Effectiveness of Implementing Active Learning Strategies in Enhancing EFL Learners' Motivation, Attitudes, Aptitudes and Skills

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ABSTRACT: *This study aimed at investigating the effect of implementing active learning strategies in enhancing EFL learners' motivation, attitudes, aptitudes and skills. To achieve the objective of this study, the researchers attempted to answer these questions: 1- What do the students in the English classroom need to learn? 2- Will the active learning strategies help students promoting their language skills? 3- Will the designed activities help maximizing students' participation and interaction in the classroom? 4- To what extent do active learning strategies affect English learners' performance in the English language? The researchers used the quasi- experimental approach. Two instruments were employed for data collection: a questionnaire besides a pre and post- test. (30) female English majors' students of Arts Faculty-Shamli Branch -University of Hail, served as subjects for the study. The participants were distributed into two groups. The first group represented the control group of (15) students; while the second one represented the experimental one of (15) students. The active learning strategies were implemented in teaching the experimental group, and the traditional teaching method was utilized with the control group. A combination tests out of (25) questions, covered all skills (Reading, listening, writing and speaking.) was designed to be used as a pre and post- test. The data analysis of the post-test results showed that there were statistically significant differences between mean results of the experimental and the control group favoring the experimental group; Thus, the experimental group outperformed the control group. Consequently, the use of the active learning strategies proved to have a positive role and effect on EFL Learners' Motivation, Attitudes, Aptitudes and Skills. In their responses to the questionnaires, they reported a very good and positive attitude towards learning English language through using active learning strategies.*

INTRODUCTION

Active learning is a pedagogical method that concentrates not only on what learners are learning, but also on how they learn. Studies has shown that the transmission of understanding is not achievable by simply telling students what they need to know (Cambridge Assessment, 2021). Thus, in an active learning environment, instead of passively receiving information from the teacher, learners are empowered to build in-depth understanding and knowledge in response to chances provided to them (Cambridge Assessment, 2021). Active learning requires that students must talk, collaborate, write, reflect, present and, problem-solve, transfer new information.

Theoretical Underpinning:
Active learning concept originates from the theory of constructivism, which emphasizes that students build their own knowledge and understanding via social interaction and by connecting new notions and experiences to finding knowledge (Bransford et al., 1999). There are tons of advantages from implementing active learning strategies inside the classroom. Active learning techniques assist drive learner motivation that moderate's attention and memory consolidation (Cavenagh, 2016). Active learning techniques positively contribute towards students' emotional health in many ways such as increased interest, creativity, motivation to prepare, as well as appreciation for learning (Owens, Sadler, Barlow, & Smith-Walters, 2017). In addition, involving boosting skills, enhanced critical thinking competences, higher knowledge and information retention; improved interpersonal skills, implementation of knowledge to new contexts. Active learning promotes a level of intimate understanding that empowers and encourages students, also, active learning experiences lead to raise levels of students' growth and achievement (Kuh, O'Donnell, and Schneider, 2017).

Stages of implementing Active Learning Techniques:
There are five stages for applying Active Learning Techniques:

Engage: The purpose of 'engage' strategies is to:
 - Capture learners' interest;
    - Make explicit links with their background knowledge
    - Focus: is to mentally engage student by capturing their interest and giving them an opportunity to demonstrate their prior knowledge.
    - Helps them make connections between prior knowledge and new ideas using .Active learning approaches.
        - Background knowledge probes; topical/controversial video & associated focus question(s); focused listing; pre-quiz; dialogue journal/work log Engage book; mind mapping; questions, establishing learning goals/ rubrics; blank slides; question slides, Graphic organizer KWL chart.

Explore: The purpose of explore strategies to have students deepen their understanding of key content and skills presented in your subject.
- Focus :is to concept /skill. This should allow them to engage with problems and describe them in their own words.
- Helps them acquire a common set of experiences to share with their peers.
 - Active learning approaches.
 - Brainstorming; buzz groups; corner strategy; jigsaw; muddiest point; problems; questions; information search; directed questioning; test-taking teams; think-pair-share; simulations; 3-step interviews; creating academic notes; summary templates; non-linguistic representations; direct vocab instruction; discussion forum; blog; wiki; workstations; problem of the day.

Explain: The purpose of explain strategies is for students to make explicit links between content and experience. Focus is for facilitator to provide the concepts and terms already used by the students to develop explanations for the phenomenon they have already experienced.
- Explanation follows experience.
- Active learning approaches
- Brainstorming; buzz groups; debate; academic note taking; jeopardy; who wants to be a millionaire; questions; ten-two strategy; roundtable; Explain think-pair-share; 3-step interviews; discussion forum; online quiz; blog; wiki; blackboard work; problem of the day; text reading; step-by-step.

Elaborate: The purpose of elaborate strategies is for students to apply knowledge/skills to develop a deeper understanding or better demonstration of skill.
- Students need to discuss and compare ideas in order to engage with higher order thinking skills and be able to develop a depth understanding of skills and content.
-Focus: is for students to apply knowledge/skills to develop a deeper understanding or better demonstration of skill.
 - Students need to discuss and compare ideas.
- Active learning approaches
- Identifying similarities and differences; identifying patterns; perspective analysis; analysing errors; academic portfolio; question and answer pairs; brainstorming; cases; critical debate; jigsaw; presentations; breakout rooms; collaborative projects; problems; questions; roundtable; simulations; 3-step interviews; problem posing; critiques; concepts to pictures; pictures to algebra; multiple representations; application problems; student generated quiz/test questions; problem of the day.

Evaluate: The purpose of evaluation is to review and reflect on their learning, new understandings/skills.
- Students provide evidence of learning.
 - Focus: is to review and reflect on their learning, new understandings/skills.

- Students provide evidence of learning.
- Active learning approaches.
 - Self-evaluation rubric; analyzing errors; problem solving; closing summary; dialogue journal/ work log book; focused listing; mind mapping; Evaluate muddiest point; one-minute paper/free write; post-quiz; questions; directed questioning; reflection templates.

Some Advantages of Implementing Active learning Strategies in Classroom:
1-   Promoting active learning in the classroom.
2-   Maximizing students' chance in discussion and participation.
3-   Creating of friendly learning situation.
4-   The chance of asking rather than giving explanation,
5-   Boosting opportunities for the students talking time.
6-   Increasing students' motivation through several topics which are relevant to them.
7-   Fostering learners' creativity through authentic tasks.
8-   Giving students more encouragement and positive feedback.
9-   Promoting communicative skills and interaction through many tasks (e.g: group work, pair work, speaking, discussion activity, role play, problem solving ..etc.)
10-   Enhancing critical thinking and brainstorming.

METHODOLOGY

In this section of the study, the research procedure is described in terms of participant, data gathering instruments, method of analysis and discussion and the findings.

Participants
The participants in this study consist of (30) EFL students who are taking English as their major at three levels. The students are believe to use English effectively by the time they have finished their use of active learning strategies experience**.**

Instruments
In this study, two tools were utilized to collect the data: a questionnaire, and pre and post-test. using two different instruments for data collection help the researchers get an extensive view on the responses submitted by the respondents. Investigating students' actual performance will reveal the facts that cannot be gained through the questionnaire. Thus, this why the researchers using these two instruments for data collection to have reliable data that can provide reasonable findings**.**

Questionnaires:
To achieve the objectives of this study, two questionnaires consist of (15) items in the form of yes, / no, questions was used. The questionnaire designed to collect the data for this study to conduct an efficient and useful study. It was designed to collect information about how English majors

students evaluate their aptitudes and attitudes towards learning English Language through implementing active learning strategies .

Pre-and Post Test:
In executing this study, the students were given a pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was conducted prior to manipulating and post-test was conducted after manipulating**.** The T-test was used to analyze the data using SPSS. The T-test was used to compare the pre-and post-test variation effects.

Data Collection and Analysis:
The questionnaires were distributed directly by the researchers to the students to elicit students' attitudes towards learning English language before and after implementing the active learning strategies. The findings of the pre and post-questionnaires were compared to find if there was a significant altering in the attitudes of the students towards learning English language after the implementing active learning strategies in their English classes. The questionnaire consists of (15) items in the form of yes, / no, questions. After that, the questionnaires were analyzed in terms of percentage and frequency by using manually Also, a pre and post-test was performed with the participants. Then, the pre and post-test were analyzed the T-test by using to analyze data by using SPSS. Therefore, the mean and standard deviation of the results of each group were calculated. An independent samples t-test was used to measure the statistical differences in means between the experimental and the control groups.

Table (1): Students' own assessment of their ability to engage into interaction and discussion in English class after implementing ALS:

No:	Question	Yes		NO	
		No:	%	No:	%
Q:1	Are you satisfied of your interaction in English classes?	24	%80	6	20 %
Q:2	Are you still facing any difficulties in participating during English classes?	7	%23	23	77%
Q:3	Do you think active learning strategy helps you to communicate with your peers in English lessons?	27	90 %	3	10%
Q:4	Do you think implementing of active learning strategy in English classes helps you to participate effectively?	26	87%	4	13 %
Q:5	Do you think active learning strategies are useful in improving your English language aptitudes?	28	93%	2	7 %

In Question (1) about 80% of the respondents acknowledged they were satisfied with their interaction in English classes. In Question (2) almost 7 % encountered difficulties in learning

English. The responses to Question (3-4-5) revealed that (90% -87%-93) of the participants admitted that implementing active learning strategies have developed their level and helped them learning English effectively. This indicates a lot of students have benefited by learning English language through using active learning strategies.

Table (2): Students' own appraisal of their ability to improve their English language skills.

No:	Question	Yes		NO	
		No:	%	No:	%
Q:6	Do you feel using any type of active learning strategies develop your skills in English language?	25	83%	5	17%
Q:7	Do think active learning will help you to understand lessons better than in passive learning?	29	97%	1	3 %
Q:8	Active learning helps me a lot in creative writing skill.	24	80	6	20 %
Q:9	Active learning is an interesting strategy in learning English language during practicing listening skill.	20	67%	10	33%
Q:10	Active learning strategy empowers students speaking skills in the English lessons.	28	%93	2	7%

In brief, according to the table above the responses of the learners show that most of them satisfied and recognized the Active Learning Strategy is appropriate in developing English language skills and learning English language effectively in general.

Table (3): Students' own evaluation of the effect of active learning strategies in adjusting their attitudes towards learning English Language.

No:	Question	Yes		NO	
		No:	%	No:	%
Q:11	Are you satisfied with your level in English?	27	90%	3	10 %
Q:12	Do you face any difficulties in learning English then?	4	13%	26	87 %
Q:13	Do you notice any differences in your level after implementing ALS in learning English language ?	28	93 %	2	7%
Q:14	Do you feel active learning strategies modify your attitudes positively towards learning English language?	22	73%	8	27%
Q:15	Do you believe ALS is helpful in increasing your motivation to learn English Language?	29	97%	1	3%
Q:9	Do you like to learn English language with the use of this strategy sometimes?	30	100%	3	0%
Q:10	Do you find it interesting ?	29	97%	3	1%

Based on the above table, almost 90% of the students believe that using active learning strategies have appositive impact on increasing their motivation and modifying their attitudes favorably.

To conclude, in the light of the results from all the tables above they emphasized that active learning strategies have significant effect on the learners' motivation , attitudes, aptitudes and skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study attempted to investigate whether the implementation of active learning strategies in developing and enhancing EFL learners' language skills. Moreover, increasing the students motivation, besides modifying their attitudes and perceptions towards English classes. In addition, the researchers attempted to investigate the effect of the active learning strategies in promoting student aptitudes and proficiency. The results of this study are compatible with the several studies which support the positive effects of using active learning strategies on the EF students levels and competence.

CONCLUSION

Most researcher, teachers and educators nowadays believe that students learn more in an active learning situation than they do in a passive learning situation. Implementing an active learning strategies is not an easy task to fulfil, and teachers need to continue on practicing their classes. This paper has reveal that active learning modifies students' attitude towards both English language and active learning strategies itself. In addition, active learning could also develop the understanding of the learners and, helps to deliver lessons effectively as it endows opportunity for students to practise the learning process, Soft-skills such as leadership and teamwork and higher-order thinking skills such as problem solving ability and critical thinking could be improved during the tasks and activities conducted into the classroom. Therefore, this study has proved the effectiveness of active learning strategies in promoting every part and tasks the learning process.

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