



Student-Centered Learning (SCL) Concept, Principles, Definition and Benefits

Mostafa Mohsen Radwan

Professor, Faculty of Engineering, Fayoum University, Egypt

**Member, EU Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs) - Egypt
National Team**



Concept of SCL

- SCL was credited to Hayward as early as 1905 and to Dewey's work in 1956.
- Carl Rogers was then associated with expanding this approach into a theory of education in the 1980s and this learning approach has also been associated with the work of Piaget (developmental learning) and Malcolm Knowles (self-directed learning)
- SCL is broadly based on **constructivism as a theory of learning**, which is built on the idea that learners must construct and reconstruct knowledge in order to learn effectively, with learning being most effective when, as part of an activity, the learner experiences constructing a meaningful product.
- SCL is also akin to **transformative learning** which contemplates a process of qualitative change in the learner as an ongoing process of transformation which focuses on enhancing and empowering the learner, developing their critical ability.



Concept of SCL

Some of the scl literature can be summarised into the following **elements** (cf. Lea et al, 2003):

- The reliance on **active rather than passive** learning;
- An emphasis on **deep learning and understanding**;
- Increased **responsibility and accountability** on the part of the student;
- An increased **sense of autonomy** in the learner;
- An **interdependence between teacher and learner**;
- **Mutual respect** within the learner-teacher relationship; and
- A **reflexive approach to the teaching and learning process** on the part of both the teacher and the learner.



Principles Underlying SCL

Some **general principles** underlying scl:

- *SCL requires an Ongoing Reflexive Process.*
- *SCL does not have a ›One-Size-Fits-All‹ Solution.*
- *Students have Different Learning Styles.*
- *Students have Different Needs and Interests.*
- *Choice is Central to Effective Learning in SCL.*
- *Students have Different Experiences and Background Knowledge*
- *Students should have Control Over their Learning*
- *SCL is about ›Enabling‹ not ›Telling‹.*
- *Learning needs Cooperation between Students and Staff.*



A Workable Definition of SCL

SCL remains a debated concept with no one clear definition available. However this is **a good workable definition:**

»Student-Centred Learning represents both a mindset and a culture within a given higher education institution and is a learning approach which is broadly related to, and supported by, constructivist theories of learning. It is characterised by innovative methods of teaching which aim to promote learning in communication with teachers and other learners and which take students seriously as active participants in their own learning, fostering transferable skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and reflective thinking.«



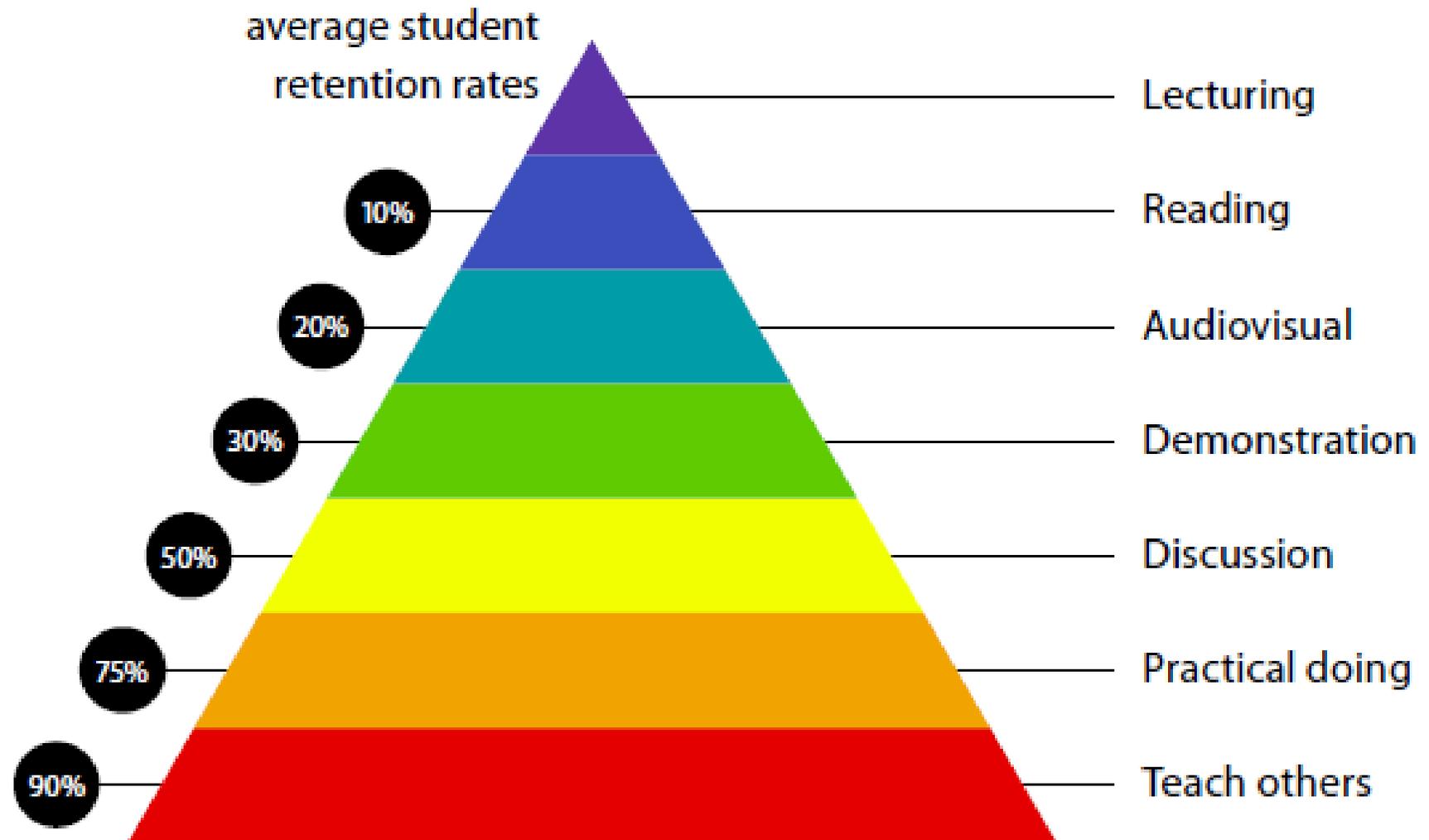
Benefits of SCL For Students

SCL provides skills for life, creates independent learners and responds to the changing and differing needs of individual students. Below is a list of what such benefits can include:

- ***Making Students an Integral Part of the Academic Community***
- ***An Increased Motivation to Learn***
- ***Independence and Responsibility in Learning***
- ***Due Consideration for Student Needs***

fig. 1 *Learning Pyramid*

Source: National Training Laboratories, Bethel, Maine



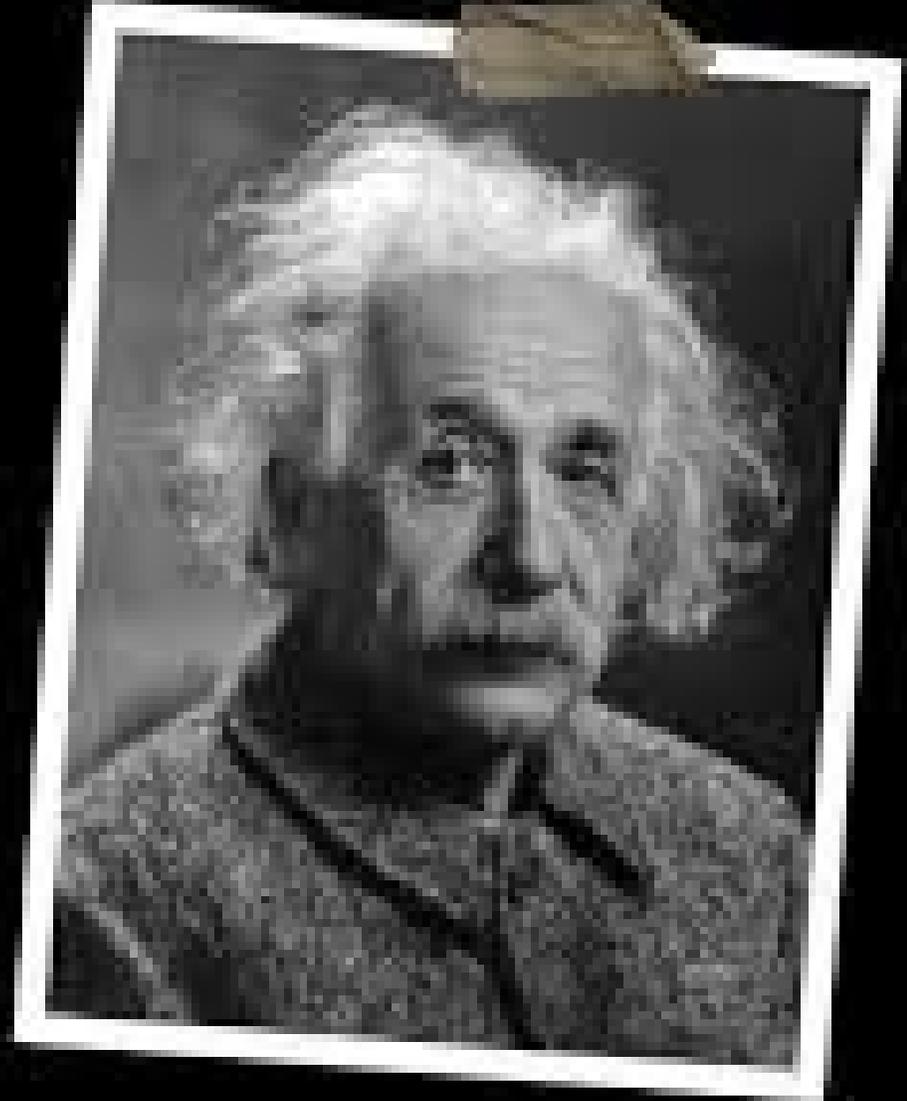


Benefits of SCL For Teachers

teachers can benefit from scl as much as the students in their classes. Below is a list of what such benefits can include:

- ***A More Interesting Role for the Teacher***
- ***Solutions to Tackling Massification and Diversity***
- ***Positive Impact on Working Conditions***
- ***Continuous Self-Improvement***
- ***Increased Learner Motivation and Engagement***
- ***Professional Development for Academia***

**"Education is not
the learning of
facts, but the
training of the mind
to think."
-Albert Einstein**





THANK YOU