Classroom Observation	20
b) Description of Classroom Observation	20
I.2.2. Teachers' Interview	20
a) Context of Interviews	21
b) The Participants	21
c) Description of the Interview	21
II. Procedures of Data Analysis	22
III. Limitations and Problems	22
Conclusion	23
 Chapter three: Presentation of the Findings	
Introduction	24
I. Presentation of the Findings	24
I.1. Results of Classroom Observation	24
I.2. Results of the Interview	32
Conclusion	37
 Chapter four: discussion of the findings	
Introduction	38
Section I: Classroom Observation	38
Section II: The Interview	43
I. Teachers' Profile	43
II. The Learner-Centered Approach	44
III. Assessment	46
IV. Learner-Centered Teaching and Technology	47

Conclusion	47
General Conclusion	48
Bibliography	51
Appendices	56

General Introduction

1-Statement of the Problem:

Teaching and learning foreign languages ought to be a cooperative process which involves the participation of both teachers and learners. Over the past few decades, the area of education in all its levels has known a shift in the teaching strategy, moving from a teacher-centred focus to a learner-centred one. Indeed, there is a great interest in developing teaching methods and strategies in a way that increases the involvement of the learners in the teaching process. Learner-centred teaching is generally viewed as a new style of teaching in which learners take part in the decisions related to their learning. Said differently, ideally teachers and learners decide what, when and how to learn.

Since learner-centered teaching aims fundamentally at encouraging learners to become critical thinkers and knowledge constructors, this research is grounded in the constructivist research paradigm to which it hopes to provide a further field of experience through an additional case study. The most important implication of constructivism on teaching and learning lies in the shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction, as constructivist learning theories consider the learner as the central entity that must be actively engaged in the teaching/learning process.

Teaching under the learner-centered approach requires new tasks to accomplish from both teachers and learners. The teachers should no longer act as the main authority and the only source of information in the classroom but they are required to be just guides, facilitators, and monitors whose task is just to orient the learners while constructing their knowledge. In addition, the learner-centered approach focuses more on the learner as the most important element in the classroom who should not only take part in making decisions about their learning, but they are also expected to assess and evaluate their works and make decisions about the curriculum as well.

2-Aims and significance of the study:

The present dissertation attempts to highlight the importance of the implementation of student-centred teaching methods and strategies in the context of teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Algeria, and more specifically in middle school classes. It intends to investigate the extent to which the learner-centred approach is used in Algerian English language middle school classes. The current approach considers that the teaching/learning

process should no longer be seen as teacher-centred which implies that teachers should give up working with the traditional ways of teaching and move to flexible principles suggested by the learner-centred approach. Accordingly, our central aim when dealing with this topic is to find out answers for our research questions and check the validity of the hypothesis stated below. Put differently, the objective of this investigation is to demonstrate whether the teaching process has really shifted to be learner-centered or if the traditional teacher-centered pedagogy still dominates the teaching/learning process. Therefore, the focus in this work consists in the description of the main teaching methods and strategies currently used in two (2) Algerian English language middle school classes, namely middle school Yahi Belaid in Tala Tgana and middle school Ammeur Amar in Aghribs. In addition, the research seeks to analyse how these strategies are used in classrooms, and find out the major obstacles that the teachers face while teaching. It is also hoped that the outcomes of the research will help bring some visibility in the ways English is taught in Algerian middle schools.

3-Research Questions and Hypotheses:

The change in education goals and objectives has led to a great change in the way knowledge is transmitted or constructed, as it has also led to a shift in didactic approaches from instructor-centred to learner-centred. This shift, as a new major teaching orientation, is questioned and put under investigation from different perspectives.

In order to conduct our research, we have raised the following questions:

- 1- Does learner-centred teaching exist in Algerian English language middle schools?
- 2- Do the strategies used by MS English language teachers fit learner-centred teaching?
- 3- What are the main obstacles that the teachers face when attempting to implement the learner-centred strategies?

Hypotheses:

As an attempt to answer our research questions, we suggest the following working hypotheses that will be tested for validity in the other chapters of this dissertation:

Hp 01- The teaching strategies used in Algerian English language MS do not provide the characteristics required by the learner-centred approach.

Hp 02- Teachers in MS classes face different obstacles that prevent a good implementation of the learner-centred approach.

4-Research Techniques and Methodology:

To carry out this study, we adopt a mixed method of research for data collection and data analysis. Since our purpose is mainly to gain an in-depth understanding of the manner in which English is taught in Algerian middle schools in relation to the principles of the learner-centred approach, this method suits our research technique and our objectives as well. In order to observe the different teaching strategies used by the teachers in Algerian middle schools in real situations, we will resort to classroom observation as the main research technique. Additionally, an interview is designed for four middle school teachers in order to sort out the teachers' views and opinions about the implementation of student-centred teaching strategies and their effectiveness to increase the learners' involvement in the teaching process. Accordingly, the findings of these two research techniques will be qualitatively analyzed.

5-Structure of the Dissertation:

The present dissertation structure follows the traditional complex type or model. Broadly speaking, it consists of a general introduction, four main chapters and a general conclusion. The first chapter includes the review of literature which is divided into two sections. Section one reviews the theoretical framework related to learner-centred teaching and displays the most important works in this field. Section two deals with the different methods and strategies that promote a learner-centred environment in ideal English language MS classes. The methodological chapter presents the procedures of data collection which consist in classroom observation, and in an interview designed for four English language MS teachers. The chapter also explains the research methods followed in order to analyse the collected data. The third chapter presents the findings which display the results reached after the analysis of our data. The last chapter of this dissertation is devoted to the discussion of the findings presented in the preceding chapter in order to answer our research questions and to check the accuracy of the

advanced hypotheses. Finally, a general conclusion summarizes the main points dealt with throughout the dissertation.

Chapter 1: Review of Literature

Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature relating to learner-centered teaching. It attempts to provide a solid theoretical framework for our investigation which seeks to provide readers with theories, ideas, and significant works published on the topic tackled in the present research.

The theoretical aspects we review in this chapter serve to reflect on the shift that the approaches towards education have known in terms of their efficiency and effectiveness. In other words, they highlight the importance of a learner-centered approach to reduce learners' passiveness in the teaching/learning process. Barr and Tagg (1995) explain this change as a move from an "Instruction paradigm" in which universities delivered institution to "transfer knowledge from faculty to students" to a "Learner paradigm" in which universities construct knowledge through "student discovery and construction of knowledge".

This chapter provides definitions for different concepts related to learner-centered teaching to avoid confusion in readers' minds. In addition, it attempts to shed light on the constructivist theory on which this research is based. Therefore, it is divided into three main sections; the first section deals with the different concepts related to the learner-centered approach. Section two is devoted to review and describe the different methods and strategies used to foster learner-centered practices; whereas, the third section is about the theoretical framework on which this research is based.

I.1- Learner-Centered Teaching

Recently, teaching/learning process has shifted from being teacher-centered, to learner-centered pedagogy. In fact, students are no more bottles that are filled with knowledge in schools, yet learners' roles and responsibilities have changed as claimed by Christensen et al (1991) "To teach is to engage learners in learning". This means that knowledge should no longer be transmitted from instructors to learner's minds. Rather, it is an interactive process that requires the engagement of learners in the instructional process.

Learner-centered teaching has revolutionized the sector of education by making the teaching/learning process more flexible. In the same context McCombs and Miller (2006) state: "learner-centered approaches orient themselves continually toward what individual learners need to learn regarding their backgrounds and abilities". It is clear from this quotation that learner-centered teaching makes use of a variety of methods to meet learners' needs. Moreover,

in the present time learners are more active in classrooms and have got more responsibilities in the construction of their own knowledge “learning is not about passivity and order; it is about the messy process of discovery and construction of knowledge” Johnson (2004).

Contrary to teacher-centered pedagogy, the current approach aspires to make learners effective participants in decision making in relation to the content to be taught and the way it should be taught. This idea is concretely defended by Dupin-Bryant (2004, p. 42) since he defines learner-centered teaching as “a style of instruction that is responsive, collaborative, problem-centered, and democratic in which both learners and instructor decide how, what, and when learning occurs”. This quotation explicitly shows that teachers are no more the providers of knowledge but they act as facilitators and guides in the classroom while learners construct their knowledge by themselves.

According to Lea et al (2003, p. 322) learner-centered instruction is grounded in the following principles:

1. Reliance upon active rather than passive learning; this point demonstrates that learners’ participation in the ongoing of lessons is elementary.
2. An emphasis on deep learning and understanding; through this principle it is hoped that learners should go beyond the given knowledge in order to have a good mastery of the content tackled.
3. An improved responsibility and accountability on the part of the learner; it is made clear that learners endorse more responsibility in producing knowledge and relying on themselves to accomplish tasks such solving problems.
4. An increased sense of autonomy in the learner; learner-centered teaching aims at making learners more autonomous. That is to say, learners rely on themselves in making most of their decisions.
5. Interdependence between teacher and learner; this principle suggests that learners and teachers are mutually reliant on each other in order to produce the required knowledge.
6. Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship; it is evident that in an atmosphere where respect is granted, the teaching/learning process is better.
7. A reflexive approach to the learning/teaching process on the part of both teacher and learner; both teachers and learners should reflect on their works because it is the best technique that allows them to progress.

In her book titled “Learner-Centered Teaching”, Weimer (2002, p. 38) points out that The shift from the traditional teacher-centered approaches to learner-centered teaching methods needs to go through five areas that concern mainly:

1. **The balance of power:** Power in the classroom is not equitably distributed and the imbalance negatively affects learning outcomes and Weimer’s ideas about how to redistribute power in the classroom are that a system in which the focus of the learning process is shifted from the teacher to the students. And this shift overtly signifies an altered power relationship, not only in the classroom but in the broader social contexts as well.
1. **The function of content:** The interaction between content and learners from the constructivist perspective should afford “invention and self-organization on the part of the learner” thus, learners are given more autonomy in making decisions on what to learn and how to learn it such as asking their own questions on the topic that has been taught also providing their personal hypothesis when necessary.
2. **The role of the teacher:** In learner-centered teaching environment, teachers no longer function as exclusive content expert or authoritarian classroom managers and no longer work to improve teaching by developing sophisticated presentation skills; rather, they speak less and stay much more around the classroom than in front of it.
3. **The responsibility for learning:** Learners are “perfect” only if they are “responsible for their own learning”. According to Weimer, “adopting a learner-centered approach helps learners to transfer the skills they acquire during their formal educational experiences to their professional and personal lives”, in other words, this approach trains learners in order to cope with the professional careers.
4. **The process of assessment:** Assessment, in general, and more particularly self-assessment is an important aspect in learner-centered approach. Weimer states that “what and how students learn depends to a major extent on how they think they will be assessed”. (1999, p. 141). This quotation reveals that assessment plays a major role in helping learners to grasp the content and emphasize on deep learning.

In brief, Weimer’s contribution to learner-centered teaching covers these five key changes that should be put into practice in order to get a real learner-centered environment in the classroom.

Therefore, the shift to the learner-centered approach requires the reform of different concepts such as content, curriculum and assessment.

I.1-1- Assessment

Assessment plays a crucial role in the teaching/learning process, as it serves to determine whether or not the goals of learning have been achieved. It is a process that enables teachers to identify their learners' needs and check their learning progress. Heritage (2008) defines assessment as "one process that identifies the differentiation of individual learning as a central component of student learning". This means that assessment gives importance to learners individually to check to which extent each learner made progress.

Learner-centered assessment does not merely measure and evaluate what the learners have learnt; rather, it aims also to help learners learn while completing given tasks. Put differently, through the process of teaching, teachers may use some techniques and assessment options such as preparing daily or weekly quizzes, using portfolios, creating debates...etc that enable them to follow the learners' learning progression, and to sort out their strengths and weaknesses. Yet, it is important to shed light on the different types of assessments and define them so as to avoid confusion in readers' minds.

I.1-1-1-formative assessment

Formative assessment refers to that type of assessment which is continuous and which occurs side by side with the teaching/learning process. It refers to all kinds of activities that teachers may integrate during the occurring of lectures in order to evaluate the learners' progress. Cizek (2010, p. 4) argues that assessment "can be formative if it occurs during the instructional process and aims at identifying students' strengths and weaknesses". This view claims that formative assessment is used as a diagnostic tool to verify what goes right and improve it and check what goes wrong and remedy it.

Moreover, through students' outcomes formative assessment assists teachers to evaluate their way of guiding learners. In the same context Stiggins (1992, p. 35) claims that "teachers who gather accurate information about student achievement...contribute to effective teaching and learning. This shows the importance of formative assessment in teaching..

a) Peer assessment

Peer assessment is one vital type of formative assessment. It occurs in the classroom or outside where learners make comments and judgments on their peers' works. This type of assessment is very fruitful, as it allows learners to make their own decisions and trains them to get more autonomy. In Aouine (2011), Topping & Ethly (2010) define peer assessment as “an arrangement for learners to consider and specify the level, value, or quality of a product or performance of other equal- status learners”. Therefore, implementing peer evaluation is a very useful technique that helps learners to gain the skill of assessment and evaluation and helps them to diagnose their strengths and weaknesses.

b) Self assessment

Self assessment is an ongoing assessment which is more individualized, as learners evaluate and assess their own works individually. Andrade (2010 p.92) defines self assessment as “a process of formative assessment during which students reflect on the quality of their work, judge the degree to which it reflects explicitly stated goals or criteria, and revise accordingly”. In other words, self assessment is a technique that teachers may use to engage learners in self reflection by reviewing their works to sort out what needs improvement.

I.1-1-2- summative assessment

Summative assessment is a tool used to gauge, at a particular point of time, learners' learning achievements. It is a formal assessment that is frequently standardized and takes place at the end of a unit of instruction, semester, or a year. Black (1999) argues that “summative assessment serves to inform an overall judgment of achievement, which may be needed for reporting and review”. That is to say, it provides teachers, the staff, and parents with information about learners' progress in order to make the necessary decision about the way of teaching, and the content to be taught. According to Irons (2008, p. 8) this type of assessment is also used for grading and ranking the learners according to their achievements and performances. In addition, it helps to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, school improvements and alignment of curriculum.

I.1-2- the curriculum

As learners' needs are changing with the speed growth of diversity and technology, institutions are called to redesign each time new programs to meet the needs of the new

generation. Learner-centered curriculum gives much importance to the participation and contribution of learners in the adjustment and improvement of their own learning experiences. Emes and Cleveland-Innes (2003, p. 54) emphasize this importance by declaring that “learners play an active participatory, knowledgeable role; participation includes knowledge development in the area of learning and curriculum design”. A learner-centered approach to curriculum recommends both design specifications and practical recommendations for the implementation of learning strategies and assessment. In brief, redesigning curriculum to fit the recommendations of learner-centeredness plays a crucial role in increasing learners’ creativity and self-efficacy.

II. Learner-centered teaching strategies

The biggest backward of the teacher-centered teaching is that teachers work with the idea that “One teaching style fits all” which is totally false as Brown (2003, P. 49) claims “this idea is a thing of the past as our culture is changing and the individuals in the school system are changing as well”. Such practices entail that while few learners excel and understand easily, the remaining majority feel neglected in the classroom and need an alternative method and strategy for comprehending. Therefore, learner-centered style of teaching offers a set of strategies and practices that fit learners’ interests and capacities.

II.1- Inductive Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning inductively is one kind of student-centered approach which is commonly seen as a better alternative way of teaching that motivates students and involves them in the teaching/learning process. That is to say, instead of beginning with general principles and eventually getting to applications, the instruction begins with a set of observations or experimental data to interpret, a case study to analyze, or a complex real-world problem to solve

Inductive teaching and learning is an umbrella term that encompasses a set of instructional methods which share the fact that they are all student-centered practices. Besides, they are all characterized to be as constructivist methods since they focus on the principle that students should construct their own understanding of the reality rather than absorbing the knowledge presented by their teachers. However, these methods differ in several points such as the nature and scope of their implementation and the amount of guidance students receive from their instructor.

The literature also demonstrates that inductive methods make students more involved during the occurring of lectures. It makes them active participants by affording them a good atmosphere. Noman and Schimdt (1992) consider this method as “a better way to motivate students”. Inductive Teaching and Learning methods ought to include Inquiry-based learning, Problem-based learning, and Project-based learning.

II.1.1- Inquiry-based learning

It is a form of inductive teaching and learning that is also known as “Inquiry-guided learning” or “Guided- inquiry”. According to Bateman (1990) Inquiry learning “begins when students are presented with questions to be answered, problems to be solved, or a set of observations to be explained”. That is to say, at the beginning of lectures students are asked to perform some activities in order to find out the rules.

In addition, Inquiry-based learning includes a range of techniques which serve different aims fixed at the beginning of the lecture. Staver and Bay (1987, p. 629) distinguish between structural inquiry, guided inquiry and open inquiry. In structural inquiry learners are asked to perform activities which contain problems that need to be solved. In guided inquiry, students are not only required to solve problems but also to mention the method followed to get to their results. In open inquiry students however, face more complicated situations since the problem to be solved is formulated by themselves. Similarly, Smith (1996) differentiates between teacher inquiry in which the teacher poses questions, and learner inquiry in which questions are posed by the students. The scholar explains that in Inquiry-based learning, the instructor acts as facilitator, working with the students if they need help and addresses class-wide problems when necessary.

II.1.2- Problem-based Learning

In problem-based learning (PBL), learners, usually working in teams, are confronted with open-ended questions, ill-structured sentences, or authentic (real-world) problems to solve. In other words, students are challenged by problems that are close to their individual and personal interests in order to learn from their personnel experiences. Haward Barrows (1984)

defines PBL in terms of specific attributes as being student-centered, taking place in small groups with the teacher acting as a facilitator, and being organized around problems.

Accordingly, in a work written in 1996, Barrows identifies six core features of PBL:

1. Learning is student-centered
2. Learning occurs in small student groups
3. Teachers are facilitators and guides
4. Problems are the organizing focus and stimulus for learning
5. Problems are the vehicle for the development of clinical problem-solving skills
6. New information is acquired through self-directed learning

Broadly speaking, PBL education builds on the students' background, expectations, and interests. It is common for students to be motivated to work much harder with the PBL model than with traditional teaching methods. Moreover, "Studies show that learners in the PBL program were better equipped to be lifelong learners" (Aspy, Aspy & Quinby, 1993, p. 22). That is to say, learners are more trained to cope with the professional life through problem-based learning because it equips them with the social competences.

PBL is generally described as "an instructional strategy in which students confront contextualized, ill-structured problems and strive to find meaningful solutions" (Rhem, 1998). To say things differently, PBL is an approach that does not only assist students to be active participants in the teaching learning process, but it helps them also to become lifelong learners.

II.1.3- Project-based Learning

Within the context of learner-centered teaching, Project-Based Learning (PBL) method has become increasingly prominent as a response of schooling to the challenges of the 21st century. First of all, it may be helpful to think of PBL as a subset of Inquiry Learning because according to Thomas (2000) "the central activities of a project involve inquiry and the construction of new knowledge by the learner".

PBL is globally defined as a model that organizes learning around projects; it is an instructional model that involves learners in real investigations that lead to authentic products. However, Tretten and Zachirion (1997) report in their observation on PBL in multiple classrooms that

“the variety of practices under the banner of PBL makes it difficult to assess what is not PBL”. That is to say, many researches done in this field may present some problems for a research review.

Silvia Chard (2003) defines PBL as a model for classroom activity that shifts away from the traditional classroom practices of short, isolated, teacher-centered lessons to long term, interdisciplinary, student-centered lessons where learners are integrated with real-world issues and practices. Accordingly, Silvia Chard defines the PBL approach as an “in-depth investigation of a real-world topic worthy of children’s attentions and efforts”. This means that PBL gives learners an opportunity to deal with authentic topics that are related to their real life which attract their attention and motivate them to make more efforts to accomplish the work.

Additionally, Tassainari (1996, p. 16) and Worthy (2000, p. 2) assert that PBL approach offers learners opportunities to guide, manage and monitor their learning through self-direction and self-regulation.

Accordingly, many of the principles related to PBL are common to problem-based learning as well. However, while the emphasis in PBL may focus on the production of a learning artifact, problem-based learning seems to require “the acquisition of new knowledge and the solution may be less important than the knowledge gained in obtaining it” (Prince and Felder, 2006, p. 130).

II.2- Active Learning

An old native Chinese saying states “Tell me and I will forget, show me and I may not remember, involve me and I will learn”. This saying shows how much it is important to make learners active participants in the occurring of lectures. In the same frame of mind, active learning is defined by Bonwell (1991) “as any instructional method that engages students in the learning process”. In short, active learning refers to all those techniques used in classrooms where learners are significantly required to participate and be critical towards what they learn. It is a general term that includes different methods such as solving problems, asking and formulating questions, discussions, debates, explanations, and brainstorming. Bonwell and Eison (1991) cite evidence from McKeachie (1972) that discussion, which is one form of active learning, surpasses traditional lectures for retention of material, motivating students for further

study, and developing thinking skills; that is to say, it encourages interaction between learners and teachers and make them more critical towards the constructed knowledge.

In addition, for a better understanding of active learning, it is contrasted to the traditional ways of teaching. Prince (2004) points out that “Active learning is often contrasted to the traditional lecture where students passively receive information from the instructor. (p.1), in other words, active learning shifted drastically the field of teaching from been teacher-centered where the learner is considered as a blank slate and filled by the teacher with knowledge to a learner-centered teaching where the teacher is only a guide and facilitator while the learner is constructing his/her own knowledge.

II.3- Cooperative and Collaborative Learning

a) Cooperative Learning

A great deal of studies conducted by Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1998) show that cooperative learning promotes more positive attitudes toward learning, the subject area, and the college than do competitive or individualistic learning. Accordingly, the majority of these studies indicate that cooperative learning promotes higher individual achievements than do individualistic approaches.

Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1981) state that cooperative learning can be defined as “the instructional use of small groups so that learners work together to maximize their own and each others’ learning”. That is to say, learners work together in teams in order to exchange information and assess each others’ works in order to achieve shared goals.

Millis & Cottell (1998) and Feden & Vegel (2003) define cooperative learning as “a structured form of group work where learners pursue common goals”; it means learners are divided into small groups during lectures to carry out some activities that are designed to help learners meet their needs.

Moreover, this method encourages learners to be critical thinkers and be skeptic towards all new information received either from the teacher or the peers, as argued by McKeachic, Pintrich, Yi-Guang and Smith (1986) “learner participation, teacher encouragement, and learner-learner interaction positively relate to improved critical thinking”.

Additionally, Tinto (1994) argues that “positive peer relationships are essential to success in college, whereas isolation and alienation are the best predictors of failure”. Explicitly, working in groups hinders learning and makes it more attractive because when in groups learners interact with each other therefore overcome shyness.

To sum up, cooperative learning aims at developing the social skills of the learners which will lead to enhanced academic achievements. Johnson and Johnson (1989) argue that social skills tend to increase more with cooperative rather than competitive or individual situations. Similarly, Terenzini et al (2001) show that learners report increased team skills as a result of cooperative learning; in other words, it equips learners with social skills such as leading a group, the respect of each other, collaborating with others.

b) Collaborative Learning:

Collaborative learning is one type of learner-centered teaching strategies that is mainly based on learning collectively in groups as Smith and MarGregor (1992) claim “collaborative learning represents a significant shift away from the typical teacher-centered or lecture centered milieu in college classrooms”. Collaborative learning, in general, refers to any instructional method in which learners assist each other or sometimes assisted by the instructor in order to make meaning. According to Ken Bruffee (1995, p. 12), collaborative and cooperative learning were developed originally for educating people of different ages, experience and levels of mastery of the craft of interdependence. Second, when using one method or the other method, teachers tend to make different assumptions about the nature and authority of knowledge. In other words, collaborative learning is a method of teaching and learning in which students work together to explore a significant question or create a meaningful project which makes them more autonomous and give them more freedom to construct their own knowledge.

III)- Construction Learning:

One of the greatest challenges facing educators today is that of how to train learners to be critical thinkers and knowledge constructors. Now more than ever, learners need to be engaged in hands-on activities and independent researches in order to construct their own

meaning. Because as Hein (1991, p. 1) claims, “constructing meaning is learning; there is no other kind”.

The most important implication of constructivism on teaching and learning lies in the shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction. Therefore, this research grounded in constructivist research paradigm. Constructivist approaches to teaching and learning have emerged from the works of psychologists such as Jerome Bruner, Jean Piaget (1977, 1970), John Dewey, and Vygotsky (1978). It is a philosophy of learning founded on the premise that learners by reflecting on their experiences, construct their own understanding of the world, because according to Taylor (2002, p. 175) what is important is not much “what” learners learn, but “how” they learn. It is also worthy to mention that the competencies learners learn are more important than the content (Jacobs et al, 2011, p. 46). In other words, constructivist approach aims at equipping learners with social competencies such as leadership competency, communicative competency more than it aims at teaching learners the content.

The adoption of a constructivist theory in learner-centered teaching is not a random choice; rather, it is due to the principles of this theory that matches better the goals of learner-centered teaching. Indeed, concept to classroom, constructivism as a paradigm for teaching and learning (2004) considers that a constructivist classroom must encompass the following characteristics:

1. Students are not blank slates upon which knowledge is etched; this point declines the view that considers teachers as knowledge givers and learners as knowledge receivers. It gives the opportunity to learners to discover new knowledge.
2. The student is the person who creates new understanding for him/herself; through the guidance of teachers, learners become autonomous by reflecting on their own works, solving problems, and hands-on experiments.
3. Students control their own learning process; relying on peer and self assessments learners check the extent to which they progress and make judgments on their works in order to diagnose the gaps.
4. The constructivist classroom relies heavily on collaboration amongst students; in the current approach the teacher is no more the center in the classroom, in some cases learners negotiate meaning amongst them without the inclusion of the teacher.
5. The main activity in constructivist classroom is problem solving; this approach pushes learners to be skeptic and find solution to activities by asking questions. They are pushed to construct their own view of the world surrounding them.

6. Students have ideas that they may later see as invalid; this principle of constructivism considers that knowledge is acquired through personal experiences of students.

In addition to the previously stated characteristics of constructivism in learning, Fox (2001, p. 24) provides definitions for the following constructivist views of learning:

1. Learning is an active process; it suggests that there is interactivity between the teacher and his/her learners.
2. Knowledge is constructed, rather than innate, or passively absorbed; contrary to previous approaches, constructivism considers the collaboration of learners in producing their own knowledge very essential.
3. Learning is essentially a process of making sense of the world; that is to say the meaning of the world is developed in learners' minds through their own experiences
4. Effective learning requires meaningful, challenging problems for the learner to solve; fox suggests that learners should be provided with difficult tasks to perform in order to get access to the deep knowledge.

Conclusion:

To sum up, this chapter has tried to account for the most important works in the field of learner-centered teaching to show its importance in the field of education as a whole. It has mentioned the different methods and practices that teachers may implement to create a learner-centered environment in MS classes. In addition, the review has tried to shed light on the ultimate goal of learner-centered teaching which is to produce autonomous learners who are able to make decisions about their life-long learning.

Chapter 2: Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter is methodological. It describes the research design and methodological procedures used for data collection and data analysis to answer the research questions and confirm or disconfirm the suggested hypotheses. It consists of two main sections, the first deals with the different tools used to collect the necessary data needed for the accomplishment of this investigation. The second section is called procedures of data analysis which explains the data analysis methods.

I-Procedures of data collection

I.1-Data collection techniques

The fulfillment of this investigation requires us to rely on two main research techniques to collect data. Knowing that this study deals with MS classes, we considered that classroom observation is an appropriate tool liable to allow us to better observe our object of study in real situations and collect the needed data as well. We also make use of interviews to complete deepen our research and compare the data obtained through classroom observation with that obtained from the interview. These two research tools are used with four English language MS teachers in order to gain more insightful information about the implementation of learner-centered teaching strategies in MS classes.

I.1.1-Classroom observation

Classroom observation is a research technique that helps to collect valid data. It allows the researcher to have access to data and information in real situations and in its natural context. In this study, for a better conduction of this methodological tool, a checklist is prepared to make the classroom observation more structured. According to Cunningsworth (1984) quoted by Aimeur (2010, p. 51), “the checklist is intended as an instrument, or a useful tool, for evaluating teaching material”. Our checklist contains twenty four (24) items to be observed and checked and all of them are related to the implementation of learner-centered teaching in Algerian middle schools.

a) Context of classroom observation

The investigation was carried out in two middle schools namely Yahi Blaid middle school in Tala Tgana and Ammaur Amar middle school in Aghribs located in the region of Tizi-Ouzou. In order to be allowed to do the classroom observation, we had to obtain an authorization from the headmasters of the two schools, and this was made possible thanks to a

letter of introduction from department of English. Due to time limitations and schedules, the total number of the attended sessions is limited to fifteen (15) and the duration of each session was one hour. These observations lasted from the 14th of November, 2016 to the 18th of November, 2016, and involved fifteen (15) recorded sessions covering the four levels, namely, MS1, MS2, MS3, and MS4.

I.1.2-The interview for teachers

A structured interview is the second research tool used in this study. This qualitative data collection procedure comprises a number of questions aimed to understand the teachers' perceptions of the learner-centered approach and the main obstacles they face for its implementation in their MS classes. In addition, the interview sought to verify whether there is accordance between the fixed strategies of learner-centered approach and their teaching style.

a) Context of Interviews

The recording process was conducted in two middle schools situated in two different villages. It took place from 24th of November, 2016 to 27th of November, 2016.

b) The Participants:

Concerning the participants, four English language MS teachers accepted to be interviewed. The first teacher was interrogated on the 24th of November, 2016 at 08 h in a classroom at MS Yahi Blaid in Tala Tgana. The second teacher was interrogated the same day at 10h and in the same MS. The third interview was conducted on the 27th of November, 2016 in a classroom at MS Ammeur Amar in Aghribs with the third teacher. Finally, the fourth teacher was recorded in the same day and the same MS at 9h.

c) Description of the interview

The interviews consisted of a set of twenty (19) questions that follow the same order. In order to cover all the points mentioned in the previous chapters, the interview was divided into four parts: the first part dealt with teachers' profiles and involved two questions. The second part concerned the learner-centered approach and comprised thirteen questions. The third part involved four questions concerning learner-centered assessment and the last part

about learner-centered teaching and technology comprised four questions. For a better engagement with the interview, the participants were assured about the ethical principles and they were aware about the research's objectives.

II-Procedures of data analysis

I.1- research method

In order to meet the objectives of this research which are merely evaluative, a qualitative method is selected to analyze the collected data. According to Price (1991), the qualitative method “helps the researcher to get descriptive information on variables not easily assessed using empirical research and can provide a way to view phenomena from the point of view of the subject” (Price, 1991 cited in Tanveer, 2007, p. 33). This means that the qualitative method is more likely to permit us interpret our results.

Indeed, this data analysis method appears to us as a suitable method to analyze the outcomes of both classroom observations and the interviews which ought to answer the research questions raised in the introduction and to check the accuracy of the advanced hypotheses. Put differently, the qualitative method might help to give a detailed interpretation of the findings related to the implementation of the learner-centered approach in Algerian middle schools.

I.1. Data Analysis

This section is devoted to the presentation of the methods used to analyze the collected data. It deals with Weimer's contribution to learner-centered teaching that can be summarized in her five key changes discussed in the review of the literature. These changes generally consist of the balance of power, the function of content, the role of the teacher, the responsibility for learning, and the process of assessment which cover the analysis of the findings of classroom observation and the interview. Accordingly, each item will be used to discuss a convenient set of questions according to the question's objective. Nevertheless, the outcomes of both classroom observation and the interview will be analyzed according to six major principles developed by Educational Broadcasting Corporation in the workshop entitled constructivism as a paradigm for teaching and learning (2004) and which are:

7. Students are not blank slates upon which knowledge is etched

8. The student is the person who creates new understanding for him/herself
9. Students control their own learning process
10. The constructivist classroom relies heavily on collaboration amongst students
11. The main activity in constructivist classroom is problem solving
12. Students have ideas that they may later see were invalid

These principles summarize the most important concepts that should be found in a learner-centered classroom and this will help us to analyze and discuss the collected data.

III-Limitations and problems

This research is a case study. That is to say, it is one example of a particular type of research which is about learner-centeredness. According to Arsenault and Anderson (1998) and Flick (2004), the case study is “an investigation into a specific instance or phenomenon in its real-life context” (Arsenault and Anderson, 1998: 121; Flick, 2004 cited in Cohen et al, 2007, p. 170). Furthermore, the case study “provides an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth” (Bell, 2005, p. 10). Therefore, our research is limited to the population and area of study and its results cannot be over generalized.

Dealing with this investigation, a number of limitations and potential problems arose. The major issue that prevented the progress of the present study for a period of time was lack of agreement from the head-teachers of middle schools to do classroom observation. Another problem was the time frame. Due to time limitations and schedules, our research techniques for data collection were limited to classroom observation and the interview, while, a questionnaire designed for middle schools’ pupils would have been very helpful to extend the objectives of this study.

Conclusion

To put it all together, this chapter has presented the data collection procedures which consist of classroom observation and a structured interview for middle schools’ teachers. Additionally, it has outlined the methods used for the analysis of the collected data; that is, the qualitative content analysis which is used to interpret the outcomes of both classroom observation and the interview.

Chapter 3: Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This section is about the findings of our study. It presents the results obtained from both classroom observation and the interview. Its main aim is to give an empirical overview of the collected data. This chapter is divided into two parts; the first deals with the results obtained through classroom observation, whereas the second part is devoted to the presentation of the outcomes of the interview held with four middle school teachers.

I- Presentation of the Findings

I.1- Results of classroom observation

The first research technique for data collection used to conduct the study is classroom observation. The total number of the attendances is fifteen (15) with three teachers in two different middle schools. The observations were organized using a checklist that contains twenty three (23) items presented in a table. These items are observed in term of their presence, absence or between the two, which means **yes, no or not really**.

In order to present clear data, the results obtained from these observations are presented in one table that contains the number of answers for each question. Put differently, for each question, we state how many respondents replied by **yes**, how many answered by **no** and how many answered by **not really**. This technique helps us to avoid the use of fifteen (15) tables to present the results of each observation.

Questions				Number of responses
1: Is there teacher-learner interaction?				0
2: Is there learner-learner interaction?				6
3: Are learners involved and engaged in the teaching process?				9
4: Do learners take part in the construction of their own knowledge?				6
5: Do learners rely only on what is provided by teachers?				0
6: Do learners ask questions when something is ambiguous?				0
7: Does the lesson seem interesting for the learners?				8
8: Do learners criticize what is given to them?				0
9: Do learners give their opinions about the curriculum?				0
10: Do learners work individually?				0

11: Are cooperative and collaborative learning (group and pair involved in the classroom?			0
12: Do teachers provide their learners with issues and challenges to solve?			0
13: Does the teacher explain everything for the learners?			6
14: Does the teacher act as a guide and facilitator?			5
15: Is there a balance of power between the teacher and the learners?			0
16: Does the teacher turn around tables when explaining and checking the learners when working individually or in groups?			0
17: Does the teacher encourage his/her learners to speak?			0
18: Does the teacher make use of words like “good”, “thank you” to encourage the learners to participate?			0
19: Does the teacher devote few minutes of the lesson’s time to learners’ understanding?			0
20: Do teachers provide their learners with daily or weekly tests (oral or written) to evaluate them?			0
21: Do teachers use peer and self assessment?			0
22: Do teachers use extra materials than textbooks?			0
23: Do teachers use ICT’s like the data-show?			0

Table 01: Results of Classroom Observation about the Implementation of the Learner-Centered Approach

In order to make a better clarification of the results of these observations, it is worthy to present each item separately. That is to say, each question will be provided by a description that will include the notes taken during the attendances.

Q01: Is there teacher-learner interaction?

All the observations showed that there was teacher-learner interaction. However, the great amount of this interaction was limited to asking questions and answering either from the teacher to learners or vice versa. Most of the time, teachers asked questions related to the lecture and the learners answered and sometimes there was a kind of exchanges between the teacher and his/her learners.

Q02: Is there learner-learner interaction?

We notice that only in four out of fifteen attendances (4/15) there was interaction between the learners. That is to say, they shared information and ideas with their partners especially when working in groups or in pairs. In addition from time to time, instead of correcting learner mistakes or explaining something, the teacher asked another learner to do that in order to enhance the learners' communicative competence. However, in six other observations (6/15) we found that learners were rarely interacting with each other especially when working individually. Whereas in the five (5/15) other observed sessions learner-learner interaction was totally absent.

Q03: Are learners involved and engaged in the teaching process?

Nine observations (9/15) showed that learners were involved in the teaching process at a certain extent. Put differently, some teachers used some techniques to motivate the learners to better engage in the teaching/learning process. For example, in order to encourage her learners to write in the board, one teacher wrote on the learner's copy book while the latter was writing on the board. Using this technique, the learners were more motivated to write on the board. In contrast, in the remaining six sessions (6/15) the learners were not involved in the teaching process.

Q04: Do learners take part in the construction of their knowledge?

Out of fifteen observations only in six sessions (6/15) learners tried to take part in the construction of their knowledge as they made efforts to understand and follow their teacher and ask questions whenever there were difficulties to follow. Yet, in the remaining nine attended sessions (9/15) learners did not make any efforts to construct their knowledge, they rather passively asked the teacher for further explanations and clarifications.

Q05: Do learners rely just on what is provided by teachers?

All the observations (15/15) displayed that learners relied just on what their teachers provided them with. In other words, they did not make extra efforts either in or outside the classroom to improve their learning. For instance, learners were asked to make further researches on a topic but couldn't and when asked to provide examples about a given topic they were always providing the examples previously given by the teacher.

Q06: Do learners ask a question when something is ambiguous?

In eleven attendances (11/15) it was noticed that learners, especially in the third and fourth level (MS3 and MS4), asked for other repetitions and further explanations whenever they did not understand or met an ambiguity. Usually, their questions were related to vocabulary and the meaning of words as opposed to the four remaining observations (4/15) where absence of questions is noticed. Even during workshops where the teachers provided their learners with a set of tasks to sort out their weaknesses with the view to remedy them no questions were raised from the part of the learners. Yet, it was necessary to remind that two of the lectures we attended were devoted to do written tests related to assessment.

Q07: Does the lesson seem interesting for the learners?

In four observations (4/15) we perceived that learners found the lessons very interesting. In fact, two of the sessions with MS1 learners were about reading in which the learners were provided with new items to discover through reading a given text. In the two others, the teacher created a kind of debate about the new technologies which seemed to attract MS4 learners' attention who tried to use the English language to participate and express their opinions. In contrast, in eight observed sessions (8/15) the topics of the lessons did not seem to catch the learners' attention. Yet they were not boring since the learners tried to follow their teacher and ask questions from time to time. Concerning the remaining observations (3/15), in two of them the learners were scheduled for a written test. The third one, although it was a tutorial session where learners were expected to participate and raise their questions to allow their teacher know their weaknesses but the session seemed so boring as the pupils were just doing their tasks quietly and correcting them without any comment.

Q08: Do learners criticize what is given to them?

All the attendances (15/15) showed that learners never criticize what their teachers provide them with. In other words, they never doubt the credibility and the correctness of the information they receive from the teacher. They tend to consider the information provided by the teacher as true and infallible knowledge therefore they consume it without having any skepticism on it.

Q09: Do learners give their opinion about the curriculum?

According to teachers, at the beginning of the year, learners were asked to write down their opinions about the better teaching style of teachers and the curriculum. They were also asked to write about what they appreciated and did not appreciate in the program of the previous year and what they expected to find in the new curriculum. However, all observations (15/15) showed that learners were not even aware of what was included in the curriculum.

Q10: Do learners work individually?

Individual work is found in all the fifteen observed sessions (15/15). Most of the time, learners were working individually either for answering oral questions or doing written tasks.

Q11: Are cooperative and collaborative learning (group and pair works) involved in the classroom?

In seven attendances (7/15) it was displayed that cooperative and collaborative learning were involved in the teaching process. Frequently, teachers used group work when the activity consisted in writing an essay, a summary or a paragraph about a given subject such as writing a letter of recommendation. Whereas, pair work was used to write a dialogue like making an invitation or an offer and then practice it. In contrast, in the other six observations (8/15) neither group work, nor pair work were involved in the classroom activities.

Q12: Do teachers provide their learners with issues and challenges to solve?

Most of the classroom observations (11/15) showed that problem-based learning was frequently included in classroom activities. Indeed Teachers tried to create a problematic situation and asked the learners to solve it either individually or in groups. Whereas in the remaining four sessions (4/15) problem-solving situations were totally absent.

Q13: Does the teacher explain everything for the learners?

It was noticed in nine attendances (9/15) that teachers were the only source of information. This is mostly shown when dealing with grammatical items especially with MS1 classes where the learners had their first contact with the English language. However, when it was a reading or writing session, as it was noticed in the six remaining sessions (6/15) teachers limited their explanations as much as possible to let the learners grasp the idea by themselves.

Q14: Does the teacher act as a guide and facilitator?

In six attendances (6/15) it was noticed that teachers acted as guides and facilitators especially when the learners working in pairs or in groups. Nevertheless, it is not really conspicuous when the learners were working individually which was the case in five observations (5/15). Whereas in four observed sessions (4/15) teachers acted neither as guides nor as facilitators; rather, they were the main authority in the classroom.

Q15: Is there a balance of power between the teacher and the learners?

All the observations (15/15) showed that there was no balance of power between teachers and their learners, as teachers were still the main authority and the most important element in the classroom.

Q16: Does the teacher turn around tables when explaining and to check the learners when working in groups or individually?

Eight observations (8/15) showed that most of the time teachers turned around the classroom while explaining to make sure that everybody had understood and to check the learners while doing an activity either individually or in groups to provide them with further clarifications. In the remaining seven sessions (7/15) teachers preferred to stay in the front of the classroom. In addition, they kept their comments till the correction without checking their learners while doing the activities.

Q17: Does the teacher encourage his/her learners to speak?

All the observations (15/15) confirmed that teachers were always encouraging their learners to participate and to speak using the English language in order to check their mastery of the pre acquired knowledge.

Q18: Does the teacher make use of words like “good”, “thank you”...etc to encourage the learners to participate?

In all the attended sessions (15/15) it was noticed that whenever a learner provided a right answer, the teacher thanked him/her using positive terms such as “thank you”, “very good”, “nice”. Teachers used these words in order to encourage them and to motivate the others as well.

Q19: Does the teacher devote few minutes of the lesson’s time to check if the learners have understood?

The notion of formative assessment is not given the required importance as shown in all the observed sessions (15/15). In fact, there was no single session where we noticed that teachers had devoted few minutes neither at the beginning nor at the end of the lecture to check the understanding of their pupils.

Q20: Do teachers provide their learners with daily or weekly tests in the oral or written form to evaluate them?

In two attendances (2/15) the teacher gave her MS4 learners a written test where she included the most important elements done during the finished unit of study. According to the teacher, at the end of each sequence the learners were provided with such test that is graded upon 10/10 in order to evaluate them and to sort out their weaknesses with the view to remedy them, whereas in the thirteen other observations (13/15), these kinds of tests were not included in the teaching process.

Q21: Do teachers make use of peer and self assessment?

Concerning peer assessment, it was noticed in two observations (2/15) that the teacher asked her learners to work in groups in order to write a letter of recommendation. After accomplishing the task, she asked them to exchange their works and find out each others' mistakes and correct them then, each group took back its own work and re-corrected it. In contrast, this kind of assessment was not found in all the remaining sessions (13/15). As concerns self assessment, it was totally absent in all the observations (15/15).

Q22: Do teachers use extra materials than text books?

Three attendances (3/15) showed that, in addition to textbooks, teachers made use of other materials such as tickets, pictures and paper-sheets especially with MS1 pupils as it was their first contact with the English language. In the other twelve sessions (12/15), teachers either did not use any material or just relied on the textbook as the only resource during the lecture.

Q23: Do teachers use ICT's such as the data show?

In all the attended lectures (15/15) we deduced that there was no use of Information Communication Technologies. No single lesson was presented through a data show or using computers for instance.

I.2- Results of the interview:

1- Teacher's profile:

All the participants in our interview are middle school teachers. Two of them work in Yahi Blaid middle school and the two others are English language teachers in Ammeur Amar middle school. They all have an experience that varies from two years to twenty-four years. As far as the levels taught are concerned, one teacher is responsible on MS3 and MS4, another participant teaches MS1 and MS2, the third one takes in charge MS2 and MS3 and the fourth teaches MS1 and MS4. Therefore, all middle school levels are covered.

Q01: How could you define the learner-centered approach?

The definitions provided for the learner-centered approach are approximately similar. The four teachers (4/4) defined this new approach as an approach that is fundamentally based on the learner as the most important element in the teaching process; they said that contrary to the traditional teacher-centered teaching where the teacher is the main authority in the classroom, the learner-centered approach shifted the centrality in the classroom from the teacher to the learner. The least experienced teacher declared “the teachers are expected to act as guides, facilitators and helpers and leave the knowledge construction to learners”. Another teacher stated that this approach “makes the learners work more as they take a great part in the construction of their learning”.

Q02: Have you ever received training about teaching under learner-centeredness?

Out of the four participants only the most experienced teacher received enough training. Indeed she said that at the beginning of her teaching experience she used to work with the traditional ways of teaching (teacher-centered) but when the learner-centered approach was integrated into the teaching/learning process, she received many training sessions mainly with the inspectors who introduced her to the new approach. The Two other participant teachers (2/4) who newly joined the sector of education acknowledged that before starting teaching they received training sessions for two weeks where they dealt with the different teaching approaches and strategies, mainly with learner-centered strategies and assessment. The fourth teacher (1/4) said that throughout his professional experience as a teacher he did never receive official training about how to teach under learner-centered approach; however, he confirmed that teachers (including himself) received new teaching criteria that reshape their teaching style.

Q03: Broadly speaking, do you find it easy to match your teaching style and the recommendations of the learner-centered approach?

All the participants (4/4) stated that it was not easy to move to the learner-centered approach and apply its principles in Algerian middle schools because of the different obstacles encountered while teaching. Indeed, one of the interviewed teachers stated it clearly “even though we are doing our best to shift to the learner-centered teaching but there is always the influence of the traditional ways of teaching that prevent a good implementation of this new approach”.

Q04: What are the main strategies you consider as learner-centered practices?

The participants provided different answers for this question; three of them (3/4) referred to cooperative and collaborative learning, particularly group and pair works and individual work as well. As for the remaining teacher (1/4), she mentioned all the above strategies and added problem-based learning, she said that during the TD or tutorial sessions “we frequently try to create problematic-solving situations in order to make the learners practice the linguistic and grammatical points they have already learnt”.

Q05: Do you make use of these methods? If yes, which ones do you prefer and why?

All the participant teachers (4/4) confirmed that most of the time they relied on all the strategies they mentioned already in their teaching process, namely group and pair work, individual work and problem-solving, but frequently they used group work as it is reported by one teacher, “group work is the most used technique because the learners are more confident and active when they work with their mates”. Another teacher stated that group and pair works help them to involve the shy learners and to encourage them to speak with their peers and share their knowledge.

Q06: Which methods help you to better manage your classroom?

Two teachers (2/4) stated that they prefer relying on group work as it helps them to involve all learners in collective tasks. The two other participant teachers (2/4) however declared that the method to use depends on the lecture’s objectives and it differs from one lecture to another. One of these two participants exemplified that if the lecture is about introducing oneself, it would be better to rely on individual work but when the objective of the lesson is related to the writing skill, for instance, it is fruitful when working in groups. The second teacher added that

since there are some pupils who disturb the lecture it is better to adopt different methods in order to not ignore them and make them work.

Q07: According to you, do learners prefer working in groups or individually?

The responses to this question differ from one participant to another. According to one teacher (1/4) learners prefer to work in groups as it makes them more confident and less afraid. The second teacher said that many pupils, especially the shy ones, still like working alone and there are others who are a little bit selfish and dislike sharing their knowledge with others, but “we always try to integrate them to groups in order to equip them with social competencies”. The third and fourth teacher commented that choosing one method rather than another depends on learners’ choices, yet most of them prefer group work.

Q08: Do you think that learner-centered teaching requires more efforts from the teachers and/or from the learners?

All the participant teachers (4/4) agreed that learner-centered teaching requires more efforts from the part of learners rather than teachers. One participant teacher said that the learner-centered approach shifts the responsibility of teachers from being the only source of information to guides and monitors. Another teacher argued that teaching is no longer the responsibility of teachers; rather, learners should make more efforts to construct their own knowledge.

Q09: Do you think that you reach a better efficiency in learner-centered or teacher-centered activities? Which approach do you prefer?

Two teachers out of four (2/4) stated that the teaching process depends on the changes in the educational theories and approaches which in their turn depend on the changes of learning objectives. Therefore, teaching under learner-centeredness is a necessity rather than a choice. Another teacher (1/4) said that she prefers the learner-centered teaching style because it breaks the borders between teachers and learners and it creates a more interactive atmosphere in the classroom. The fourth teacher (1/4), however, declared that classroom management and teaching in general depends on the teacher’s attitude and willing, he added that “teachers can manage their classrooms either in teacher-centeredness or learner-centeredness”.

Q10: What type of assessment do you make use of?

All the participant teachers (4/4) mentioned formative and summative assessment. All of them said that during the year they provide their pupils with ongoing tests which most of the

time take place at the end of each sequence, either written or oral questions. In addition to the official exams that the learners sit to at the end of each term in order to get grades which is the summative assessment, One of the participant teacher said that at the beginning of each year “I do a kind of test for my pupils in order to know what they have already learnt in the previous year “and this is another type of assessment which is called the diagnostic assessment.

Q11: Do you provide your learners with daily or weekly (ongoing) tests to check their understanding?

All the participants affirmed that ongoing assessment is a very important concept in the teaching process. The first interviewed teacher stated that before starting each lesson, she makes a short test (oral questions) in order to know whether her learners had grasped the previous session or not. The second teacher in contrast said that it was not possible to do daily or weekly test due to lack of time, so formative assessment was limited to oral questions either before, while or after dealing with a given concept. The third teacher added “it is not after a week or a month of work that we schedule a test to assess the learners’ progress but ongoing assessment should be included in each step of the lesson”.

Q12: Is pupils’ feedback (understanding, participation and motivation) the same when relying on one source and on a variety of sources?

All the teachers (4/4) agreed that the learners’ understanding is better when there are a variety of means. The first teacher stated that competences and cognitive capacities differ from one learner to another and each learner has his/her specific way of learning which entails that when relying only on one method, some pupils understand but the others do not, so the teacher has to vary the sources to ensure the understanding of all the pupils. The second teacher argued that the methods vary according to the topic, to the learners’ attitudes and the teachers’ objectives. He said that each teacher develops different ways of dealing with his/her learners.

Q13: Are peer and self assessment involved in your classroom?

One teacher out of four (1/4) said that both peer and self assessment are included in her teaching process to give the learners the opportunity to correct their own works by themselves. Three participant teachers (3/4) however make use only of peer assessment because the learners prefer to correct their peers’ works rather than their own works. They explained that they neglect self assessment because it is difficult to apply especially with MS1 and MS2 learners who are beginners.

Q14: What materials do you use aside textbooks?

Three teachers out of four (3/4) said that they do not rely only on textbooks in their teaching process. They said that they make use of other materials like the data-show, flash cards, pictures, videos...etc to better transmit the information to their learners. The first teacher stated that it is not possible to rely on textbook all the time because the learners' abilities and styles of learning are different. Said differently, there are pupils who are more visual and others are more auditory, so it is worthy to vary the materials especially new technologies as they are very helpful for both teachers and learners. Another participant teacher said that she refers to textbooks just when dealing with reading sessions or to follow the linguistic points, otherwise she prefers to bring pictures, videos and records during her lectures. Only one teacher (1/4) provided a negative answer, he said: "as there is a great lack of means in our school, teachers rely just on a textbook as their main source".

Q15: Do you make use of ICT's? If no, why?

Two participant teachers (2/4) confirmed that they use ICT's, particularly the data-show. The first teacher said that nowadays it is a necessity and teachers cannot rely on the traditional ways only. The second participant stated that they are required to use them as they are available in our school. Two other teachers (2/4) however, said that they do not use this kind of means because the school cannot afford buying them. One teacher further added: "most of the time we use pictures because the pupils like animation so we bring pictures as there are no other available means".

Q16: According to you, are learners more motivated when making use of textbooks solely or when used aside with visual aids (such as the data-show)?

Three of the participant teachers (3/4) said that the learners are more motivated when they made use of visual aids because the pupils at this age are more visual and they like animation, so they learn better from what they see rather than from what they read or hear. The fourth teacher answered: "learners' motivation depends and differs because even when using textbooks there are pictures and the learners can read and look at a picture at the same time". Nevertheless, "learners are more interested when there is an image on the board or a video or recorders...etc". In addition, all the participants agreed that using visual aids helps them to better manage the lecture's time.

Q17: According to you, what are the main obstacles when teaching under the learner-centered approach?

All the participant teachers (4/4) agreed that different obstacles influence the application of the learner-centered approach in Algerian middle schools. Two participants mentioned that the main problem teachers face is lack of materials as one teacher put it: “even though we are in an era of technology but we still do not have access to modern means in our schools so we are still working with textbooks”. To the third teacher, the only obstacle she finds in her teaching process is the fact that the English language is used only in schools with their teachers which makes communication very weak between teachers and learners.

Conclusion:

The findings obtained from classroom observation and those of the audio-recorded interviews with four MS English language teachers were presented in this chapter. In fact, both classroom observation and the structured interview provided a notable amount of data; classroom observation allowed us to observe in real contexts the implementation of learner-centered teaching methods and strategies, whereas the outcomes of the interview revealed the teachers’ perspectives towards the learner-centered approach and the main obstacles that prevent a good implementation of the learner-centered approach.

Chapter 4: Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to discuss the outcomes obtained from the two research techniques used to collect data. The findings of both classroom observation and the interview will be interpreted in relation to the concepts discussed in the literature review, namely Weimer's five key changes to practice and the principles developed by Educational Broadcasting Corporation in the workshop entitled constructivism as a paradigm for teaching and learning. This discussion aims to answer our research questions and to confirm/disconfirm the advanced hypotheses. It consists of two main sections, the first section discusses and attempts to interpret the results obtained from classroom observation, and the second part is designed to the interpretation of the interview's results.

Section I: classroom observation

Classroom observation was used to collect data from fifteen sessions. It highly helped us to carry out our research; indeed, it allowed us to provide a deep and detailed description of the environment in which learning takes place. Moreover, it allowed us to check the extent to which learner-centered teaching is implemented in the middle schools Yahi Blaid and Ammeur Amar relying on 23 items in relation to learner-centered approach.

Shifting from a situation where the classroom is largely dominated by the teacher and where interaction rarely takes place to a situation that reduces the domination of the teacher over the classroom to give much more importance to interaction is a very important step towards the learner-centered teaching pedagogy. In this context Prince (2004, p. 1) states "Active learning is often contrasted to the traditional lecture where students passively receive information from the instructor". Based on the results we obtained from the classroom observation in relation to classroom interaction it is shown that interaction between the learners and their teacher takes place. However, when it came to learner-learner interaction, it is noticed that it rarely takes place since we encountered it only in four sessions whereas, in all the other sessions it is totally neglected or relied on in very limited situations. This result explicitly shows that teachers are not yet totally delivered from the traditional teaching methods and they still consider themselves as the center of interest in the classroom.

Traditionally, learners are in classrooms to consume teachers' knowledge without being involved in making meaning, as opposed to the current teaching techniques which incite learners to be more engaged in the learning process. Engaging learners in the instructional

process is a better way to make students progress as claimed by Christensen et al (1991) “To teach is to engage learners in learning”. The data that we have collected via the classroom observation have shown that engagement of learners in learning is met insignificantly in nine observations and are totally absent in the remaining sessions. This outcome entails that learners in the classroom are poorly motivated and their attention is drastically decreased. The immediate consequence is that the learning objectives are hardly achieved. Moreover, we deduce that teachers rely on one strategy consisting in providing knowledge to learners without involving them in the developing of ideas. Therefore, the deduction sorted out from the absence of learner-learner interaction is reinforced by the absence of engagement of learners in the learning process, which means that teachers are not yet delivered from the traditional teaching methods.

Learner-centered teaching considers the learner as a knowledgeable individual, as opposed to teacher-centered teaching that sees the learner as a blank slate that needs to be filled. learners should no more rely only on their teachers’ outcomes; rather, they have to take a great part in the construction of their own knowledge to be as autonomous as possible, as stated by Hein (1991, p. 1) “constructing meaning is learning; there is no other kind”. However, the results of the fifteen observed sessions show that learners are still dependent to and tied to what is provided by the instructors, and this does not accord with the constructivist view of knowledge where learners are expected to construct knowledge on their own ways. Furthermore, this passivity is clearly displayed in the fact that the learners never use their reasoning to doubt the credibility of the information they get in the classroom. As a result, critical thinking is very low or totally absent in learners’ behavior which is due to lack of discussions, learner-learner interaction, problem-solving situations in the teaching process to stimulate the learners to think critically.

Questioning is a very important concept in learner-centered teaching. Teachers’ questions allow them to get learners’ feedback and check their understanding, whereas learners’ questions reflect their curiosity and interest to better understand. The results indicate that the great majority of the learners’ questions are limited to vocabulary and the meaning of the words as it is noticed in nine attendances especially with MS1 classes. In contrast, MS3 and MS4 pupils raise more structured and meaningful questions in relation to difficult concepts and further explanations or relating the lesson with real-life situations to confirm/disconfirm what they already know. Indeed, this evidence confirms that the learning process in this case makes use of an important principle of learner-centered teaching since through asking questions

learners deepen their understanding as claimed by Lea et al (2003, p. 322) “learner-centered instruction emphasis on “deep learning and understanding”.

The fast changes the world witnesses because of globalization, make it necessary to equip learners with the relevant competences that would assist them to cope with the current social metamorphoses. Therefore, learner-centered approaches consider cooperative and collaborative methods better strategies to enhance learners’ social competences. Accordingly, Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1998) show that “cooperative learning promotes more positive attitudes toward learning, the subject area, and the college than do competitive or individualistic learning”. We noticed in more than six (6) observed sessions that few minutes after the beginning of the lectures teachers move to group or pair works depending on the objective of the activity; for instance, in order to write a letter of recommendation, learners are ordered to work in groups; whereas, pair work is frequently used to engage learners in dialogues such as making an invitation or an offer. Consequently, middle school learners are more motivated and engaged in the learning through cooperative and collaborative strategies. Concerning individual work, it is merely used to answer oral questions and discuss personnel issues such as introducing oneself.

Problem-based learning is deemed to be a vital strategy in the teaching process. Indeed, it is a strategy used to increase learners’ involvement in the construction of their own knowledge as shown in the studies reported by (Aspy, Aspy & Quinby, 1993, p. 22) “learners in the Project-based learning program were better equipped to be lifelong learners”. The implementation of PBL in classrooms is made through providing problematic situations that need to be solved by the learners using their pre acquired skills. During the classroom observation, we perceived that teachers significantly rely on tasks related to problem-based learning. Indeed, learners at the beginning of each session are confronted with a problematic issue to solve, using the knowledge acquired in the previous lecture. For instance, MS4 were asked to find a way to their home in case they are lost in a big city using the techniques used to solicit others for help. Moreover, learners are from time to time provided with difficult problematic situations to solve at home. As a result, those learners are enough trained through this strategy to develop social competencies required to face the challenges they may encounter in their professional careers.

As concerns teachers’ role, it is shown that teachers do not easily shift their role in the classroom to act as guides, facilitators and helpers. Instead, the traditional teacher-centered

ways of teaching were still influence teachers' performance. Accordingly, in nine observed sessions out of fifteen, we noticed that teachers provide the learners with all the necessary information related to a given concept rather than limiting their explanations to key ideas to be developed by the learners. Furthermore, in order to maintain more control over the classroom, teachers make use of some instructional methods that are characterized by having the teacher in the front of the classroom while the learners do an individual work or listen passively to teacher's explanations. Boostrom (1991) relate this attitude to the physical organization of the classroom that focuses on the teacher "rooms are often organized so that desks face toward the primary focal point, the teacher". However, teachers act more as guides and facilitators when learners work in groups or in pairs as it is noticed in the remaining six observations. Said differently, learners focus less in the teacher and more in themselves and their peers when they work in groups which minimize the teachers' task to check the groups and provide clarifications when necessary. In fact, learner-centered teachers' main task should no longer rely on the traditional principle, as it is glibly known "sage on the stage" which is fundamentally teacher-centered. And this shift in roles should appear in teachers' behavior as stated by Weimer (2002) "in learner-centered teaching environment, teachers speak less and stay much more around the classroom than in front of it".

In addition, in order to enhance learners' participation and encourage them to speak, teachers should refer to some techniques that stimulate pupils' motivation. As it is shown in the classroom observation, whenever a learner provides a correct answer, the teacher makes a positive reinforcement by smiling or saying thank you or very good. To illustrate, when an MS4 pupil provided a right answer about how to express ability in the future "will be able to" the teacher shouted "very good! Thank you Gaya". The pupil was very happy to hear this and motivated him during the whole session. Furthermore, in order to encourage the learners to write on the board, a teacher wrote on the learner's copybook while the later was writing on the board and this technique created a kind of competition between the learners. Therefore, teachers may better assert learners' communicative competences by using some intelligent techniques that encourage them to speak and communicate in English.

Another important aspect that needs to be reformed in order to complement the shift towards learner-centeredness is teacher-learners relationship. This means that, teachers should no longer be seen as the most resourceful element in the classroom; instead, authority and leadership should be shared between teachers and learners. in this respect, Rogers and Freiberg (1999) argue that such a shift requires teachers to adopt a person-centered, rather than a

teacher-centered orientation toward classroom management, which features shared leadership, community building, and a balance between the needs of teachers and students (cited in Tracey, 2008, p. 34). In other words, learners should be given more authority in decision making concerning the content, the tasks and the methods to use to accomplish these tasks. The results obtained from the observation do not confirm this principle as all the fifteen attendances showed that teachers are still the main authority in the classroom; whereas, the learners do not take part in decisions that concern their learning. Moreover, as far as curriculum is concerned, the same result is found as learners have no role in curriculum design. In brief, teacher-learners relationship and the notion of authority in the classroom are always the same as in traditional instructions.

A learner-centered environment requires further changes that go beyond the teaching methods to include assessment as a vital aspect in the learner-centered approach. The importance of assessment lies on the fact that it enables teachers to check learners understanding and progression through time (formative assessment) and to evaluate and classify them according to their grades (summative assessment). This explains what was stated previously in the literature that “the assessment technique should directly involve students in examining their own cognitive development by having them focus on learning first and the grade second” (Pedersen & Liu, 2003, p. 57). Based on the results we got from the classroom observation in relation to assessment it is shown that only in four sessions over fifteen that ongoing assessment took place. To illustrate, in order to train MS3 learners on how to evaluate each others’ works, a teacher asked them to work in groups to write a letter of recommendation and once they finished, she asked them exchanging their works and correcting each others’ mistakes; this is mainly peer assessment. In the remaining sessions, however, assessment is limited to few oral questions that do not diagnose learners’ weaknesses as they are not answered by all the pupils. Similarly, the findings showed that self assessment is totally neglected, and according to teachers, this is due to learners’ insufficient mastery of the English language which prevents them from evaluating and correcting their own works by themselves.

The learner-centered approach is a new approach that goes with the increased development of technology. Its proponents believe that an enhanced learning requires the use of different means beyond textbooks. During the classroom observations, we perceived that teachers rarely refer to other materials than textbooks and which are merely paper-based such as tickets, paper-sheets, drawings, and pictures. Similarly, there was no use of improved technology like the data-show; rather, textbooks are still the main reference for both teachers

and learners. Indeed, this absence of other visual aids leads to the fact that the selection of materials to use is not optional but compulsory, in other words, it does not depend on teachers' choice or learners' needs but on the school available means.

Section II: The Interview

The second tool we relied on in order to collect data was the interview. Its use was beneficial for us in different ways. First, it allowed us to have access to information that we didn't get through the classroom observation. Second, it helped us to check the compatibility between teachers' answers and the information we obtained through our direct observations in classrooms. Finally, thanks to face-to-face interactions we were able to obtain additional data in relation to non verbal language. The design of the interview which was conducted with four teachers, consisted of twenty items divided into four sections according to the purpose of each session.

I. Teacher's profile

The results of the interview have shown that three teachers have recently joined the sector of education; whereas, the fourth one had spent twenty four years experience in teaching. We deduce from the results that both teachers with short experience and those with long experience face problems in teaching under the learner-centered principles. Indeed, teachers who have been teaching for many years encounter some problems when shifting from the traditional teaching ways where they are considered to be the center in the classroom to the current teaching methods that focus on the learner who is deemed to be the center. As concerns the obstacles met by teachers who newly joined this domain, they are due to the fact that as learners, they have been taught under teacher-centered pedagogy, therefore they need more training and experience to work under the new established approach in Algerian middle schools.

Concerning the levels taught, we noticed that they depend on teachers' experience. That is to say, teachers with a long experience most of the time deal with the third (MS3) and the fourth level (MS4) because at these levels the learners are expected to be more familiar with the English language and the more the teacher is experienced the better they are supposed to deal with their pupils.

II. The learner-centered approach

Through the provided answers, we noticed that middle school teachers are significantly acquainted and familiar with the learner-centered approach. Indeed, all the participant teachers said that the learner-centered approach is an approach that focuses on the learner rather than on the teacher who is expected to be just a guide and facilitator. Accordingly, teachers' familiarity with this new approach is due to the training that teachers received either from inspectors visiting the middle schools, or from the vocational training that is scheduled at the beginning of their professional life as teachers. These training sessions were very helpful for the instructors to adopt this new approach and master its fundamental aspects that should be included in their teaching style. This supports what is reported from one participant teacher "before starting to teach, we received many training sessions for two weeks where we dealt with the different approaches and strategies, mainly learner-centered approach and assessment".

To achieve a more interactive atmosphere in the classroom, teachers are required to make use of some particular methods and strategies. In other words, learner-centered classes should mainly include inquiry-based learning, active learning, project-based learning, collaborative learning, cooperative learning, and problem-based learning that are already developed in the literature of this study. This mainly shows the falsity of the idea that "One teaching style fits all" as Brown (2003) claims "this idea is a thing of the past as our culture is changing and the individuals in the school system are changing as well". However, while answering this question, teachers made reference to only three strategies that are collaborative learning, cooperative learning and problem-based learning. This is mainly due to the fact that teaching under learner-centeredness is a new experience for middle school teachers who have been introduced to this new approach only recently.

Additionally, the three methods mentioned above are the same that are often used by the participant teachers in their MS classes, particularly group work. According to the participant teachers, group work is the most used method as it helps them to include all the learners in the task and encourage them to participate and speak with the help of their peers. Moreover, some teachers argued that they achieve better classroom management when they use group or pair work, whereas other teachers associate the use of a particular method with the lecture's objectives. Furthermore, learners' interest and opinion about the method to use is very important in the learner-centered pedagogy because pupils are more motivated when using the

strategy they prefer. According to the participant teachers, even though there are some pupils who like individual work, most of the learners prefer to work in groups as they share ideas and help each other to solve a given problem. Working in groups enables the learners to express themselves freely without hesitation because they share responsibility as it is shown in one participant teachers' words "working in groups makes the pupils more confident and less afraid".

The effectiveness of the methods is revealed through learners' feedback that differs from one method to another and when relying on one method or varying the methods; that is to say, pupil's feedback that is shown mainly from their participation and motivation is different when the teacher uses always the same strategy and when adopting different strategies. The participant teachers reported that MS learners understand better and participate more when there is variety because, according to some teachers, the cognitive competences and interest differ from one learner to another. As a result, the more the teachers vary the methods the more the number of the learners who understand increases. Instead, other teachers argued that the choice of the method to use depends on the teachers' attitudes and the lecture's purpose.

The most important shift characterizing learner-centered teaching is the fact that the focus is no longer on the teacher but on the learner who becomes the center in the teaching/learning process. This shift, systematically, is followed by a change in responsibilities as teachers' task is limited to guide, orient and monitor the learners while constructing their knowledge. This totally sustains the statement of Weimer (2002) who assumes that learners are "perfect" only if they are "responsible for their own learning". Accordingly, the results obtained from the interviews confirms this view as all the teachers under investigation agreed that learning is no longer the unique responsibility of the teacher, rather everything should be given from the learners. All this means that, contrary to the traditional ways of teaching where the teacher is the only source of knowledge and the most important element in the classroom, learner-centered teaching requires more efforts from the part of the learners rather than the teachers.

Finally, teachers' attitudes towards the learner-centered approach and its use in their teaching process are approximately similar. All the participant teachers prefer teaching under learner-centeredness as it helps them to achieve more efficiency in their teaching process by providing them with different methods that creates a more interactive atmosphere in the classroom. Similarly, learner-centered approach helps teachers to better achieve their

objectives as there is the collaboration of the learners who may help each other better than when helped by the teacher himself.

III. Assessment

Assessment is a vital concept in the learner-centered approach and its importance lies on the fact that it enables teachers to check the learners' understanding and evaluate their learning progression through time. This process, according to Heritage (2008) entails that teachers establish learning progression, and utilize various assessment to provide individualized feedback". This means that, for the sake of a better implementation, middle school teachers should make use of all types of assessment that should be included in their teaching process. In this context, the results of the interview show that all the participant teachers make use of formative assessment as all kinds of tests (oral or written) that took place during the academic year and summative assessment as the exams that learners take at each term. Yet, just one teacher added diagnostic assessment that is done at the beginning of the year. This means that middle school teachers are significantly familiar with the most important types of assessment that are expected to be found in learner-centered classes.

Concerning the implementation of these different kinds of assessment, teachers' instructions differ from one teacher to another but the objective is the same. Said differently, aside from summative assessment that is scheduled each term, formative assessment is used differently; some teachers said that at the beginning of each lecture provide their learners with a set of questions to revise the previous lecture before starting a new one, other teachers prefer to use oral questions while lecturing due to lack of time, whereas some teacher design a test after each new item as it is showed in one teacher's words "ongoing assessment should be included in each step of the lesson". To illustrate, one of the participant teachers said that after dealing with modal verbs I provided my pupils with a set of exercises to check if they have understood where and how to use each modal verb.

Moreover, as far as peer and self assessment are concerned, the proponents of the learner-centered approach encourage the use of these two kinds of assessment to enhance interaction between the learners and increase their self-evaluation for their own works. This explains what is previously said by Weimer (2002) "the ability to self-assess accurately and constructively judge the work of peers is an essential learning skill". However, most of the

participant teachers make use of peer assessment rather than self assessment because the learners are more motivated when they correct their peer's works than correcting their own works. In addition, teachers avoid using self assessment because of lack of time and learners do not master the English language accurately. In brief, with learners gaining the skill of evaluation teachers are easily able to assess the classroom and learners are more engaged in the construction of their learning.

IV. Learner-centered teaching and technology

In order to better introduce or explain something for MS pupils, teachers need to refer to different materials especially visual aids. According to the participant teachers, in order to avoid using textbooks all the time, they resort to more helpful materials which are mainly flash-cards, pictures, tickets and drawings. In addition, whenever they are available, teachers prefer to use more improved materials such as data-shows and computers that allow a better transmission of the information. However, most of the time, teachers use paper-based rather than technology-based materials because of the lack that most of the MS suffer from. This is one of the main obstacles that teachers face in their implementation of the learner-centered approach, as one teacher commented "we are in an era of technology but we are still having no access to modern means in our schools so we are still working with textbooks". Additionally, it is found that teachers still use the traditional ways in teaching due to the fact that the use of the English language is limited to classrooms' interactions.

Conclusion

This section discussed and interpreted the results obtained from the classroom observation and the interview about the extent to which the learner-centered teaching strategies are implemented in Algerian middle schools. This discussion, therefore, allowed us to confirm the validity of our hypotheses and provide answers to the research questions.

General Conclusion

The present work has attempted to cover a significant part in the sector of education in Algeria as it has dealt with the crucial shift that this field has been experimenting during the two past decades and which consisted in the move from the traditional teacher-centered classes to a new approach that is fundamentally learner-centered. It has focused on the field work in MS English language classes, and has examined some dimensions of this new approach such as assessment and students' active participation in class activities.

In contrast to traditional ways of teaching where the teacher is the only source of information and the main authority in the classroom, and where the learners are just considered as empty vessels and passive receivers of information, learner-centered classes focus on the learner as the most important element in the teaching/learning process who should be at the same time a critical thinker and a knowledge constructor of his/her own learning. To apply this approach in middle school classes, both teachers and learners ought to have been prepared to the changes and familiarized with the new tasks that each of them is required to accomplish.

Relying on the constructivist principles developed in an article entitled "constructivism as a paradigm for teaching and learning" (2004), and Weimer's five key changes to practice, the research has tried to find out extent to which the learner-centered approach is implemented in Algerian middle schools in relation to the teacher's role, the students' responsibility for learning, the content, the balance of power and the process of assessment. In addition, the present study has dealt with the different obstacles that prevent a good implementation of the learner-centered approach. Thus, the presentation and the discussion of the findings have allowed us to confirm the accuracy of the advanced hypotheses.

Considering the qualitative nature of the objectives of this dissertation, a qualitative type of research methods were used for data collection and data analysis. In order to observe the implementation of the learner-centered approach in its natural context, classroom observation was the main tool relied on to carry out this research using a checklist of 24 items that are related to the learner-centered approach. In addition, a structured interview was prepared for gathering more information in order to check the extent to which teachers' way of instructing matches the new strategies of the teaching process. The interviews were conducted in two middle schools with four participant teachers who accepted to take part in this interview and answer our questions.

Concerning the analysis of the results obtained from the two research techniques, on the one hand, all the attendances showed that even though teachers try to create a learner-centered

environment in their classes, there were many gaps due to the great influence of the traditional ways of teaching. The analysis demonstrated that the methods used by teachers were limited to collaborative and cooperative learning and problem-based learning; whereas, inquiry based learning, active learning and project-based learning were totally neglected. In addition, teachers under investigation were rarely acted as guides and facilitators because most of the time they explained everything for their learners which increased the passivity of the pupils who in their turn did not take part in the construction of their own learning and did not play any role in making decisions about the content, the method to use and the curriculum. Add to this, the results revealed that teachers are still the main authority as there is no balance of power in the classroom.

On the other hand, the analysis of the interviews revealed that all the participant teachers were aware of what learner-centered teaching consists of. This was mainly shown in their awareness about the different types of assessment, namely formative, summative and diagnostic assessment that they claimed should be included in the teaching process to assess and evaluate the comprehension of the pupils. However, the teachers' awareness about the different learner-centered teaching methods and strategies was limited to collaborative and cooperative learning and problem-based learning neglecting totally the other strategies such as inquiry-based learning, active learning and project-based learning. Regarding the materials used aside textbooks, most of the participant teachers mentioned tickets, pictures, records and in some rare instances, they used the data-show whenever available. Moreover, the interviews served to sort out the main obstacles that teachers face when attempting to implement the learner-centered strategies, and these consist mainly in lack of materials available in middle schools and lack of mastery of the English language by the pupils that is used only inside the classrooms with their teachers.

In brief, the interpretation of the findings of the classroom observation and the interview showed that sometimes there are similarities between what is observed in the classrooms and what the participant teachers gave us as information. However, both showed that the implementation of the learner-centered approach in the Algerian middle schools did not reach its hedge as there is always the influence of the traditional ways of teaching that prevent the good implementation of this new approach. Accordingly, the discussed results approved our second hypothesis as shed light on the different obstacles that teachers face when they opt for a learner-centered teaching style even though they do their best to create a learner-centered environment in their classrooms.

Our hope is that the present work will add some contribution has to the field of didactics particularly in the area of the learner-centered teaching. This study has attempted to shed light on the implementation of the learner-centered teaching strategies in Algerian English language middle schools which may open new perspectives for further research in this field either with other levels such as secondary or higher education or from a different angle.

Bibliography

- Andrade, Heidi L. and Gregory, J. Cizek (2010) *Handbook of Formative Assessment*, New York and London, Routledge.
- Ambrose, S. A., Bridges, M.W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M. C., & Norman, M. K. (2010). *How Learning works: 7 research-based principles for smart thinking*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- Barkley, E., Cross, K.P, and Major, C. H. (2004) *Collaborative Learning Techniques: AP Practical Guide to Promoting Learning in Groups*, San Francisco, Cal: Jossey Bass.
- Barrows, H. S. (1984) *A specific problem-based, self-directed learning method designed to teach medical problem-solving skills, and enhance knowledge retention and recall*, in H. G. Schmidt and M. L.de Volder (eds), *Tutorials in Problem-Based Learning*, Van Garcum, Assen, the Netherland, pp. 16-32
- Barrows, H.S. (1996) "*Problem-Based Learning in Medicine and Beyond: A Brief Overview*", in Wilkerson, J., and Gijsselaers, W.H., eds: *New Direction for Teaching and Learning*, No. 68, pp.3-11, San Francisco, Cal: Jossey-Bass Publishes
- Bateman, W. 1990 *Open to Question: The Art of Teaching and Learning by Inquiry*, San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.
- Black. P., et al. (2003) *Assessment for Learning Putting it into Practice*, Two Penn Plaza, New York: Open University Press.
- Bonwell, C.C., and J.A. Eison, (1991) "*Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom*", ASHEERIC Higher Education Report No. 1, George Washington University, Washington, DC.
- Boostrom, R. (1991). *The nature and function of classroom rules*. *Curriculum and Inquiry*, 21 (2), 193-216.
- Brown, K. L. (2003). *From teacher-centered to learner-centered curriculum: Improving learning in diverse classrooms*. *Education*, 124 (1), 49.
- Bruffee, K., (1995), "*Sharing our toys- Cooperative learning versus collaborative learning*". *Change*, Jan/Feb, 1995 pp12-18.
- Bruffee, K., (1999) *Collaborative Learning: Higher Education, Interdependence, and the authority of knowledge*, Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Chard, S., (1998) *Project Learning: Management for Successful Projects*. Canada. Vol, 2, 1998.
- Christensen, C.R., Garvin, D.A., and Sweet, A., 1991 *Education for judgement: The artistry of Discussion leadership*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Business school.

- Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Marrison, K. (2007) *Research Methods in Education*. 6th Ed. New York: Routledge.
- Diehl, W., Grobe, T., Lopez, H., & Carbal, C. (1999). *Project-based learning: A strategy for teaching and learning*. Boston, MA: Center for Youth Development and Education, Corporation for Business, Work, and Learning
- Duch, B.J., S.E, Groh, and D.E. Allen, 2001 *The Power of Problem-Based Learning*, Sterling, Virginia: Stylus.
- Dupin-Bryant, P.A. (2004). *Teaching Styles of Interactive Television Instructors: A descriptive Study*. The American Journal of Distance Education, 18 (1), 39-50.
- Feden, P., and R. Vogel, (2003) *Methods of Teaching: Applying Cognitive Science to promote Student Learning*, McGraw Hill Higher Education.
- Heritage, M. (2008) *Learning progressions: supporting instruction and formative assessment*. Washington, DC: Council of chief state school officers.
- Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., and Smith, K.A., (1991) *Cooperative Learning: Increasing College Faculty Instructional Productivity*, ASHEERIC Report on Higher Education, Washington, D.C: The George Washington University.
- Johnson, D.W., Johnson, D.T., and Smith, K.A., (1998) *Active Learning: Cooperative in the College Classroom*, 2nd ed., Edina, Minn: Interaction Book Company.
- Johnson, D., and R. Johnson, (1989) *Cooperative and Competitive, Theory and Research*, Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company.
- Kagan, S., 1989/1990 *Educational Leadership* (Dec/Jan) Printing House,
- Lea, S.J., Stephenson, D & Troy, J 2003, *Higher Education Students Attitudes to Student-centered learning : Beyond “Educational Bulimia”* Studies in Higher Education, 28(3): 321-334
- Lee, V.S., ed., (2004) *Teaching and Learning through Inquiry*, Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing,
- Mayring, P. (2014) *Qualitative Content Analysis: Theoretical Foundation, Basic Procedures and Software Solution*, Klagenfurt, Austria.
- McKeachie, W., May 1972 “*Research On College Teaching*”, Educational Perspectives, Vol. 11, No. 2, pp.3-10.

- McKeachie, W., Pintrich, P., Yi-Guang, L., and Smith, D., (1986) *Teaching and Learning in the college classroom: A Review of the Research Literature*, Ann Arbor, Mich: The Regent of the University of Michigan.
- Millis, B., and P. Cottell, Jr., (1998) “*Cooperative Learning for Higher Education Faculty*”, American Council on Education, OPYX Press.
- Panitz, T., (1999) “*The Case for Student Centered Instruction via Collaborative Learning Paradigms*”, U.S. Massachusett, 1999-12-00, ED 448444.
- Pedersen, S., & Liu, M. (2003). *Teachers’ beliefs about issues in the implementation of a student-centered learning environment. Education Technology Research & Development*, 51 (2), 57. 76.
- Prince, M.J. & Felder, R.M. (2006). *Inductive teaching and learning models: Definitions, comparisons and research bases. Journal of Engineering Education*, 95(2), 123-138.
- Rockwood, R., (1995) *National Teaching and Learning Forum*. vol 4 #6, part 1.
- Scrivener, J. (2005). *Learning Teaching*. UK: Macmillan Education.
- Smith, K.A., Johnson, D.W., and Johnson, R.T., (1981) “*Structuring Learning Goals to Meet the Goals of Engineering Education*”, *Engineering Education*, Vol. 72; No.3, pp. 221-226.
- Staver, J.R., and M. Bay., (1987) “*Analysis of the Project Synthesis Goal cluster Orientation and Inquiry Emphasis of Elementary Science Textbooks*” *J. Research in science Teaching*, Vol. 24, pp. 629-643.
- Stiggins, Richard. J. (1992). “*High Quality Classroom Assessment: What Does it Really Mean?*” *ITEMS. Instructional Topics in Educational Measurement (35/39)*.
- Tracey, G. (2008). *Student-centered and teacher-centered classroom management: A case study of three elementary teachers. Journal of classroom interaction*, ISSN. Vol, 43. 1, p. 34-47.
- Tassainari, M. (1996). *Hands-on projects take students beyond the book. Social Studies Review*, 34(3), 16-20
- Tinto, V., (1994) *Learning College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of student Attrition*, 2nded, Chicago, III: university of Chicago press.
- Tretten, R. & Zacharion. P. (1997) *Learning about project-based learning; Assessment of the project-based learning in Tinkertech schools*. San Rafael, CA: Autodesk Foundation.
- Terenzini, P., Cabeera, A., Colbeck, C., Parente, J., and Bjorklund. S., (2001) “*Collaborative Learning vs Lecture/ Discussion: Students’ Reported Learning Gains*” *Journal of Engineering Education*, vol. 90, No.1.

- Weimer, M. (2002). *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Woods, D., R. Felder, A. Rugareia, and J. Stice, (2000) “*The Future of Engineering Education. III. Developing Critical Skills*”, *Chemical Engineering Education*, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 108-117.
- Worthy, J. (2000) *Conducting research on topics of student interest*. *Reading teacher*, 54(3), 298-299.

List of thesis

- Aouine, A. (2010/2012) *English Language Assessment in the Algerian Middle and Secondary schools: A context Evaluation*, Magister Thesis, MouloudMammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou.
- Aimeur, R. (2010/2011). *Project-Based Learning in the Algerian Secondary Syllabuses and Textbooks*. Magister Thesis, MouloudMammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou.
- Smith, D., (1996) *A Metha-Analysis of Student Outcomes Attributable to the Teaching of science as Inquiry as Compared to Traditional Methodology*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Temple University. Department of Education.
- Tanveer, M. (2007) *Investigating the factors that cause language anxiety for ESL/EFL learners in learning speaking skills and the influence it casts on communication in the target language*. Master dissertation. University of Glasgow: Turkey.

List of websites

- Educational Broadcasting Corporation, (2004) *Workshop: Constructivism as a Paradigm for Teaching and Learning*. [Www.thirteen.org](http://www.thirteen.org). Accessed October, 18th, 2016.
- Thomas, J.W. (2000). *A Review of Research on Project-Based Learning*. San Rafael, CA: Autodesk <http://www.K12reform.Org/foundation/pbl/research> accessed August 18th, 2016.
- Stemler, Steve (2001) “*An overview of content analysis. Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*” 7(17). <http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=17> Accessed September 14th, 2016.

- Rhem, J. (1998) *Problem-Based Learning: An Introduction. The National Teaching & Learning Form*, 8(1). from <http://www.ntlf.com> Web site: http://www.ntlf.com/html/pi/9812/pbl_1.htm accessed July 07th, 2016
- Prince, M. J. (2004) *Does active learning work? A review of the research*, Journal of Engineering Education, 93 (3), 223-231. Received May 27, 2012, from www.ncsu.edu/felder-public/papers/prince.AL.pdf accessed August 18th, 2016
- Aspy, D.N., Aspy, C.B & Quinby, P.M (1993) *What doctors can teach teachers about problem-based learning*. Educational Leadership, 50(7), 22-24. Retrieved March 10, 2003, from <http://www.ascd.org> accessed July 07th, 2016
- <http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/nise/CL1/CL/question/TQ13.htm> accessed August 18th, 2016.
- Online Collaborative Learning in higher Education, <http://clp.cqu.edu.au/glossary.htm> accessed October 21th, 2016

Appendices

I-Classroom observation

In order to present clear data, the results obtained from these observations are presented in one table that contains the number of answers for each question. Put differently, for each question, we state how many respondents replied by **yes**, how many answered by **no** and how many answered by **not really**. This technique helps us to avoid the use of fifteen (15) tables to present the results of each observation

Questions	Yes	No	not really
1: Is there teacher-learner interaction?	1	1	0
2: Is there learner-learner interaction?	1	1	6
3: Are learners involved and engaged in the teaching process?	1	1	9
Do learners take part in the construction of their own knowledge?	1	1	6
5: Do learners rely only on what is provided by teachers?	1	1	0
6: Do learners ask questions when something is ambiguous?	1	1	0
7: Does the lesson seem interesting for the learners?	1	1	8
8: Do learners criticize what is given to them?	1	1	0
9: Do learners give their opinions about the curriculum?	1	1	0
10: Do learners work individually?	1	1	0
Are cooperative and collaborative learning (group and pair work) involved in the classroom?	1	1	0
Do teachers provide their learners with issues and challenges to solve?	1	1	0
13: Does the teacher explain everything for the learners?	1	1	6
14: Does the teacher act as a guide and facilitator?	1	1	5
Is there a balance of power between the teacher and the learners?	1	1	0
Does the teacher turn around tables when explaining and checking the learners when working individually or in groups?	1	1	0
17: Does the teacher encourage his/her learners to speak?	1	1	0
Does the teacher make use of words like “good”, “thank you”... to encourage the learners to participate?	1	1	0
Does the teacher devote few minutes of the lesson’s time to check learners’ understanding?	1	1	0

Do teachers provide their learners with daily or weekly tests (oral or written) to evaluate them?			0
21: Do teachers use peer and self assessment?			0
22: Do teachers use extra materials than textbooks?			0
23: Do teachers use ICT's like the data-show?			0

II- The teachers' interview

Introduction

This interview is part of a study that is conducted to get a Master degree in English. This work is about the implementation of the learner-centered teaching strategies in Algerian middle schools. More precisely, it aims mainly at sorting out the extent to which English language teachers make use of this new approach in their teaching process and at discovering the main obstacles that they may face in doing so. Therefore, we are very grateful to you for accepting to take part in this interview and answer our questions that will be very helpful for the collection and the analysis of our data.

The questions

I/- Teacher's profile

- How long have you been teaching English?
- What level/class(es) do you teach?

II/- The learner-centered approach

- 1- How could you define the learner-centered approach?
- 2- Have you ever received training about how to teach under learner-centeredness?
- 3- Broadly speaking, do you find it easy to match your teaching style and the recommendations of the learner-centered approach?
- 4- What are the main strategies you consider as learner-centered practices?
- 5- Do you make use of these methods? If yes, which ones do you prefer and why?
- 6- Which method helps you better manage your classroom?
- 7- According to you, do learners prefer working in groups or individually?
- 8- Do you think that learner-centered teaching requires more efforts from the teachers and/or from the learners?
- 9- Do you think that you reach a better efficiency in learner-centered or teacher-centered activities, which approach do you prefer?

III/- learner-centered teaching and assessment

- 10- What type of assessment do you make use of?

- 11- Do you provide your learners with daily or weekly (ongoing) tests to check their understanding?
- 12- Is pupils' feedback (understanding, participation and motivation) the same when relying on one source and on a variety of sources (methods)?
- 13- Are peer and self assessment involved in your classroom?

IV/ - learner-centered teaching and technology

- 14- What materials do you use aside textbooks?
- 15- Do you make use of ICT's? If no, why?
- 16- According to you, learners are more motivated when making use of textbooks solely or when used aside with visual aids such as data-show?
- 17- According to use, what are the main obstacles when teaching under learner-centeredness?

1.1. Transcription of the interview

Interview 01

This interview took place in a classroom in Yahi Blaid middle school in November 24th, 2016
at 8:30h. The duration of the audiotape is 12:14 minutes.

The questions

I/- Teacher's profile

1- How long have you been teaching English?

- I have been teaching English for twenty four years.

2- What levels/class(es) do you teach?

- I used to teach all levels, but this year I am teaching just MS3 and MS4.

II/- the learner-centered approach

1- How could you define the learner-centered approach?

- Well, the learner-centered approach is meant by the fact that the learner takes part, a great part in his learning. so, he decides on what to learn, when to learn and how even to learn it, ok he takes part also or there is evaluation self-evaluation, he takes part of it and he tries to determine his weaknesses and lead the teacher to give more about teaching, ok to guide the teaching process. This is mainly the learner-centered approach, it turns around the learner, he is the one who decides and the one who assess, that is it in general.

2- Have you ever received training about how to teach under learner-centeredness?

- Of course, we have received many training sessions, mainly with the inspectors at the very beginning level of CBA, so when they decided to integrate this approach in the teaching/ learning process, we have received a lot of training sessions about it.

3- Broadly speaking, do you find it easy to match your teaching style and the recommendations of the learner-centered approach?

- I hope so, we are trying to apply this on Algerian learners, the English language is not their native language so we are trying our best.

4-What are the main strategies you consider as learner-centered practices?

- Ok so one of the strategies is when you lead the students to mainly gather their knowledge about the things they study, either you give them a question from the teacher to the learners or the learners themselves set the objective of the things we are going to learn about the topic, mainly as I said before, the assessment and evaluation are parts ok. There is also group work which is very important, group and pair work this is mainly meant by the fact that the student, the shy pupils and even the weak ones do not appear in the classroom, so they are helped by their peers by their classmates and the learner can learn from his peers more than what he learns from his teacher.

4- Do you make use of these methods? If yes, which ones do you prefer and why?

- Of course, we make use of them. Most of the time we use group work, it is the most used technique to teach because I said the learners when they work with their mates they can explain the thing by themselves in their own way and it is easy for them to manage and deal with the topic they are working on.

5- Which methods help you better manage your classroom?

- It depends, it depends, because when we have essentializing, introducing one self, this is mainly an individual work because the learner here is introducing himself to his environment, but in other themes, it is easier to deal with group work and it works.

6- According to you, do learners prefer working in groups or individually?

- Of course, for shy learners are still like working alone but we try to bring them, yes to involve them and to bring them to the group work in order to make them get use to live in the society.

7- Do you think that learner-centered teaching requires more efforts from the teachers and/or from the learners?

- Yes I think so because the learners need to work more, ok to make great efforts in their learning.

8- Do you think that you reach a better efficiency in learner-centered or teacher-centered activities, which approach do you prefer?

- In my opinion, the management of the classroom depends on the teacher's attitudes, the teacher's willing, so you can manage even in learner-centered teaching.

III/- the learning-centered teaching and assessment

9- What type of assessment do you make use of?

- Assessment, mainly the ones we deal with in the school there is the diagnostic assessment at the beginning of the year, then we have the formative assessment that is while teaching, during the learning process and the summative assessment each term we have tests, we have exams, yes we need them.

10- Do you provide your learners with daily or weekly (ongoing) tests to check their understanding?

- Of course, this is what we mean by formative assessment, there is always this kind of tests at each level of the lesson not only after a week or a month of work but each step of the lesson is considered as part of assessment.

11- Is pupils' feedback (understanding, participation and motivation) the same when relying on one source and on a variety of sources (methods)?

- The methods vary, they vary according to the topic, to the learners attitudes, according to the teacher, ok, so each teacher develop a certain way of doing with his/her learners. The feedback is better when there is variety, ok, as we say variety is type of life.

12- Are peer and self assessment involved in your classroom?

- Of course, they are involved because they are ways to get the weaknesses and the strengths of your learners.

IV/ - learner-centered teaching and technology

13- What materials do you use aside textbooks?

- Besides the textbook we use the data-show, we use ICT's in general. In addition, we bring tickets, work- sheets, pictures and this is worth because the learners' levels of learning and styles of learning are different, there are visual learners and auditory learners so when you vary the materials you get a better teaching and a better learning.

14- Do you make use of ICT's? If no, why?

- Yes of course we use them nowadays it is an obligation.

15- According to you, learners are more motivated when making use of textbooks solely or when used aside with visual aids such as data-show?

- Here it depends, it depends because even for books they read, there are pictures in the book but they are more interested when there is something, a picture in the board or a video, an audio...etc.

16- According to use, what are the main obstacles when teaching under learner-centeredness?

- The only problem here in Algeria, I think it is the same all over the schools is the fact that the English language is used only in the schools with their teachers, it is not used outside so the communication is mainly weak, there is a lack of communication in English, but I hope in the future there will be a better chances of worth expansion. Concerning the material, we do not have lack of materials, they are available at least in our school.

Interview 02

This interview took place in a classroom in Yahi Blaid middle school in November 24th, 2016 at 10:30h. The duration of the audiotape is 11:05 minutes.

The questions

I/- teacher's profile

- **How long have you been teaching English?**
- This is my second year.
- **What level/ class (es) do you teach?**
- MS1 classes and MS2 classes.

II/- the learner-centered approach

1- How could you define the learner-centered approach?

- The teaching process is centered on the learners, they have to do everything and the teacher is only a guide, a facilitator, a helper ok, he has only the role of helping the learners in their learning process.

2- Have you ever received training about how to teach under learner centeredness?

- Yes, we received a training sessions for two weeks before starting teaching ok and we dealt with teaching strategies and teaching approaches mainly with learner-centered approach and assessment.

3- Broadly speaking, do you find it easy to match your teaching style and the recommendations of the learner-centered approach?

- No it is not easy but I am trying to do my best to apply what we have learned about the learner-centered approach ok, even though it is difficult because there is no materials and a good environment to do this.

4- What are the main strategies you consider as learner-centered practices?

- Ah yes, so here for example mainly during our TDs or tutorial sessions as teachers of English language we prefer to deal with group work for problematic-solving situations ok, there is a problematic then the learners try to solve this problem using the grammatical points and the linguistic points they have already learned.

5- Do you make use of these methods? If yes, which ones do you prefer and why?

- Yes, mainly I use group and pair work in addition to, as I said before, problem solving which help me to better explain things and it helps the learners to better understand as well.

6- Which method helps you better manage your classroom?

- Here it differs from one class to another, from one group of pupils to another, so for example when I enter into the classroom, I start by making a short test ok in that way I attract the learners to the lesson ok and about the pupils there are a lot of pupils who disturb the lecture so I prefer to adopt different methods. It differs from one situation to another in order to not ignore them and make them work.

7- According to you, do learners prefer working in groups or individually?

- It depends on the learners but most of the learners prefer to work in group ok and they learn better when they work in group because they exchange ideas and even age, it has a role in the learning process, so when they work in group they get better the idea.

8- Do you think that learner-centered teaching requires more efforts from the teachers and/or from the learners?

- Here I think as it is an approach that considers the learner as the center of the teaching/learning process so it requires more efforts from the part of the learners who have more tasks to do.

9- Do you think that you reach a better efficiency in learner-centered or teacher-centered activities, which approach do you prefer?

- I prefer the learner-centered teaching style because it breaks the borders between teachers and learners and it creates a more interactive atmosphere in the classroom.

III/ - assessment

10- What type of assessment do you make use of?

- Here, during the teaching process there is formative assessment in addition to summative assessment which is the official exams that learners take each term.

11- Do you provide your learners with daily or weekly (ongoing) tests to check their understanding?

- Yes, for example before starting each lesson, I prefer to make a short test, oral questions, for my pupils in order to know whether they have really understood and get what we have done in the previous sessions.

12- Is pupils' feedback (understanding, participation and motivation) the same when relying on one source and on a variety of sources (methods)?

- No it is not the same, when using only one method we have always a group of learners who understand but the majority does not so we are required to vary the methods.

13- Are peer and self assessment involved in your classroom?

- Here I prefer to deal with peer assessment because the learners prefer to evaluate the works of their mates rather than their own works, and me personally it helps me to find out the weaknesses of my learners.

VI/- learner-centered teaching and technology

14- What materials do you use aside textbooks?

- Yes, here the textbook I do not really use it each time, I refer to it only to follow the linguistic points that I have to teach my learners, otherwise, I prefer to use other materials, bringing videos, records... and most of the times I use pictures during my lesson especially with MS1 pupils.

15- Do you make use of ICT's? If no, why?

- No, we do not use them because there is a great lack of this kind of materials in our school, so most of the time I use pictures, I bring pictures with me and before starting my lesson I prefer to give pictures to my learners in order to introduce them to the topic because the learners at this level are more visual and they learn more from what they see rather than from what they hear.

16- According to you, learners are more motivated when making use of textbooks solely or when used aside with visual aids such as data-show?

- Of course the learners are more motivated when they made use of visual aids rather than when using only textbooks because at this age the learners are more familiar with images and pictures rather than with texts.

17- According to use, what are the main obstacles when teaching under learner-centeredness?

- Yes, here there are a lot of obstacles that we find during our teaching process because there is lack of materials; we do not have enough materials.

Interview 03

This interview took place in a classroom in Ammeur Amar middle school in November 27th, 2016 at 10:03h. The duration of the audiotape is 10:31 minutes.

The questions

I/- teacher's profile

18- How long have you been teaching English?

19- Eight years ago.

20- What level/ class(es) do you teach?

21- Ok this year I am teaching MS2 and MS3.

II/- the learner-centered approach

1- How could you define the learner-centered approach?

The learner-centered approach is a new approach where the learner must be the basic of the lesson and the teacher is just a guide, helper, monitor and facilitator.

2- Have you ever received training about how to teach under learner-centeredness?

- Yes I received a kind of training, I attended some training sessions with the inspector.

3- Broadly speaking, do you find it easy to match your teaching style and the recommendations of the learner-centered approach?

- Ok it is not really easy but I am trying to implement all what received from the training sessions about this approach.

4- What are the main strategies you consider as learner-centered practices?

- Ok some learner-centered strategies maybe group work and pair work.

5- Do you make use of these methods? If yes, which ones do you prefer and why?

- Yes I do, especially group work and pair work but most of the time I use group work because it is helpful to avoid too much noise and allows me to engage all the learners in the lecture and make them work

6- Which method helps you better manage your classroom?

- Group work of course.

7- According to you, do learners prefer working in groups or individually?

- The learners prefer working in groups to exchange ideas and help each other.

8- Do you think that learner-centered teaching requires more efforts from the teachers and/or from the learners?

- Here I think that it requires more efforts from the part of the learners because the learner in this approach is the center so he is expected to accomplish much more tasks than before.

9- Do you think that you reach a better efficiency in learner-centered or teacher-centered activities, which approach do you prefer?

- I prefer this new approach, in learner-centered pedagogy I reach my objectives easily because learners may help each other better than the teacher himself.

III/- learner-centered teaching and assessment

10- What type of assessment do you make use of?

- Ok I use formative and summative assessment.

11- Do you provide your learners with daily or weekly (ongoing) tests to check their understanding?

- Yes this is formative assessment but most of the time I use oral questions.

12- Is pupils' feedback (understanding, participation and motivation) the same when relying on one source and on a variety of sources (methods)?

- No it is not the same of course, the pupils' feedback is better when varying the method because when using just one method all the time makes the lectures boring so we attempt to make use of other methods because the learners participate and understand better.

13- Are peer and self assessment involved in your classroom?

- I use peer assessment from time to time when I find time of course because it is helpful for the learners to make them know how to evaluate a work but self assessment is a little bit difficult to implement it because the learners do not really master the English language.

IV/ - learner-centered teaching and technology

14- What materials do you use aside textbooks?

22- It will be very helpful and beneficial to use other materials aside textbooks but as there is a great lack of means in our school, teachers rely just on a textbook as their main source.

15- Do you make use of ICT's? If no, why?

- We do not use this kind of means because the school cannot afford buying them so they are not available.

16- According to you, learners are more motivated when making use of textbooks solely or when used aside with visual aids such as data-show?

- Even though we do not make use of visual aids but I think that the learners will be more motivated when there is animation.

17- According to use, what are the main obstacles when teaching under learner-centeredness?

- The first obstacle I find myself is lack of materials, even though we are in an era of technology but we still do not have access to modern means in our schools so we are still working with textbooks.

Interview 04

This interview took place in a classroom in Ammeur Amar middle school in November 27th, 2016 at 12:34h. The duration of the audiotape is 10:24 minutes.

The questions

I/- Teacher's profile

- **How long have you been teaching English?**

Ok six years ago.

- **What level/class(es) do you teach?**

I am teaching MS1 and MS2

II/- The learner-centered approach

1- How could you define the learner-centered approach?

- In general, it means that teaching is more on the learner and less on the teacher which means that it makes the learners work more than the teacher.

2- Have you ever received training about how to teach under learner-centeredness?

- Yes I did, mainly with the inspector before starting my career as a teacher I attended some training sessions in addition to the comings of the inspector from time to time.

3- Broadly speaking, do you find it easy to match your teaching style and the recommendations of the learner-centered approach?

- Not really but as the new method of teaching obliges us to teach under the learner-centered approach so I am trying my best to implement it as better as possible even though it is not easy.

4- What are the main strategies you consider as learner-centered practices?

- Ok we have individual work, pair work and group work. These are the main used methods.

5- Do you make use of these methods? If yes, which ones do you prefer and why?

- Yes, mostly I use pair work and group work because it makes the learners work more and lets them to be more confident of using their minds and sharing ideas between them.

6- Which method helps you better manage your classroom?

- I think it is group work because the learners here are working together and there is more data to use.

7- According to you, do learners prefer working in groups or individually?

- They prefer working in groups because they are more confident because there are their friends to help them, there are a lot of ideas to share between them.

8- Do you think that learner-centered teaching requires more efforts from the teachers and/or from the learners?

- It requires more efforts from the learners because before it was like stem feeding, the teacher was stem feeding the learners. Now, the teacher is just a guide and a facilitator and the learners make more efforts to construct their knowledge.

9- Do you think that you reach a better efficiency in learner-centered or teacher-centered activities, which approach do you prefer?

- In reality I started teaching with this new approach so even though it is not easy to implement its principles because we are not familiar with it as we were taught with the traditional ways but I prefer using the learner-centered approach.

III/- learner-centered teaching and assessment

10- What type of assessment do you make use of?

- Ok I use formative assessment during the whole year, I mean after each sequence I do a kind of test or quiz for my pupils in addition to the oral questions I usually ask them to check if they have understood something. And of course there is summative assessment.

11- Do you provide your learners with daily or weekly (ongoing) tests to check their understanding?

- Yes a kind of, I usually provide my learners with a set of questions either before, while, or after doing something. All this is formative assessment, generally oral questions.

12- Is pupils' feedback (understanding, participation and motivation) the same when relying on one source and on a variety of sources (methods)?

- I think when varying the methods because each learner has his/her specific way of learning. It means when using one method we have just a small group of learners that understand and the others do not, so we have to change the method in order to make them understand.

13- Are peer and self assessment involved in your classroom?

- It is mostly peer assessment because I think self assessment is difficult for them because they do not know the English language.

IV/ - learner-centered teaching and technology

14- What materials do you use aside textbooks?

- Most of the time I use flash-cards, tickets and pictures.

15- Do you make use of ICT's? If no, why?

- Ok we are required to use them especially the data-show and as they are available in our college so we use them, not always but from time to time.

16- According to you, learners are more motivated when making use of textbooks solely or when used aside with visual aids such as data-show?

- When we use the visual aids of course, the learners become more motivated and interested to the lecture when I use the data-show because there is a lot of animation and learners like animation because they are more visuals and they learn better from what they see especially MS1 pupils.

17- According to use, what are the main obstacles when teaching under learner-centeredness?

- May be it is lack of means and materials because in some schools we find some modern means like the data-show for instance but in most schools they are not available.

