



L1 and L2 secondary teachers' perceptions of the use of instructional strategies in Lebanon's public schools

Hanadi S. Mirza ^{a *}, Hanan M. Halabi ^b

^a Faculty of Pedagogy, Lebanese University, Beirut, Lebanon

^b Faculty of Pedagogy, Lebanese University, Beirut, Lebanon

Abstract

This study explores how language teachers in public schools in Lebanon perceive and utilize various instructional strategies designed to equip secondary students with the skills they need in the 21st century. Participants included 38 Arabic, 21 English, and 22 French language teachers with various experiences in teaching in public schools across Lebanon. Data were collected through a survey questionnaire containing closed-ended and open-ended questions about items related to 9 commonly used instructional strategies. The analysis of the qualitative data revealed that the three groups of teachers shared somewhat similar preferences for the 3 most commonly-used student-centered instructional strategy. However, different teachers of different languages favored different strategies. Problem solving was mainly used by teachers of French (40.9%), classroom discussion by teachers of English (71.4%), and cooperative learning by Arabic teachers (63.2%). Cross tabulation analysis and Pearson Chi-Square were performed to analyze the quantitative data using SPSS (V. 20). Results show that there are no significant differences among the percentages of the 3 groups of language teachers and (a) their use of instructional strategies, and (b) their years of teaching experience except for the field trip (sig= 0.028).

Keywords: secondary teachers; Arabic language; French language; English language; instructional strategies; 21st century skills

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1. Introduction

Teachers are seen as agents of change in society and therefore are directly involved in the mental, emotional, and physical development of children. To perform their essential work, teachers today rely on two main types of teaching approaches: student-centered and teacher-directed (Stipek & Byler, 2005). The student-centered approach, which is based on constructivist theory, emphasizes the role of children as

* Halabi H. Hanan. Tel.: +9613953262
E-mail address: halaby_h@hotmail.com

active constructors of knowledge. Thus, the teacher's role is to create a learning environment that facilitates learning, and encourage children to explore and develop new cognitive skills. Moreover, to enhance learning, teachers should create and utilize activities that foster problem-solving skills, promote classroom interaction, and encourage children to create new ideas. Some instructional strategies (Eggen & Kauchak, 2006) utilized in the student-center approach are problem solving, project based learning, cooperative learning, role playing, presentation, field trip, and research based learning.

The second approach, the teacher-directed approach is based on behaviorism and emphasizes passing on knowledge directly from instructor to learners and the use of repetition. Thus children are mostly passive in the classroom and learning is seen as a reaction to environmental stimuli (Daniels & Shumow, 2003). Some instructional strategies used in teacher-centered instruction are lecturing and discussion. As for the teaching and learning approaches followed in Lebanon, there is a complex language learning environment. Due to Arabic diglossia, students who speak vernacular in their daily life, study modern standard Arabic as their native language (L1), in addition to French or English as a foreign language. Lebanon has also a system of education established by early missionaries in which many schools and universities, mostly in the private system, have English or French as language of instruction.

1.1. Preferred instructional strategies

Language teachers face many challenges such as deciding on an instructional strategy, designing content, and promoting classroom interactions that are relevant to the subject they teach. Since a teacher's ability to effectively use instructional strategies depends on his/her training and teaching experiences, language teachers may be more or less effective in teaching the target language in different learning environments, such as in classrooms where English or French are taught as a foreign language, while Arabic is the native language.

1.2. Native versus nonnative language teachers

When teaching their native language to students, teachers may have greater confidence in their ability to answer questions, use various instructional strategies and set more ambitious goals for themselves and for the students. However, language teachers may feel less comfortable experimenting with other instructional strategies and feel less able to take on challenges when the language is a foreign language.

The differences between native and nonnative speaking language teachers were well examined and documented in previous research. In a study that investigates the different teaching behaviors of native and nonnative teachers, Arva and Medgyes (2000) found differences between the two groups in three aspects of teaching: use of English, general attitude toward teaching, and choice of instructional strategies of teaching the language. It was concluded that native English-speaking teachers with superior command of the language tended to give fewer tests and homework, preferred to use less-structured activities, such as group work, and were more flexible in their choice of materials. In contrast, their nonnative counterparts preferred more controlled activities, such as a translation exercise or drills, and adopted a more guided approach to teaching that required a textbook and regular homework. However, native teachers seem to be

less committed to teaching and less empathic to students whereas nonnative teachers were more cautious and stricter in teaching and had more realistic expectations of their students' progress.

1.3.21st Century learning skills

The 21st century skills are subdivided into four major categories, one of them is also called innovative skills (Fisher & Frey, 2010). These categories include creative thinking skills, critical thinking skills, collaborative skills and communicative skills. They are essential to prepare students for the more complex life and for the more demanding and competitive work environment that characterize the 21st century.

1.3.1. Creative thinking skills

Corpuz (2007) states that a creative thinker manifests the following characteristics: Awareness, Curiosity, Imagination, Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, Elaboration and Perseverance. She adds that awareness is the ability to notice the attributes of all elements of the environment to build a knowledge foundation that will support all other forms of creative thinking.

1.3.2. Critical thinking skills

According to Corpuz (2007) critical thinking is a process that includes verification, analysis and interpretation. Duyer (2014) shows the importance of developing critical thinking among 21st century students. Instruction in critical thinking is becoming exceedingly important because it allows individuals to gain a more complex understanding of the information they find and promotes good decision-making and problem-solving skills (Duyer, 2014; Corpuz, 2007). Several studies were conducted to measure and develop creative thinking among students. For instance, Vijayaratnam (2009) found that adopting critical thinking tasks centered on instructional strategies that emphasize cooperative learning helps improve social relationships among students who do team work.

1.3.3. Communication skills

Corpuz (2007) states that communication skills can be either verbal or non-verbal. Since words are the source of understanding in communication, students should have the ability to use words meaningfully in order to interact with each other. Abdulla (2013) investigated ways of enhancing oral communication skills by using pair work activities in an English language classroom of young learners in the UAE. Findings reveal that these tasks are an effective instructional strategies which provides students with opportunities to learn the target language in a meaningful way. It was also noted that using pair work helps to improve young learners' oral communication skills.

1.3.4. Collaborative skills

The National Research Council NRC (2011) outlined several reasons to include collaboration as a key 21st century skill. First, today there is a growing emphasis on project and enquiry-based learning. This conclusion is based on research that shows that

collaboration has influential effects on student learning and knowledge retention. Secondly, there is an increasing need for students to be able to apply their knowledge and problem-solving skills in social settings (OECD, 2013).

1.4. Contemporary instructional strategies

For several years, instructional strategies have been developing from simple to a more complex practices where the focus shifted from the teacher as the source of knowledge to the student as the focus of learning. Moreover, because of this new teaching pedagogy, teachers are being challenged to adopt new instructional strategies that answer to the increasing needs of 21st century learners.

There are several main instructional strategies such as inquiry-based, cooperative, and discussion-based strategies from which several sub-categories are derived. Nine commonly used instructional strategies are briefly detailed below.

1.4.1. Problem-based learning

A study by Fatade, Mogari, and Arigbabu (2013) investigates the effect of problem-based learning (PBL) on students' achievements in senior secondary school. The researchers found that there were statistically significant differences in the mean post-test achievement scores of students who had been exposed to PBL as opposed to those who had not. PBL learning requires that students address complex and challenging problems and work collaboratively to solve them. Problem-based learning also requires that students connect the knowledge of a specific discipline, for example, history, to real-world problems. In PBL, the motivation to solve a problem becomes the motivation to learn (Savery, 2016).

1.4.2. Discussion based instructional strategy

Kidd (2002) defined discussion as a form of structured argument. Two sides speak alternately pro and against a particular, usually current controversial topics. Zare and Othman (2013) found that using classroom discussion as a teaching/learning approach has many advantages to learners, such as promoting critical thinking skills, helping students master the course content, and improving the students' speaking abilities.

1.4.3. Project-based learning

Project work is a progress-based instructional strategy that effectively meets the requirements of the modern educational system. It is considered a strategy that naturally increases motivation because by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to a complex question, problem, or challenge, students gain new knowledge and skills (Carroll, Goldman, Britos, Koh, Royalty, & Hornstein, 2010).

1.4.4. Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning is a type of group work in which students work in small groups and are encouraged to work together to maximize their own and each other's learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2008). While many teachers agree that there at times they should implement a different goal structure, research conducted by Johnson and Johnson (1995) indicates that students participating in a cooperative learning environment perform as well or better than students who participate in a competitive and

individualistic learning environment, particularly in terms of achievement and attitudes toward learning.

1.4.5. Role play

During role play, students use their own experiences to perform a real-life situation. When properly used, a role play activity increases students' self-confidence, give them the opportunity to understand other people's viewpoints or situations, and usually brings about practical answers, solutions or guidelines on how to deal with a given situation (Klug, Bruder, Kelava, Spiel, & Schmitz, 2013).

1.4.6. Field trip

Field trip, which is also called instructional trip, school excursion, or school journey, is defined by Krepel and Duvall (1981) as a school or class trip with an educational goal during which students interact with the location, actions, and exhibitions to connect directly with new ideas, concepts and subjects, i.e., a type of experiential learning. Tal and Morag (2009) described field trips as activities in which students have a learning experience outside the classroom at locations that offer interactive activities designed for educational purposes.

1.4.7. Research based learning

Research based learning is a strategy used in inquiry-based instruction. It is seen as based on a constructivist approach to education and is supported by theorists and psychologists such as Jean Piaget (Mayer, 2004).

1.4.8. Lecture

The lecture is a traditional strategy in which an oral presentation is delivered by the teacher. The teacher relays factual information related to his/her area such as principles, concepts, ideas and the theoretical information about the topic s/he is teaching. (Kaur, 2011).

1.4.9. Presentation

The instructional strategy of using student presentations as a way to present content to the class can be a fun and engaging strategy of instruction. Presentations not only help students learn the material in a deeper manner but also provide them with practice in public speaking. This instructional strategy can be a largely passive experience for the student's audience; the student presenting the topic is actively engaged, thus demonstrating a high level of understanding of the materials he/she is presenting (Bennett, 2018).

2. Study Objectives and Research Questions

2.1. Purpose of the study

This study will explore how secondary language teachers in public schools in Lebanon perceive and evaluate the effectiveness of various modern instructional strategies designed to equip students with the necessary 21st century skills. This study will also investigate which strategies are most-commonly used to teach the three main languages of instruction, which are also widely spoken, in Lebanon.

2.2. Research questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Which instructional strategies are most-commonly used by secondary language teachers in public schools in Lebanon?
2. To what extent do secondary language teachers in public schools in Lebanon (L1, FFL, and ESL) differ in their choice and use of instructional strategies in their language classes?
3. To what extent do the instructional strategies language teachers use contribute to develop the 21st century skills of secondary students?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

Eighty-one (81) language teachers teaching at the secondary level in public schools in Lebanon agreed to participate in this study. Participants included 38 teachers of Arabic, 21 teachers of English, and 22 teachers of French with various years of teaching experience (2–7 year of practice). All the participant teachers had been enrolled in an in-service teacher preparation program known as CAPES (Certificat s'aptitude au professorat de l'enseignement du second degre) offered by the Faculty of Pedagogy at the Lebanese University. Participant teachers work and live in different Lebanese regions and attend meetings at the faculty three days a week.

3.2. Data collection

A mixed model analysis was used to study the research problems. Data were collected using a survey with closed-ended and open-ended questions investigating the participants' perceptions of the various instructional strategies they use in their secondary language classrooms. Teachers were asked to answer how often they use each of the 9 most common instructional strategies and explain the reasons why they have chosen them. The research questionnaire included 9 instructional strategies measured with a 3 points Lickert Scale. In addition, at the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked whether they planned to use a specific teaching strategy they had not used before and to justify their choice for that strategy.

3.3. Data analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 to compute Pearson Chi-Square and cross tabulations to attempt to show whether the 3 groups of teachers chose to use different instructional strategies, and how their years of experience affect their choices. The qualitative data were coded and categorized before being analyzed. The answers to the survey questions guided the coding process.

4.Results and Discussion

The findings from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis are discussed below.

A closer look at the results will show that the statistical significance was higher than 0.05 in all instructional strategies except for field trip.

4.1.Use of lecturing as an instructional strategy

Results indicate that 18.4% of EFL teachers never use lecturing as an instructional strategy. They believe that lecturing is boring to their students since it does not allow them to practice and test their language skills. However, 81.8% of French language teachers offered that they sometimes use lecturing, particularly when they do not have enough time to cover the curriculum especially the section on writing. 10.5% of L1 teachers believe that lecturing should always be used in their classes since it can help students understand the materials in a limited period of time.

4.2.Use of problem-solving as instructional strategy

Results show no statistical significance in the use of problem-solving ($\text{sig} = 0.664$) by the participant language teachers. Most L1, EFL, and FFL teachers agreed that problem-solving is a useful classroom strategy. However, 34.2% of L1 teachers believe that problem-solving is not adequate to their classes, particularly instructors of Arabic who claim that the strategy does not apply to teaching Arabic. However, 40.9% of FFL teachers believe the opposite, for them problem-solving should be widely used in class since it clearly enhances their students' critical thinking skills. French teachers also believe that problem-solving can help students acquire and retain knowledge more effectively. Nevertheless, 47.6% of EFL teachers say that they use problem-solving sometimes, depending on the topic they are teaching.

4.3.Use of project as an instructional strategy

The 0.889 result indicates that there was no statistically significant difference in the responses of the L1, EFL, and FFL teachers regarding the use of project as a teaching strategy. As the percentages indicate, 22.7% of FFL teachers have never used project as an instructional strategy. FFL teachers claim that they do not have the necessary support from their administrators to implement the strategy in their classrooms, while others do not think that using project as an instructional strategy is applicable to teaching languages. On the other hand, 78.9% of L1 teachers may use the strategy

sometimes. For these teachers, project helps to build student self-confidence, encourages collaboration and motivates learners to work when it is effectively implemented in class.

4.4. Use of cooperative learning as an instructional strategy

As mentioned above, 63.2% of L1 teachers prefer to use cooperative learning in their classrooms. For these teachers cooperative learning is an effective way to improve the performance of weaker students since they interact with other students who are ready to share their knowledge and are eager to encourage weaker students to participate in the activities. Cooperative learning motivates students to actively participate in class and develop social skills. The percentage of EFL teachers who use cooperative learning sometimes is of 52.4%. EFL teachers find that before using this cooperative learning, students have to develop the ability to accept classmates who are different from them and to learn from their peers. 4.5% of FFL teachers believe the strategy is difficult to implement because of time constraints. There were no clear statistical differences between language teachers since all participants tended to use cooperative learning in a similar manner ($p = 0.509$).

4.5. Use of discussion as an instructional strategy

Discussion is clearly another preferred strategy. 71.4% of EFL teachers always use discussion in their classroom. For them, discussion helps students express their ideas and develop their critical thinking skills. EFL teachers also think that discussion motivates students and makes learning easier and more engaging. EFL teachers claimed that they noticed that discussion improves their students' verbal skills. 45.5% of FFL teachers use discussion sometimes since they think that discussion is a means to help their students to accept each other's opinions. FFL teachers believe that discussion is especially helpful to start a new lesson. Only 4.5% of FFL teachers said that they do not use discussion at all in their classes and provided no justification for their answer. Moreover, the Pearson Chi Square test does not indicate any statistical significance in the participants' responses ($p = 0.293$).

4.6. Use of role play as an instructional strategy

Results indicate that 31.8% of FFL teachers never use role play in their classrooms. Some FFL teachers claim that their students are not well trained to role play in class due to poor language proficiency. In addition, other FFL teachers believe that role play is not an appropriate strategy to use in their class because of their students' age. Nevertheless, 14.3% of EFL teachers believe the opposite and always use this role play in their classrooms and say that role play motivates students to learn. As for L1 teachers, 81.6% of them use role play sometimes in their Arabic language classrooms. L1 teachers think role playing is particularly useful to teach a number of topics and that the strategy helps their students develop their emotional and physical skills. For L1 teachers, role play helps students discover their talents, in addition to making learning fun. The statistical significance of 0.179 was higher than 0.05, thus indicating that there are no major

differences in the participants' responses since they tend to use role play in a similar manner.

4.7. Use of presentation as an instructional strategy

No significant differences were noticeable in the participants' responses since they tend to use presentation as a strategy similarly ($p = 0.933$). 14.3% of EFL teachers believe that presentation is a strategy they cannot use in their classes due to time constraints. However, 28.6% of the respondents in the same group believe the opposite. This group of EFL teachers believe that students are motivated to learn more as a result of doing presentations. Among the FFL teachers, 68.2% of them use presentations sometimes since they believe that the strategy enhances students' verbal and kinaesthetic skills. However, 9.1% of the respondents reported that they prefer to do the presentations themselves; they did not justify their responses.

4.8. Use of field trip as an instructional strategy

About 81.8% of FFL teachers never use field trip because they say they have no funds to do so. The participants claimed that the Ministry of Education along with the public schools administration are responsible for organizing field trips in their school. Therefore, field trips in their schools are very infrequent. As for L1 teachers, 52.6% of them said that they are able to organize field trip sometimes. Some of the L1 teachers claimed that their school's administrations do not encourage the use of field trip as an instructional strategy. Moreover, only 5.3% of the L1 teachers said that they always use field trips since it encourages students to discover new information and learn by themselves. According to the results, there was no statistical significance in the use of field trip among L1, EFL, and FFL teachers ($\text{sig} = 0.028$)

4.9. Use of research based learning as an instructional strategy

The statistical significance of research based learning, does not show significant differences in the responses of L1, EFL, and FFL teachers concerning the use of this strategy ($p = 0.697$). According to the percentages, 57.1% of EFL teachers never use research based learning in teaching English as a foreign language. EFL teachers believe that the research based strategy is applicable to science classes and is not useful in the language classroom. On the other hand, 45.5% of FFL teachers tend to use research based learning sometimes in their classrooms. They believe that research based learning helps students discover and explore new information by themselves. Other FFL teachers claim that they do not have enough time to use research based activities in their classroom. Among the teachers who always use research based learning, only 13.2% of L1 teachers believe that this strategy encourages students to think about and explore new ideas.

4.10. Instructional strategies to be used in the classroom

Participant language teachers were also asked whether there were any other instructional strategies they use in their classrooms. 66% of them answered no and 34%

of them answered yes. Participants in this group mentioned that they use other instructional strategies such as computer-assisted learning and brainstorming. Another question participants were asked was the following: "Which of these instructional strategies you have never used in your classroom but plan to use in the future and why?" 45% of the participants answered that they plan to use field trips; 5% said they will eventually use role playing; 8% answered that they plan to include presentations; 6% said they will use the problem-based strategy; 1% mentioned discussion; 1% the project-based strategy, 7% mentioned computer-assisted learning; 2% answered they will use cooperative learning; and 24% did not respond to this question. 76% of the participant teachers emphasized the importance of using various instructional strategies in the language classroom.

4.11. Most preferred instructional strategies

It was observed that there is not any statistical significance in the participants' response concerning the use of a preferred instructional strategy. However, the percentages show that 64.2% of participants prefer to use discussion, while 54.3% prefer to use cooperative learning in their classrooms. Moreover, 34.6% of the participants use problem-solving in their classes. They believe that discussion helps students share ideas and knowledge in addition to enhancing their own knowledge of the subject matter. Participants in this group also added that discussion teaches students to respect each other's opinions and points of view. Some others believe that cooperative learning helps to build team spirit in addition to helping weaker students, who participate in productive and encouraging groups, learn from their classmates. For them, problem-solving encourages curiosity and enthusiasm among learners. This group also believes that problem-solving helps to enhance students thinking skills and makes them more knowledgeable of the subject matter.

4.12. Least preferred instructional strategies

As for the least preferred instructional strategies, 48.1% of the secondary language teachers in public schools in Lebanon believe that research based learning is never used in their classes. In addition, 59.3% of them prefer not to use field trips while 23.5% of the same group do not encourage using role playing instructional strategy. They believe that these instructional strategies are never used in their classes because public schools lack the funds necessary for field trips. They also believe that secondary students are old enough for the role playing instructional strategy, and that research based learning is not suitable for the subject they are teaching.

Sections 4.11 and 4.12 address research question 1.

4.13. Overall percentages of the language teachers using different instructional strategies

The table below shows the percentages of official high school language teachers implementing different instructional strategies in their classes.

Table 1: Language Teachers Using Different Instructional strategies

	Never	Sometimes	Always	Statistical Significance
Lecture	14.8%	75.3%	9.9%	0.168
Problem solving	27.2%	38.3%	34.6%	0.664
Discussion	1.2%	34.6%	64.2%	0.293
Role playing	23.5%	70.4%	6.2%	0.179
Project	17.3%	76.5%	6.2%	0.889
Cooperative learning	2.5%	43.2%	54.2%	0.509
Presentation	12.3%	64.2%	23.5%	0.933
Field Trip	59.3%	37%	3.7%	0.028
Research based learning	48.1%	42%	9.9%	0.697

According to Table 1 above, 14.8% of L1, EFL, and FFL teachers never use lectures in their secondary classes. However, 75.3% and 9.9% of the participants sometimes and always use lecturing respectively. As for problem solving, results show that 27.2% of the language teachers never use this instructional strategy in their classes while 38.3% and 34.6% of the same group sometimes and always use it respectively. As for the use of discussion in class, 1.2% of teachers never use it, 34.6% of them sometimes use it, and 64.2% of them always use discussion as an instructional strategy in their daily classes. As for role playing, results show that 23.5% of the participants never use it, 70.4% of them sometimes use it while 6.2% of them always use it in their classes. Results also show that 17.3% of the L1 and L2 teachers never use projects in their classes while 76.5% of them sometimes use it and 6.2% of the same group always use this instructional strategy. As for cooperative learning, results were as the following: 2.5% of the participants never use this instructional strategy, 43.2% of them sometimes use it while 54.2% of them tend to use this strategy all the time. Moreover, 12.3% of the secondary language teachers never use presentation in their classes while 64.2% and 23.5% of them sometimes and always use this instructional strategy respectively. As for the field trip,

results show that 59.3%, 37%, and 3.7% of these teachers never, sometimes, and always use this instructional strategy respectively. In addition, 48.1% of language teachers use research based learning as an instructional strategy in their classes while 42% and 9.9% of the same population sometimes and always use this instructional strategy respectively.

5. Discussions and Conclusion

5.1 *Research question 1*

Research question 1 was as follows: Which instructional strategies are most-commonly used by secondary language teachers in public schools in Lebanon?

It was observed that there is no statistical significance in the participants' response concerning the use of a preferred instructional strategy. However, the percentages show that 64.2% of participants prefer to use discussion, while 54.3% prefer to use cooperative learning in their classrooms. Moreover, 34.6% of the participants use problem-solving in their classes. They believe that discussion, which is essential to problem-solving, encourages the sharing of ideas and knowledge in addition to enhancing students' knowledge of the subject matter. Participants in this group also believe that discussion teaches students to respect each other's opinions and points of view. Others see cooperative learning as a means to build team spirit and help weaker students since they have the opportunity to participate in productive groups and thus learn from their classmates. They also see problem-solving as a means to encourage curiosity and enthusiasm among learners and to enhance students' thinking skills.

As for the least preferred instructional strategies, 48.1% of the secondary language teachers in public schools in Lebanon stated that research-based learning is never used in their classes. A high percentage, i.e., 59.3% of teachers, prefer not to use field trips, they also added that one of the reasons for that is the lack of public schools funding and support. 23.5% of teachers in the same group do not use role playing in their classes because they think that secondary students are too old to perform role playing. They also indicated that research-based learning is not suitable for the subject they are teaching. Thus, these findings answer Research Question 1.

5.2 *Research question 2*

The second research question was: To what extent do secondary language teachers in public schools in Lebanon (L1, FFL, and EFL) differ in their choice and use of instructional strategies in their language classes?

No significant differences were noticeable in the participants' responses regarding the 9 most commonly used instructional strategies under study. However, the frequency of instructional strategies varied in L1, EFL, and FFL secondary classes.

The 3 groups of language teachers differed in their use of instructional strategies as follows. PBL, which according to Fatade, Mogari, and Arigbabu (2013), helps students develop their critical thinking skills, was used by FL teachers more than L1 teachers. While problem solving was mainly used by teachers of French (40.9%), classroom discussion, which Zare and Othman (2013) found particularly effective in secondary schools' language classrooms was the preferred strategy of English teachers (71.4%).

Cooperative learning in their classrooms, which clearly helps students build social skills and develop a positive self-image, is the preferred strategy of Arabic teachers (63.2%). These positive results on cooperative learning are aligned with those found by Johnson and Johnson (2008). Among the teachers who always use project as an instructional strategy, 9.5% of EFL teachers find that using projects empowers students. However, the use of project-based learning is somewhat limited in the secondary classes in Lebanese public schools as opposed to the findings by Carroll et al. (2010). Most secondary language teachers do not invest time in role playing, a result that differs from the findings by Klug et al. (2013). However, 14.3% of EFL teachers always use role play in their classrooms because they are convinced that it motivates students to learn. As for the use of presentation, 68.2% of FFL teachers use presentations sometimes since they believe that they enhance students' verbal and kinaesthetic skills in addition to actively engaging them (Bennett, 2018). Among the teachers who always use research-based learning, only 13.2% of L1 teachers believe that it encourages students to think about and explore new ideas. For this minority, research-based learning contributes to enhancing students' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are studying (Mayer, 2004). Field trip is the least preferred instructional strategies and thus counters the findings by Krepel and Duvall (1981). As for using lecture, 81.8% of French language teachers offered that they sometimes resort to lecturing, particularly when they do not have enough time to cover the curriculum especially during sections devoted to writing. As indicated by Kaur (2011) they rely on lecturing mostly to teach some specific concepts or principles.

Thus, the discussion and results aforementioned answer Research Question 2.

5.3 Research question 3

Research question 3 addressed the following point: To what extent the instructional strategies used by language teachers contribute to developing the essential 21st century skills for secondary students?

Teachers play a crucial role in understanding student learning and in selecting and utilizing instructional strategies that can move the learning process from surface learning to deep learning, from teacher-directed to student-centered teaching (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). Thus, in order to improve the quality of learning, teachers should strive to utilize a wide range of effective instructional strategies in the classroom.

Aside from lecturing, which is a traditional teacher-centered strategy, the results in Table 1 show that 75% of the language teachers participating in this study tend to use various student-centered instructional strategies in their classrooms either "sometimes" or "always." The strategies they utilize have been shown to benefit learners in previous research on the benefits of specific instructional strategies such as PSL (Fatade, Mogari & Arigbabu, 2013); discussion (Zare & Othman, 2013); role playing (Klug et al., 2013); project-based learning (Carroll et al., 2010); cooperative learning (Krange & Ludvigsen, 2008); presentation (Bennett, 2018); and research-based learning.

The results of this study indicate that most of the instructional strategies used in Arabic, French, and English language classrooms that follow the official Lebanese curriculum for secondary schools are student-centered, an approach that has proved to enhance students' skills for the 21st century, also referred to as the 4Cs: creativity

thinking and communication skills (Corpuz, 2007), critical thinking skills (Vijayaratham, 2009), and collaboration skills (OECD, 2013). Therefore, the findings listed in this section answer Research Question 3.

This study's findings highlight the importance of using student-centered instructional strategies in secondary L1, FFL, and EFL classes.

There are two main reasons to incentivize the implementation of student-centered learning in secondary language classrooms at Lebanon's public schools. First, student-centered learning reflects the reality of how students learn regardless of how they are taught, an essential paradigm of cognitive and socio-constructivist psychology and related theories which have proven more effective in addressing issues in contemporary education and are, therefore, the predominant approach to educational psychology. Conversely, when teacher-centered learning dominates, behaviorist psychology, which is the subject of various critiques, becomes the educational paradigm. Both cognitive and socio-constructivist studies about how learning takes place stress the fact that teachers cannot pour knowledge into students' heads; the students themselves should actively construct their own knowledge. Furthermore, learning is not necessarily based on information, the emotions of learners also play a role in this process. Similarly, teachers alone are not capable of motivating students to be lifelong learners, instead they should offer students learning opportunities that foster intrinsic motivation. Thus, by aligning their instructional practices with strategies used in student-centered learning, teachers are better able to engage with the practical realities of how students actually learn.

The second reason for encouraging student-centered learning is that research has indicated that it is a process that better helps to provide students with 21st Century skills so they can face the personal and societal challenges posed by modern life. The focus of student-centered learning on lifelong learning, thinking skills, managing diversity in intercultural environments and on the social nature of learning has the potential to empower students and make them conscientious of their role in the process of shaping the future so that we can co-exist with and preserve the health of our planet in order to thrive.

It is highly recommended that researchers study the use of instructional strategies not only in public schools but also in private ones. Future research should also include the students' perspective on the effective use of various instructional strategies in developing their Arabic, English and/or French languages.

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