The Iraqi EFL College Instructors' use of Strategies Promoting Active Learning

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Abstract

The rapid developments and the huge accumulation of information and technology have many applications in many fields and at all levels of education. Consequently, at college, there is a need to prepare students with a high level of competence and this surely required engaging them actively in the learning process. The failure of students' active engagement may be due to college instructors' "over-reliance" on lecturing as a method of teaching.

The aims of the study are to evaluate the use of strategies that promote active learning (AL) by Iraqi EFL college instructors and to identify the difference among instructors according to sex.

The population of the study is EFL college instructors at Al- Mustansiryah and Baghdad universities during the academic year2010-2011. The sample consists of 48 instructors. The instrument of the study is a questionnaire which contains 74 items classified into four categories: cognitive, metacoginitve , communication, and socio-affective. After gaining the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, it was delivered to the sample of the study.

The results show that:

1-most of AL strategies are not acceptably used by Iraqi EFL instructors.

2-sex is not an effective variable that affect the use of AL strategies.

In the light of the obtained results, some conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies are drawn.

Chapter one: Introduction

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AL	Active Learning
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Chapter one : Introduction:

1.1 The Statement of the Problem:

   The vast and rapid growing accumulation of information and knowledge has many implications in many fields and at all levels of education. Consequently, at college, the most apparent need is to prepare students with a high level of competence by engaging them actively in the learning process. Cuseo(2010:online) regards the failure of student's active engagement is due to college instructors' "over-reliance" on the lecture method as research has shown that the vast majority of college faculty makes use of lecturing and regard it as the primary method of instruction.

   Bonwell &Eison(1991:online)state that research consistently has shown that traditional lecture methods in which the instructors talk and students listen dominate college and university classroom and that the traditional way of teaching shows its failure as the student is out of the real involvement in the

lecture .Beard(1972:103)declares that lecturing as a method of teaching is under attack by many educational psychologists and students. He adds that critics believe that it results in passive learning and it tends to be less effective than those which fully engage the learner in the learning process.

The thinking required when attending a lecture is just low level of comprehension which passes from the ear to the writing hand and leaves the mind untouched .Active learning (AL) puts the responsibility of organizing what is to be learned on the learners themselves, and ideally results in more diverse learning styles(Dodge,2010:online).

Mann(1999:1) states that the concepts of AL is currently a hot topic in the strategies of the classroom in order to increase students' learning and long term retention of the materials presented. And yet, we seem to have forgotten that learning is naturally an active process which involves putting our students in situations which force them to read ,speak, listen ,think deeply and write(Dodge,2010:online). Bonwell and Eison (1991:online) state that several studies have shown that students prefer strategies promoting AL to traditional lectures. Other studies on students' achievement have proved that strategies promoting AL are comparable to lectures in the mastery of content, but superior to lectures in the development of students' skills in thinking and writing. Fink(1999:online) adds that many colleges recently like to pass passive learning to active learning to gain better ways of engaging students in the learning process.

From the researchers' experience in TEFL at college level, they found that students are not engaged actively in the learning process and this is the reason behind their deficiency in using the EFL. Students will not learn very much English by just listening and reading or by occasionally saying a single sentence in class. Students must be given enough opportunities to use language and to practice as much as possible. Since it is essential for them to attain fair mastery of language in order to communicate ideas and experiences fluently, students must do more than just listen passively to an instructor's talk or have shrewd mind; they must read, write, discuss , or be engaged in solving problems and in higher –order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

1.2 The Aims:

This research aims to

1- evaluate the use of strategies that promote AL by Iraqi EFL college instructors.

2-identfy the differences among Iraqi EFL college instructors' use of strategies that promote active learning according to sex.

1.3 The Hypotheses:

1-The use of Iraqi EFL college instructors of strategies that promote AL is at high level.

2-There is no statistical significant difference in EFL college instructors' use of strategies that promote AL according to sex.

1.4 Limits of the Study:

The study is limited to :

1-Iraqi EFL instructors at the universities of Baghdad and Al-Mustansiriyah .

2-The academic year 2010-2011.

1.5 Definitions of Basic Terms:

1.5.1 Active learning: It can be defined as "an accumulation of a significant amount of mental energy and a high level of psychological involvement in the learning process which is increased considerably when students physically act on ,or engage in some action"(Cuseo, 2010:online).

Active learning is used to "describe a range of pedagogical approaches from the simple asking of questions in a class through highly structured problem -based learning exercises and simulations to practical experiential learning in the community outside the educational situation" (McManus,2007:online)

CTL&T(2010:online) regards AL as a variety of strategies or pedagogical projects designed to place the primary responsibility for creating and/or applying knowledge on the shoulders of students.

The researchers define AL operationally as a process whereby students engage in higher order thinking tasks such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students are doing something including discovering, processing, and applying information .

1.5.2 Strategies: They are "specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end ,or planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information"(Brown, 2007 :119).

AL strategies can be operationally defined as instructional activities involving students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Previous Studies:

2.1Theoretical Background of AL

Dodge(2010:online) declares that AL is not a new idea. It goes back at least as far as Socrates and it was the most focus point among progressive educators like John Dewey who emphasizes the child's engagement in active learning . McManus(2007:online)supposes that "there can be learning with no teaching and equally there can be teaching with no learning", the latter point has led academics to argue for AL. Mann (1999:online) states that the aim of AL is to help students to become effective agents for their own lifelong learning and personal development.

The theoretical framework of AL is based on the constructivist's perspective and assumptions about learning as AL refers to a situation where learners construct their knowledge based upon their perceptions of experiences (Cuseo,2010:online).

Al is an umbrella term which encompasses a wide range of pedagogical approaches which have been used in teaching at both college and school over a long period. The use of active engagement in the learning process promotes reflection and the use of higher order skills such as analysis, synthesis , and evaluation(McManus:2007:online).

Petty (2004:online) states that we learn by doing and that research shows that AL is much better recalled, enjoyed, and understood. He adds that AL strategies require from the learners to make their own meaning by developing their own conceptualizations of what they are learning. In this process of learning, students physically make neural connections in their brain, while passive methods like listening do not require them to do so. He clarifies that good students may create meaning from passive methods, but weak students cannot. But when both types of students require to use AL , they improve their learning enormously. When AL methods are compared with traditional methods in control and experimental groups comparisons, AL methods show much better achievement and this is also true at every academic level .

McKinney(2010:online) points out that AL "derives from two basic assumptions 1-that learning is by nature an active endeavor and 2-that different people learn in different ways". Mann(2010:online) adds that an important AL principle involves the instructor sharing control with students . A student can learn how to inquire , how to extract relevant information, and then how to organize these ideas through a more interactive approach versus that of the more traditional prescriptive style of advising.

AL techniques can occur in class or out of class"(e.g. computer simulation, internships, www assignments, class internet discussion lists, independent study research)"(McKinney,2010:online). AL techniques do not make the teacher job easier as they require a lot of up-front work from the teachers like planning , preparation, creating effective problems and required from him to learn new skills and techniques that differ from what he may use for a traditional lecture(Mann,1999:2).Mann adds that the use of AL strategies help to ensure that students won't become bored and inattentive during the lecture. The involvement of students will ensure that they will retain the information presented to them(Ibid).

2.2 The Psychological Bases of AL:

Piaget deals with how young children learn and function in the world that surrounds them and how this affects their mental development. He believes that the child is seen as continually interacting with the world like solving problems that are presented by the environment .He thinks this knowledge is not inborn knowledge but it is "actively constructed" by the child. He states that "thought is seen as deriving from action; action is internalized, or carried out mentally in the imagination, and in this way thinking develops"(Cameron,2001:2-3).

The important idea taken from Piaget is that the child is an active learner and thinker as he/she can construct the knowledge from working with objects or ideas(Ibid:4).

Vygotsky theory puts emphasis on the social and modern development .He believes that the mental development and learning take place in a social context. This means that the child is born in a world full of people with whom he /she interacts from birth. Piaget sees the child as an active learner in a world of objects whereas Vygotsky sees the child as an active learner in a world full of people and those people play important roles in helping the child to learn , bringing objects, and ideas to his attention , reading stories, talking while playing, etc and gradually the child will shift away from depending on others to independent action and thinking (Ibid:6).

Fotos concludes that according to Vygotsky "language and thought are initially separate but become independent during acts of communication since meaning is created through interaction"(cited in Celce-Murcia,2001:269).

Lantolf explains activity theory as "a unified account of Vygotsky's original proposals on the nature and development of human behavior " (quoted in Ellis,2003:183) whereas Leontiev regards people possess motives which determine the response to a particular task and how they construct a given situation. So people with different motives will do the same task but in different ways. Ellis (Ibid) distinguishes three dimensions of cognition: motives, goals, and operation. The first answers why something is done, the second answers what is done, the third answers how it is done. All these theories support the use of AL .

2.1.2 The Principles of AL:

AL is based on the following principles:

1-Students spend much of class time actively engaged in the subject matter: This means that students think, talk , and do rather than merely listen to the instructor.

2-Students interact with their peers: Communication among students is an important component of knowledge construction ,and sharing and evaluating ideas.

3-Students receive immediate feedback on their work: Students receive the correct feedback from their peers or the instructor .

4-The instructor is a facilitator not a conveyor of knowledge : The instructor should be a guide not a sage on the stage. Students should construct knowledge from negotiations, observations, and reflections.

5-Students take responsibility for their knowledge :Students are responsible for constructing knowledge and this includes student metacogntion and self regulation (Center for the Advancement of Teaching ,2009:online).

2.1.4 Learning Strategies:

Nunan(2000:171) defines strategies as procedures used by learners to learn and use language. Underlying every task introduced in the classroom there is a learning strategy. Oxford (cited in Celce- Murcia,2001:395) regards learning strategies as specific actions, operation, steps, behaviors, plans, techniques, used to enhance learning Oxford argues that strategies are important for two reasons ;the first one is that they "are tools for active , self directed involvement" which is essential to develop the communicative competence. The second is that the learner who has developed appropriate strategies has self-confidence and he can learn more effectively(cited in Nunan,2000:172). Both Brown(2007:133-136) and Hedge(2000:77-78) state that there are four kinds of strategies; cognitive, metacognitive, communication, socio-affective strategies.

1-Cognitive strategies:

They are thought processes which involve more direct use of the material itself. They enable the learner to deal with the subject matter presented in tasks and materials such as translating, note-taking, repetition, memorization, and inferencing (Brown,2007:133) .

2-Meta-cognitive strategies:

They include" planning for learning, thinking about learning how to make it effective, self- monitoring during learning, and evaluation of how successful learning has been after working on language in some way"(Hedge,2000:78).

3- Communication strategies:

They involve the learner's use of gestures , mime ,synonyms, paraphrases, and cognate words from his/her first language to be understood by others or to maintain a conversation through which he/she practices language(Ibid:78-79).Brown (2007:138) adds that by communication strategies learner can do circumlocution(describe things), approximation(using an alternative term to express meaning), code switching(the shift from one language to another), time gaining(gain time to think by using hesitation devices to fill pauses),and appeal to help(ask for help from interlocutors)

4-Socio-affective strategies:

Those strategies provide the learner with opportunities for practice like starting conversations with native speakers or colleagues, collaborating on tasks, listening to the radio or watching TV programs (Hedge,2000:79). Brown(2007:135) adds other examples like asking a teacher, peers or native speakers for repetition, paraphrasing , or explanation.

2.1.5 Active Learning Strategies:

AL Strategies are a variety of strategies or pedagogical projects designed to place the responsibilities for creating and applying knowledge on the students themselves. The use of AL strategies means transforming traditional classroom passive learning to AL through problem-solving , collaborative projects,

community service learning activities and many others(Center for Teaching Learning and Technology ,2010:online). See Appendix 1 which shows in brief the most common AL strategies .Moreover, research has proved that these strategies greatly increase students' retention of knowledge and skills(Ibid).

2.2 Previous Studies:

2.2.1 Niemi, 2002

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how teacher education might promote active learning and what the main obstacles were to reach this aim. The problem was investigated from the perspective of student teachers, teacher educators, teachers and pupils in school. These groups had evaluated how AL was implemented and what were the obstacles to AL. The researcher made a survey of certified teachers and teacher educators through a questionnaire; interviews of teachers; Interviews of pupils in schools; and observation in schools. The results showed that schools and teacher education are in the middle of a cultural change .Many indicators of AL can be seen though there are a lot of obstacles which must be overcome.

2.2.2 Orhan 2009

The aim of this study was to determine physics teachers' opinions about student- centered activities applied in teaching physics and learning in a context. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with six physics teachers, and then a questionnaire was constructed based on the data gained from the interviews. This questionnaire was applied to forty physics teachers in Amasya (a small city in Turkey).Finally, a semi- structured observation chart was used to determine how these activities were demonstrated. Thus, the relation between teachers' views about AL techniques and their actual implementation were compared. The results indicated that although teachers were aware of student-centered physics instruction, they were still using traditional techniques widely.

Section Three: Procedures

3.1 Population and Sample:

The population of the study is EFL college instructors at Al-Mustansiryah University, and Baghdad University during the academic year 2010-2011.

The sample of the study consists of 48 EFL instructors distributed as follows:18 instructors from the College of Basic Education, Al-Mustansiryah University; 4 from the College of Education Al-Mustansiryah University; 10 from the College of Education for Women, Baghdad University; and 16 from the College of Education /Ibn Rushd, Baghdad University. The sample includes 33 females and 15 males.

3.2 The Instrument(the Questionnaire):

The instrument of the study is a questionnaire which is constructed by the researchers to evaluate the instructors' use of strategies that promote AL and its items are driven from literature in this field (see Office of Human

Resources:2010; Wikipedia,2010; Jeri,2010; Mckinney,2010;Celce-Murcia,2001;Cause Web,2010 ;Mathews,1999; ;Kagan,1994;Baker College, 2005; Center for Advancement of Teaching,2009; Johnson & Johnson,1999; Lowman, 1984;Center for Teaching and Learning,2010; Center for Teaching and Learning,2009;and Center for Teaching Learning and Technology,2010).The number of the items is 74 classified into four categories; cognitive (25 items) , metacognitive (10 items), communication(31 items), and socio-affective(8 items).The justification for this classification is that when the instructor makes use of these strategies this will result in developing these types of learning strategies in the learner himself and this classification was recommended by some of the jury members on the initial form of the questionnaire. The items were designed to be answered according to a three-point rating scale: always used,sometimes used, and never used(see Appendix1).

3.2.1 Questionnaire Validity :

A questionnaire validity is a reflection of how well it measures what it is designed to measure(Bergman, 1981:150). Ebel (1972:410) states that face validity is achieved by asking experts to decide whether the statement represents the features wanted to be measured.

Thus, the first version of the questionnaire has been exposed to a jury of specialists in the field of TEFL and linguistics to decide its face validity and suitability . They were asked to modify , change , or add anything suitable to the questionnaire which serves the aims of the present study.

The percentage of the agreement and disagreement of the jury members was considered and 96% of the items have been judged valid. The rest were treated in a way of modification, classification, and addition as a response to the jurors' suggestions; meanwhile, they advised a few linguistic amendments in the construction of some items.

3.2.2Questionnaire Reliability:

Reliability is considered as a necessary characteristic of any good questionnaire which refers to the consistency and stability of the measurement of the test(Harris,1969:14),whereas Mehrens and Lehmann (1991:267) consider reliability as the "degree of consistency between two measures of the same thing". To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, the researchers used re-administering the questionnaire again to a sample of the same instructors after two weeks . So, 10 instructors were chosen for this purpose. The correlation coefficient is found to be 0.89 which is considered a high stable coefficient.

3.2.3 The Administration of the Questionnaire:

After maintaining the questionnaire validity and suitability, it has been administered to 48 EFL college instructors who have the will to answer it during the period between 1st and the 25th of September 2011. Answering the questionnaire required no more than 15 minutes.

3.2.4 Scoring Scheme

The questionnaire items were marked as follows; always used 3 marks; sometimes used 2 marks; and never used 1 mark.

3.3 Statistical Means:

The researchers made use of the following statistical means:

1-Percentage:It is used to find out the agreement among the jury members to achieve the validity of the questionnaire.

2-Pearson correlation coefficient :it is used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire.

3-Fisher's formula: it is used to compute the weighted mean score of the questionnaire items.

4-t- test is used to find out whether there is any statistical difference between male and female in using AL strategies at college level.

Section Four: The Results and Interpretations:

4.1 Presentation of the Results:

To achieve the first aim which is evaluating the use of strategies that promote AL in some of the Iraqi colleges by EFL college instructors; Fisher formula is adopted here to find out the weighted mean of each strategy and compare it to the theoretical mean(2). The items are arranged according to their rank in each field descendantly (see Table1).

4.1.1 Results Related to the First Aim

1-Cognitive AL strategies (25):

It is noticed from Tables(1) that items number 7, 6,21,25,22, 11,1,23, and 8 are mostly used by the instructors in the cognitive field as their weighted means are higher than the theoretical mean which is 2 and the rest items are less used as their weighted means are less than the theoretical mean.

Table 1 The Weighted Means and the Rank Order of the Cognitive AL Strategies

Rank	No. of items	Scale			Weighted Mean	Percentile Mean
		3	2	1		
1	7	29	19	0	2.604	0.86
2	6	21	25	2	2.395	0.79
3	21	16	29	3	2.27	0.75
4	25	19	21	8	2.229	0.74
5	22	16	25	7	2.187	0.72
6	11	17	21	10	2.145	0.71
7	1	9	34	5	2.083	0.69
8	23	10	31	7	2.062	0.68
9	8	10	30	8	2.041	0.68
10.5	20	13	21	14	1.979	0.65
10.5	18	9	29	10	1.979	0.65
12	5	12	22	14	1.958	0.65
13	4	10	24	14	1.916	0.63
14	9	10	22	16	1.875	0.62

15	3	7	24	17	1.791	0.59
16	16	7	23	18	1.77	0.59
17.5	24	4	26	18	1.708	0.56
17.5	10	3	28	17	1.708	0.56
19	12	6	21	21	1.687	0.56
20	17	7	18	23	1.666	0.55
21	19	2	24	22	1.583	0.52
22	15	2	22	24	1.541	0.51
23	13	4	14	30	1.458	0.48
24.5	14	2	15	31	1.395	0.46
24.5	2	4	11	33	1.395	0.46
The mean					1.897	0.62

2-Metacognitive AL strategies (10)

As for the metacognitive field and from Table 2 it is clear that items number 4and 8 are most commonly used by instructors as their weighted means are higher than the theoretical mean 2 , and the rest are less used.

Table 2 The Weighted Means and the Rank Order of the Metacognitive AL Strategies

Rank	No. of items	Scale			Weighted	Percentile
		3	2	1	Mean	Mean
1	4	17	25	6	2.229	O.74
2	8	15	24	4	2.02	0.67
3.5	10	12	23	13	1.979	0.65
3.5	5	9	28	12	1.979	0.65
5	7	10	26	12	1.958	0.65
6	3	9	27	12	1.937	0.64
7	6	8	26	14	1.875	0.62
8	9	10	21	17	1.854	0.61
9	1	9	19	20	1.77	0.59
10	2	6	9	33	1.437	0.47
The mean					1.90	0.62

3-Communication AL strategies (31):

According to communication field, items number5,14,13 and 4 are commonly used as their weighted means are more than the theoretical mean 2 , and all the rest are less used by the instructors(see Table 3).

Table 3 The Weighted Means and the Rank Order of the Communication AL Strategies

Rank	No. of items	Scale			Weighted	Percentile
		3	2	1	Mean	Mean
1.5	5	20	23	5	2.312	O.77
1.5	14	20	23	5	2.312	0.77
3	13	18	25	5	2.27	0.75
4	4	15	20	13	2.041	0.68
5.5	1	11	23	14	1.937	0.64
5.5	26	8	29	11	1.937	0.64
7	18	12	21	15	1.937	0.64
8	2	9	26	13	1.916	0.63

9	3	9	25	14	1.895	0.63
10.5	17	7	28	13	1.875	0.62
10.5	15	8	25	15	1.854	0.61
12	6	7	26	20	1.833	0.61
13	25	8	23	17	1.812	0.60
14	7	9	19	20	1.77	0.59
15	20	9	18	21	1.75	0.58
16	11	6	22	20	1.70	0.56
17	10	6	21	21	1.687	0.56
18.5	22	3	22	23	1.583	0.52
18.5	12	7	15	25	1.583	0.52
21	27	4	18	26	1.541	0.51
21	31	4	18	26	1.541	0.51
21	24	3	20	25	1.541	0.51
23	30	2	21	25	1.52	0.50
24.5	28	7	10	31	1.5	0.50
24.5	23	3	18	27	1.5	0.50
26	21	3	20	21	1.458	0.48
27	16	3	14	31	1.416	0.47
29	19	4	11	33	1.395	0.46
29	29	5	9	34	1.395	0.46
29	8	1	17	30	1.395	0.46
31	9	1	16	31	1.375	0.45
The mean					1.727	0.55

4-Socio- affective AL strategies (8)

Regarding the socio-affective field, items numbers 3 and 5 seem to be more used by instructors as their weighted means are higher than the theoretical mean(2), and the rest are less used(see Table 4).

Table 4 The Weighted Means and the Rank Order of the Socio-Affective AL Strategies

Rank	No. of items	Scale			Weighted Mean	Percentile Mean
		3	2	1		
1	3	16	19	13	2.062	O.68
2	5	13	22	13	2	0.66
3	6	10	26	12	1.958	0.65
4	4	9	18	21	1.75	0.58
5	1	8	19	21	1.729	0.57
6	8	6	21	21	1.687	0.56
7	7	5	22	21	1.666	0.55
8	2	3	23	22	1.604	0.53
The mean					1.807	0.59

It is clear that instructors' use of metacognitive AL strategies is in the first rank and then cognitive, socio-affective, and communication AL strategies respectively (see Table 5)

Table 5 The Weighted Means and the Rank Order of the AL Strategies Main fields

Field	Rank	Weighted mean	Percentile mean
Cognitive	2	1.897	0.62
Met cognitive	1	1.90	0.62
Socio-affective	3	1.807	0.59
Communication	4	1.727	0.55
Total mean		1.832	0.59

4.1.2 Results Related to the Second Aim:

To achieve the second aim which is identifying the difference among Iraqi EFL instructors' use of strategies that promote AL according to sex; t-test is adopted here. It is found out that there is no difference between male and female instructors' use of strategies that promote AL in all fields as the computed t-value (0.864)is less than the tabulated t-value(2) with 79 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance as shown in Table 6. So, there is no difference between male and female in using AL strategies, so the second hypothesis is accepted.

Table 6 t-test statistics for male and female use of AL strategies

Field	Gender	No.	Mean	Sd	df	T-Value	
						computed	Tabulated
Cognitive	Male	15	48.6667	10.293	79	0.858	2
	Female	33	46.484	7.040			
metacognitive	Male	15	46.484	7.041	79	0,882	2
	Female	33	47.166	8.145			
communication	Male	15	18.812	4.376	79	1.031	2
	Female	33	19.145	4.312			
Socio-affective	Male	15	52.454	11.656	79	0.685	2
	Female	33	53.666	12.548			
Total	Male & famale	48				0.864	2

4.2 Interpretation of the Results

Generally, teaching at college level by EFL instructors in the specified colleges can be evaluated as passive teaching because the average weighted mean (1.832) is less than the theoretical mean (2). The use of all these AL strategies is still weak except few exceptions in each field which are:

1-Cognitive field: questions; brainstorm; lecture summary; three minutes review; story telling; note-taking; ice breaker; review; two/ one minute paper.

2-Metacognitive field: compare and contrast; composition

3-Commuincation field: class discussion; open discussion; ask a point of view; question and answer pair.

4-Socio-affective: mini research; story telling.

From the obtained statistical analysis of the data, the researchers gain the following findings :

1-Most of the AL strategies listed in the questionnaire are not acceptably used by EFL Iraqi instructors. This is an expected result because as instructors we face such a problem and students always complain of passive participation in

class activities; in addition to the low proficiency level of under graduate students.

2-It seems clear that metacognitive AL strategies get the first rank and this may be attributed to few numbers of items or because the items are quite well- known by instructors as they are not new strategies.

3-The communication AL strategies are the least used by the sample and this may be attributed to the large number of the items in this field. Instructors seem to use just class discussion ; open discussion; and question and answer pair as communication strategies, and this may be due to the lack of knowledge in the new trends in TEFL .

4-It is obvious that sex is not an effective variable that may affect the use of AL strategies and this is quite expected since they are all from the same academic and scientific layer.

5-The results are unlike the results of Niemi(2002) and the same as Karamustafaoglu(2009)

CHAPTER FIVE : CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusions

In the light of the obtained results from this research , the following conclusions are drawn:

1-It is clear that Iraqi EFL college instructors' use of strategies that promote AL is weak.

2-The Iraqi EFL college instructors' use metacognitive AL strategies more than cognitive, communication, and socio-affective.

3-Teacher- centered instructional strategies have been found superior to learner-centered strategies which involve AL .

4-Most of the AL strategies are still unknown by the majority of the instructors.

5-Students' deficiency in mastering EFL may be due to the passive learning which they receive.

5.2 Recommendations:

In the light of the gained results, the researchers recommend the following:

1-The Iraqi EFL college instructors need to attend training courses of new trends in TEFL and be acquainted with new scientific developments in the teaching field.

2-Instructors have to shift from passive learning to AL and give students more roles and chances to participate in the learning process.

3-Instructors should employ self reflection practices on their teaching and reconsider their roles.

4-Instuctors can select AL strategies that are suitable to the subject matter taught and that they feel comfortable with, and this requires more preparation and planning.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Studies:

1-Several experimental studies could be held to identify the effect of each of the mentioned AL strategies in various fields.

2-A study is needed to find out the relationship between the instructors' use of AL strategies and students' achievement.

3-A similar study can be carried out to evaluate the use of AL strategies in the primary and secondary schools by teachers.

4-The same study can be replicated using other variables like years of experience or/ and specialization.

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Appendix 1

Al-Mustansiriya university
College of Basic Education
Department of English

A Questionnaire

Dear instructor,

The researchers conduct a research entitled " The Iraqi EFL Instructors' Use of Strategies that promote Active Learning "

Active learning refers to the methodology that requires the learner to take responsibility for his or her learning through active participation in learning activities. In this methodology , students are engaged in higher order thinking skills as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to build, test, revise their knowledge.

The researchers have distributed the Active Learning Strategies into the four main categories of learning strategies; cognitive, metacognitive, communication, and socio-affective. Some of the strategies could be categorized in two fields.

You are requested to indicate whether or not each strategy in the questionnaire attached is" always used, sometimes used, never used" in TEFL at class .

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.
The researchers

Sex:
College:

A Questionnaire for Evaluating the Use of Active Learning Strategies

Active Learning Strategies

No.	Cognitive Strategies	Always used	Sometime used	Never used
1-	**Ice Breakers:** **Those things that get people talking quickly about their goals, fears, expectations for the session before them. Students may be asked to consider what one thing each hopes to gain from the workshop.**			
2-	**Learning log:** **It requires each student to maintain a daily class journal.**			
3-	**High tech:** **Use multimedia like text, audio, video, and overheads .**			
4-	**Using Visuals:** **Like maps, student project output, industry posters, actual project output and etc.**			
5-	**Focused listing:** **The students take out a sheet of paper and list what they know about a subject by creating a list of terms or ideas related to it.**			
6-	**Brain storm:** **Like focused listening ,brain storming requires from the students to recall what they know about a subject by generating terms and ideas related to it and form creative connections between prior knowledge and new possibilities.**			
7-	**Questions:** **Students are encouraged to ask different questions.**			
8-	**Two/one minute/s paper (A short written exercise):** **The students summarize the most important points in today's lecture.**			
9-	**peer teaching :** **It allows the students to teach the new content to each other, and they must be accurately guided by instructors.**			
10-	**Student summary of another student's answer:** **To promote active listening ,after one student has volunteered an answer to your question, another student can summarize the first student's response.**			
11-	**Note-taking:** **Students take notes during the class period , and then use their notes on a mini-quiz that assesses the material.**			
12-	**Note Comparison:** **Having students' model good note-taking is to have them occasionally compare notes. The instructor might stop lecturing immediately after covering a crucial concept and have students read each others' notes, filling in the gaps in their own note-taking.**			
13-	**Let's cheat:** **Before the lecture, each student is given a worksheet that lists about 12 questions which pertain to the presentation. Make the questions a mix of difficult to easy. The students walk around the room and ask other people what they think are the answers to the questions.**			

14-	**Index cards:** **Students use index cards for writing important facts, words, points or questions on each card. One item per card. After the presentation , students can review their cards in groups, and exchange questions and answers.**			
15-	**Pass it:** **After ten minutes of lecture , students write down a question or a fact they just learned on an index card. After few minutes students can process the information the instructor just said.**			
16-	**Quiz/ Test Questions:** **The students are asked to become actively involved in operating quizzes and tests by constructing some (or all)of the questions for the exams.**			
17-	**Games:** **There are many games used in TEFL like jeopardy and crossword puzzles which can be adapted to course material and used for review, for assignments, or for exam.**			
18-	**Similes, Analogies, and metaphors:** **Creative thinking can be stimulated by having students comparing something they just learned using one of these forms of figurative language.**			
19-	**Calling on the next speaker:** **It requires starting the discussion by asking for an interpretation. The first speaker selects the next speaker continuing by selecting each speaker the next, until the discussion is complete.**			
20-	**Guided note-taking:** **The students are delivered a pre-completed handout that summarizes the key points of the following lecture. Just provide the major points , topics, or ideas as well as fill in the blank statements or paragraphs with missing words .**			
21-	**Lecture Summary:** **Students summarize a lecture .**			
22-	**Story-telling:** **It is a presentation of story or event by teacher or students .It may be used to maintain attention, motivation, or as lengthy practice.**			
23-	**Review:** **Students review the entire weeks class material or all the materials before a test or quiz each other or each group develops questions to ask other groups.**			
24-	**Students-led review sessions:** **Instead of the traditional instructor- led review session, the students do the work.**			
25-	**Three minutes review:** **Instructor stops any time during a lecture or discussion and gives teams three minutes to review what has been said, ask, clarify questions or answer questions.**			

A Questionnaire for Evaluating the Use of Active Learning Strategies

No.	Metacognitive Active Learning Strategies	Always used	Sometime used	Never used

1-	**Response to a demonstration:** The students are asked to write a paragraph that begins with :I was surprised that …..I learned that….I wonder about…..This will allow the students to reflect on what they actually got out of the teachers' presentation.			
2-	**Learning log:** It requires each student to maintain a daily class journal.			
3-	**Learning Contracts:** It requires the individual students to perform self-directed study. Allow each student to select a topic for research and draw up a research plan .			
4-	**Compare and Contrast:** It requires the students to take two or more ideas and find the similarities and the differences .			
5-	**Analyzing Case Study:** Case studies are detailed accounts of specific situations about core issues that offer dilemmas, problems to solve and decisions to make.			
6-	**Concept mapping:** Students create visual representation models , ideas, and relationship between concepts.			
7-	**Report:** Students prepare exposition on books , experiences, project work, without immediate stimulus, and elaborate on according to students interests.			
8-	**Composition:** As in the report (verbal), composition is written. There should be a development of ideas, story, or other exposition.			
9-	**Information transfer:** Application from one model(e.g.,visual) to another(e.g., writing) , which involves some transformation of the information like students fill out diagram while listening to description.			
10-	**Problem Solving:** It requires the students to work in groups through a situation from beginning to end to solve the problem.			

A Questionnaire for Evaluating the Use of Active Learning Strategies

No.	Communication Active Learning Strategies	Always used	Sometime used	Never used
1-	**Think- pair –share:** This strategy engages students with the material at an individual level, in pairs, and finally as a large group.			
2-	**Write-pair- share:** The format of this strategy is identical to think-pair-share ,except that students process the question asked for them by writing about it rather than reflecting.			
3-	**Note check:** Students pair up with someone nearby and compare their notes , focusing on summarizing key information and locating misconceptions.			

4-	Question and answer pairs (learning cell): Pairs of students practice asking and answering challenging questions. Student A poses a question based on the information presented in the lecture and student B answers. Then roles are reversed.			
5-	A class discussion: Learners should be prepared to discuss materials in class and this would be a good follow- up activity given the unit has been sufficiently covered already.			
6-	Learning by teaching(peer teaching) : It allows the students to teach the new content to each other, and they must be accurately guided by instructors.			
7-	Take a guess: Before the lecture, students pair up(triads are okay)and create a list of three to six important facts about the topic which they think it will be discussed in the lecture.			
8-	Let's cheat: Before the lecture, each students is given a worksheet that lists about 12 questions which pertain to the presentation. Make the questions a mix of difficult to easy. The instructor directs them to walk around the room and ask other people what they think are the answers to the questions.			
9-	Index cards: Students use index card writing important facts, words, points or questions on each card. One item per card. After the presentation , students can review their cards in groups, and exchange questions and answers.			
10-	Partners: Team students work in pairs to master content. They consult with partners from other teams. They then share their products or understanding with the other partner pair in their team.			
11-	Note Comparison: Having students' model good note-taking is to have them occasionally compare notes, The instructor might stop lecturing immediately after covering a crucial concept and have students read each others' notes, filling in the gaps in their own note-taking.			
12-	Pair shares: During or at the end of a lecture period, students do a pair share by asking students to turn to a neighbor and tell him/her things learned in the last minutes.			
13-	Ask a point of view: After presenting an idea or the topic, the students are asked to explain their points of view.			
14-	Open discussion: The lecture starts with open discussion of the subject matter without prearranged positions.			
15-	Sub group discussion: Groups of students discuss the subject matter.			

16-	**Fishbowl:** **The instructor forms a small group in a discussion circle with a large listening circle around the outside. Rotate discussion by bringing new groups with new topics into the center.**			
17-	**Problem Solving:** **It requires from the students to work in groups through a situation from beginning to end to solve the problem.**			
18-	**Review:** **Have students review the entire weeks class material or all the materials before a test or have them quiz each other or have each group develop questions to ask other groups.**			
19-	**Computer Models :** **They are usually pre-packages software that allows students to play scenarios and to see the repercussions of their actions. It is an artificial environment that provides realistic interactions.**			
20-	**Role Playing:** **It involves providing groups of students with a "character" and allowing them to act out the characters attitudes and responses to situations.**			
21-	**Debate:** **Students think on their feet by countering arguments from the opposing side.**			
22-	**Three step interview:** **Students are first paired and take turns in interviewing each other using a series of questions provided by the instructor .Pairs then match up and students introduce their original partner .Finally all four students have their position or viewpoints on an issue heard ,digested , and described by their peers.**			
23-	**Team Pair Solo:** **Students do problems first as a team, then with a partner, and finally on their own.**			
24-	**Producing a newsletter:** **Small group of students produce a brief newsletter on a specific topic related to the class.**			
25-	**Simulation:** **This activity involves complex interaction between groups and individuals based on simulation of real life actions and experience.**			
26-	**A propos:** **It is a conversation or other socially oriented interaction/ speech by teacher, students, or even visitor, on general real life topics.**			
27-	**Roundtable:** **A question is posed by a group leader, teacher , or another participant. Each group member writes one answer on paper that's passed around the group. Each group presents their answer to the entire class.**			

28-	Jigsaw teamwork: Set a group of five students, each group member is assigned unique material to learn and then to teach to his group. Students working on the same subsection get together to decide what is important and how to teach it. Then the original groups reform and students teach each other.			
29-	Corners: The leader of the day places content(or flipchart with questions) in each corner of the room. Groups of 3-6 students move from corner to corner and discuss answers to each posed question .			
30-	Numbered Heads Together: Students work in groups, a group member asks a question ,then others in the group put heads together and make sure everyone knows the answer. The question asker picks one from the group to answer the question.			
31-	Ten –Two strategy: Presenter shares information for ten minutes and then stop for two minutes to encourage listeners to pair and share their ideas , fill in any gaps or misunderstanding, and allow each other to clarify information.			

A Questionnaire for Evaluating the Use of Active Learning Strategies

No.	Socio- affective Active Learning Strategies	Always used	Sometime used	Never used
1-	Service learning: It is experiential method which places students in a situation where they are required to help out and solve problems but which also requires them to have a certain amount of understanding and empathy.			
2-	Debate: Students think on their feet by countering arguments from the opposing side.			
3-	Mini research , or project: Students work on designing a research on topic from the class.			
4-	Drama: It is a planned dramatic rendition of play, skit, story, etc.			
5-	Story-telling: It is a presentation of story or event by teacher or students .It may be used to maintain attention, motivation, or as lengthy practice.			
6-	A propos: It is a conversation or other socially oriented interaction/ speech by teacher, students, or even visitor, on general real life topics.			
7-	Field Experience: Put the students into the environment where they are completing a project. It means outdoor work to collect data.			

8-	**Simulation:** **This activity involves complex interaction between groups and individuals based on simulation of real life actions and experience.**			

الملخص

ان التطور السريع وتنامي المعلومات الثرة و التكنلوجيا له عدة تطبيقات في مجالات عدةوفي مستويات عدة من التعلم. لذلك ،في الكلية حاجة لأعداد الطلبة بمستوى عال من الكفاءةوهذا بالتاكيد يتطلب اشراكهم بفعالية في عملية التعلم.ان فشل المشاركة الفاعلة للطلاب ربما يعود الى كثرة اعتماد اساتذة الكليات على طريقة المحاضرة كطريقة تدريس.

اهداف الدراسة هي تقييم استخدام الاستراتيجيات المفعلة للتعليم الفعال بوساطة الاساتذة العراقيين للغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية وتحديد الفروقات بينهما تبعا لمتغير الجنس.

عينة الدراسة متكونة من الاساتذة في الجامعة المستنصرية وجامعة بغداد خلال السنة الدراسية2010–2011 والمتكونة من 48 تدريسي.اداة البحث هي الاستبيان والذي تكون من 74 فقرة موزعة على اربعة مجالات، معرفي ،فوق معرفي،تواصلي،اجتماعي– مؤثر .بعد الحصول على صدق وثبات الاداة سلمت للعينة لغرض الاجابة عليها.

اظهرت النتائج الاتي:

1–معظم استرتيجيات التعلم الفعال لم تستخدم بصورة مقبولة من قبل الاساتذة.

2–الجنس لم يكن مؤثر في استخدام استراتيجيات التعلم الفعال.

في ضوء النتائج المستخلصة،وضعت بعض الاستنتاجات والتوصيات والمقترحات.

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