



# ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES ADMINISTRATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE E-LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN SAUDI UNIVERSITIES

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## ABSTRACT

*The present study focuses on implementing active learning strategies in EFL online classes at in Saudi universities. It investigates EFL instructor's main role in language class, their attitudes towards virtual classes, and the online active teaching / learning activities. To meet the goals of the study, an online questionnaire was randomly sent to faculty members of the EFL in all Saudi universities. The results of this study reveal that instructors realize the importance of involving students in the course, allow students to engage in the learning material. The findings also revealed instructors' positive attitudes towards learner-centered strategies as an important method to achieve sustainable and fruitful teaching and learning outcomes. Although results revealed that some instructors believe that conventional classes are more suitable for their EFL classes, but generally the results agree with those obtained in previous studies, which assure that active learning strategies require a participant instructor not a knowledge transmitter. Because active learning strategies often require more effort and time, further studies and surveys are essential to measure how far those strategies are applied in EFL classes.*

**KEYWORD:** active learning, learning strategies, EFL, learning techniques, virtual classes, learner-centered

## INTRODUCTION

Effective language learning requires real interaction between the instructor and the learner; and interaction amongst the learners. The absence of direct face-to-face interactions in the physical lecture rooms, due to covid-19 pandemic curfew, had urged Saudi universities to switch to e-learning or virtual classrooms. This change has prevented instructors to realize active learning strategies. Though live interaction is restricted, to some extent, in virtual classes (Gagne & Shepherd, 2001), some recent researchers claimed that effective virtual classes platforms could help to exchange views, share teaching materials and interact with the instructors, which result in more engagement and effective learning (Sarker et al., 2019).

Implementing active learning strategies in EFL virtual classes promote learning outcome by comprising active learning activities with interactive multimedia components. Researchers argue that in virtual classes less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on developing students' linguistic skills, which is the ultimate goal of language teaching-learning process. For instance, Meyers and Jones (1993, p. 13) state that Multimedia applications provide learners with meaningful opportunities to talk, listen, write, read, reflect on the course content, give ideas, and discuss issues and concerns of an academic subject. Interactive

multimedia applications encourage learners to engage directly with learning activities and will give outstanding learning outcomes particularly with language skills. So, utilizing e-learning devices to virtual EFL classes allow learners to involve in language learning process and shift teaching-learning from passive to active learning.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Language teaching-learning practices, as other university courses, has been greatly affected by the absence of face-to-face meetings with the students in physical lecture room setting due to covid-19 curfew. The unexpected shift to online instruction forced instructors to adopt new learning techniques that costume with e-learning environment and maximizes opportunities for students to learn. Still active learning strategies remain the top priority in EFL classes to fulfill the learning goals.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the background mentioned above, the following research questions arise:

1. What is the instructor's main role in the language class?



2. What are instructor's attitudes towards virtual classes concerning active teaching/learning activities?

### THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general aim of this study was to investigate the implementation of active learning approaches in online EFL classes in Saudi universities. The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify Instructors main role in language class.
2. To find out instructors' attitudes towards virtual classes and online active teaching/learning activities.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The importance of this study emerges from its contribution to the process of teaching and learning EFL in Saudi Arabian universities. It will provide both educators and stakeholders with a clear portrait of the process of implementing active learning in English virtual classes. In this way the affected parties will have a better idea of what to expect in terms of instruction and assessment during this process, allowing them to identify the major challenges that may affect teaching and learning practices. This will pave the way for them to make more informed decisions to change and strengthen EFL teaching and learning practices. Such improvements are patently of great practical significance.

### LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to instructors of English at Saudi universities. It is confined to instructors who taught English in Saudi universities during the first and second terms of the 2020-2021 academic years.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Theoretical Background

Active learning is based on the sociocultural theory of learning - that means students learn in a social context (learn from each other). It is "a student interaction with content, with materials and with peers in a multi-disciplinary, multi-sensory and multi-graded approach" (Meyers & Jones, 1993, p. 93). Prince (2004) maintained that active learning can be accomplished by any method or teaching technique that actively involves learners in the process of authentic learning. Within this context, cooperative learning, collaborative learning, student-centered learning, engaged learning, and participatory learning methods all fit within the notion of active learning. All these methods fit the use of partnerships and aim to trigger students to work in groups or pairs to complete learning tasks cooperatively to achieve certain academic goals (Beichner et al., 2007; Millis, 2002; Morrone et al., 2014). The results produce positive outcomes for students in increased academic success, development of learners' critical thinking skills, and greater social and psychological benefits.

Doyle (2012) asserted that "Neuroscience, biology, and cognitive science research have made it clear that the one who does the work does the learning" (p. 1). For EFL educators, it is vital to engage students more actively in their learning by providing learning activities that lead to optimal learning outcomes. Felder and Brent (1996) stated that "Student-

centered instruction is a broad teaching approach that includes substituting active learning for lectures, holding students responsible for their learning, and using self-paced and/or cooperative (team-based) learning" (p. 43). Learner-centered instructions activities help students understand the course content better because they are more actively engaged with the course content. Active learning techniques leads to deeper learning and increased critical thinking (Millis, 2002).

#### Defining Active Learning Strategies (ALS)

Active learning, in simple terms, according to Bonwell and Eison (1991) was the involvement of students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing. More precisely, Prince (2004) noted that "the core elements of active learning are student activity and engagement in the learning process". The learner in an active learning setting is supposed not to be a passive recipient of information and assistance from the instructor, but to be a central participant in the course material. Active learning in this context is the learning activity that is often distinguished from the traditional lecture where students passively receive information from the instructor by placing them at the center of the teaching-learning process.

Active learning method alludes to the fact that the learner is the center of instruction. The learner's role in an active class entails active involvement and responsibility for the learning process. Komarraju and Karau (2008) claimed that active instructional techniques should be used to more effectively "to encourage students to reflect on their learning, provide them with feedback, give them a chance to review material, and encourage them to take responsibility for their learning"(p. 73).

#### Benefits of Active Learning Strategies

Researchers who studied active learning confirm that active engagement significantly impacts student learning, understanding, and critical thinking and it is much more effective in developing learners' cognitive abilities than passively listening to lectures. Thompson (2009) initiated her article "*40 Active Learning Strategies for Active Students*" by saying that "one of the most obvious ways to increase your classroom charisma is to increase the amount of active learning in your class". (Pundak et al., 2010) noted improvement in students' conceptual understanding, test achievements, reduced dropout rates, student satisfaction, teamwork, and problem-solving when they applied active learning techniques in their classes. Moreover, Dori and Belcher (2005) argued that active learning strategies (ALS) assist students to attain higher conceptual understanding compared to other learners who study the same courses through traditional learning approaches. (Kuh et al., 2011) affirmed that student involvement in learning is vital to academic success. They argued that students learn more when they are deeply engaged in the learning process and allowed to think about and apply what they are learning.

In addition, active instructors' who have experienced group work realized the importance of involving students in the course and enabling them to achieve its objectives (Pundak et



al., 2009). Yazedjian and Kolkhorst (2007) admitted that active-learning activities positively develop learners' retention and retrieval of knowledge. They added that small-group activities, "can be an effective strategy for promoting classroom engagement in that they compel students to take on a more active role in the learning process" (p. 169). To this list of benefits of active learning, Cavanagh (2011) added that students who experienced active learning usually have more motivation, better attitudes, improved critical thinking skills, and more self-directed learning.

#### **a. Active Learning Strategies and Language Teaching**

Active learning is the eminent method that enthusiastically engages students in higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation instead of letting students sit passively in classrooms. Prince (2004 as cited in (Alves, 2015)) noted that group work, pair work, peer review, and in-class reading/writing activities are some examples of Active Learning Strategies (ALS) which are extremely effective in language classes. It is important to move students' roles beyond notes-taking and passive listeners to total involvement in the learning role. Lecturing does not keep students' minds engaged and awake all through the lecture because many students will be mentally check out after only a few minutes. Students should be involved in learning through activities that make them actively interact with the learning content such as reading, writing, discussion, and problem-solving activities.

Creating learner-centered environments in EFL settings is an extremely recommended technique a faculty can follow to enhance students learning (Doyle, 2008). Active Learning Strategies (ALS) make language learning more dynamic because they connect teaching, learning, and language to real-life situations. In this way, EFL language learners will find language learning more meaningful because they do not merely rely on textbooks and worksheets (Woldemeskel, 2019). According to Ellis (1993), interaction inside the classroom conveys several benefits for EFL learners such as comprehension checks, language practice, and so on. Long and Porter (1985) maintained that when FL learners work in groups, they will be active, inspired, and motivated. EFL learners in active learning situations will be more creative, initiative and have less anxiety regarding their learning classes.

The basic idea is that by immediately applying what students have been exposed to, deeper learning occurs. Not only due to the practice itself, but also to other factors connected with it, such as the desire to show competence in front of peers (healthy competition). Active learning increasingly makes students accountable for their learning, as they should be; and with the right techniques, students can deepen their learning and learn a variety of other language skills for academic and professional environments, something that listening to lectures alone cannot accomplish.

#### **b. Previous Studies**

Many studies have shown that some instructors have positive attitudes towards e-learning classes. They admitted that

e-learning has shifted teaching practice from an instructor-centered approach to a learner-centered approach. Walabe (2020), for instance, argued that e-learning platforms provide an interactive interface that enhances communication and discussion between students and instructors and among students themselves. He added, "virtual classes build strong relationships between the instructors and the students". Mutambik (2018), who investigated students' and instructors' perceptions of using e-learning for EFL learning in Saudi schools, mentioned many benefits of e-learning such as independent learning, flexible learning, and interactive learning. Instructors have benefited from the interactive interface of the e-learning platform to engage students in social learning where they support each other and promote collaboration among themselves (Almahasees et al., 2021; Layali & Al-Shlowiy, 2020). Abdelrahman and Irby (2016) stated that faculty confirmed that they support e-learning because it is suitable for higher education, but they believe the physical class learning attain more quality of education.

From the learner's perspective, Al-Mubireek (2019); Vipin (2019); Madini & de Nooy (2014); Long & Porter (1985); reported that students have positive attitudes toward e-learning platforms as flexible means of developing their language skills. In addition, online instruction decreases students' writing anxiety (Bailey & Cassidy, 2019) and makes them feel like decision-makers (Al-Shehri, 2010). Online instruction has positive effects on students' performance in speaking skills (AbouRezk, 2015). Alghamdi and Deraney (2018) found that students who were taught via active learning instruction demonstrated improvement in grammar, sentence structure, and overall writing skills. Online students can easily access information on their own and find enough time and flexibility to cooperate and interact with each other and with the instructor. Layali & Al-Shlowiy (2020) found out that students who studied online "became more flexible in their thinking, more aware of the diverse nature of people within their society, less inhibited about the opposite gender, and more self-confident".

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **a. Participants:**

The target population of the study was EFL instructors in Saudi universities. The selection of the participants was based on their availability and their willingness to participate. An online questionnaire was randomly sent to the faculty members of the EFL in all Saudi universities. 68 responses were received; 46 respondents were male instructors of which 20 were lecturers and 26 assistant professors. Of the 22 female respondents, 6 respondents were lecturers and 16 assistant professors. The experience of the respondents varies from less than 5 years to more than 15 years. Tables (1) show the number of participants, their gender, academic degree, and years of experience.



**Table 1: Number of participants, their gender, academic degree, and years of experience**

Gender		Years of experience					Total
		- 5 years	5-9 years	5-9 years	10-15 years	+15 years	
Male	1. Academic lecturer	2	8	0	1	9	20
	Degree assistant prof	1	4	1	6	14	26
	Total	3	12	1	7	23	46
Female	1. Academic lecturer	0	3	0	2	1	6
	Degree assistant prof	2	2		6	6	16
	Total	2	5	0	8	7	22
Total	1. Academic lecturer	2	11	0	3	10	26
	Degree assistant prof	3	6	1	12	20	42
	Total	5	17	1	15	30	68

**b. Instrument and Data Collection**

An online questionnaire was used to collect the primary data of the study. The development of the questionnaire items was constructed after reviewing and examining ample literature in active learning and was validated through semi-structured interviews with faculty members and teaching professionals. The questionnaire comprised three sections. The first section contains personal and professional information. The second, is to collect data about instructors' role in the language classroom. The questionnaires items in this section were designed according to the constructivist seven instructor's roles model: motivator, authority, controller, trainer, moderator, facilitator, and leader, which aims to achieve mastery of the teaching material at each cognitive level (Bloom's Taxonomy); and the 5 E Instructional Learning Objectives Model: engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate). The third section was about instructor attitudes toward using active learning activities in virtual classes.

A five-point Likert-type scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" was used measure instructors' main roles in EFL classroom and their attitudes towards adopting active learning strategies. The questionnaire was pilot-tested with twelve targeted participants. Some minor amendments were made to the order of the question and the personal information.

**c. Research reliability and validity**

The questionnaire has been subjected to a reliability and stability test. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to assess the internal consistency of the scale, thus the reliability of the Likert scale. The value of Cronbach's alpha was .91 which suggested very good internal consistency and reliability according to (Devellis, 2003; Field, 2013, p. 675) who stated that the alpha of a questionnaire should be more than 0.7, to be reliable. To ensure face and content validity the questionnaire was scrutinized by experienced academic researchers. Construct validity was achieved through developing the questionnaire based on theoretical study and reviewing the ample research literature on the subject matter.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Due to the two-pronged nature of the hypothesis, the results of the survey are analyzed and discussed in two categories. The first part deals with the instructor's main role in the language class, which gives a clear idea of the instructor's basic beliefs about language teaching and learning. The second part highlights instructors' views on virtual classes and the activities that take place in teaching and learning practice.

In the analysis of the survey, the five-point Likert scale is considered an interval scale where the mean is highly significant. Therefore, the interval from 1 to 1.8 means: strongly disagree; from 1.81 to 2.60: disagree; from 2.61 to 3.40: neutral; from 3.41 to 4.20: agree; from 4.21 to 5: agree completely.

**1. Instructors' main role in language class**

Table (2) shows the descriptive statistics for the instructor's role in the EFL class. The results reveal that the greatest awareness was awarded to the items 2, 4, and 3 with means of 4.38, 4.25, 4.16, and standard deviations of 0.98, 1.10, and 1.06 respectively. These results mean that EFL instructors strongly agree with the role of facilitating, moderating and training strategies in their classes and that they make every effort to identify and address students' learning difficulties.

These results show clearly that EFL instructor were not centering the learning activities, but they give some freedom to the learners and free the rein to their students to be creative and innovative. Instructors play the role of a facilitator in the classroom to help learners achieve their learning goals without having to intervene themselves. As a facilitator, the instructor gives the learners the opportunity to actively participate in discussions and group work so that the learning process becomes comprehensive (Gholami et al., 2014). The instructor, then, makes every effort to make his lessons lively, so learners can gain new knowledge at the end of each lesson. As a facilitator, an EFL instructor corrects misinformation and gives helpful hints that clarify some vague facts in the learning task by letting learners try to correct their own mistakes rather than handing them the corrections.

E-learning settings facilitate students' and instructors' active engagement in English learning and teaching through numerous forms of interaction, including online collaboration



and the delivery of instant feedback (Mutambik, 2018). A successful facilitator creates constructive lessons in which both the instructor and the learners respond positively and actively in the classroom (Kudryashova et al., 2016). The role of the EFL as a facilitator is to simulate professional situations, solve problems, and encourages students to develop alternative solutions. Here, students create new personal knowledge from the elements they have learned in the previous stage. Besides, the instructor helps students evaluate their own progress, make judgments based on certain criteria, and give reasoned explanations for phenomena. The facilitator's role is to observe students' behaviour and skills and encourage them to evaluate their own learning.

As a moderator the instructor moderates the learners' activities by creating the necessary conditions for learners to analyse, reflect and reconstruct current knowledge in a cooperative way. The moderator organizes and observes learners' interaction in groups where they carry out joint activities, make predictions, form hypotheses or collect evidence to support generalizations, share ideas and suspend judgment, record observations, and discuss tentative alternatives (Lim & Lee, 2007). In online teaching, the role of the instructor shifted from lecturer to moderator who leads an online electronic session or conference (Webster, 2012). In principle, the e-moderator is expected to fulfil the dual functions of maintaining community and ensuring that language learning takes place.

In e-learning situations, EFL instructors should support students learning by relating new knowledge to the knowledge and concepts they have already known. Learners need to be trained to divide knowledge into similar, retrievable categories, to develop larger conceptual ideas, and to link ideas together. The EFL instructor has to clear learners' misconceptions and faulty ways of thinking that limit and

weaken the connection to new knowledge with the previously learned knowledge. In addition, an active e-learning instructor presents the knowledge to students, and perform other tasks to identify students' learning difficulties, controls and guides students in various activities, directs the work of groups, and encouraging students to participate in learning activities (Pundak et al., 2009). E-learning technologies and the use of multimedia technologies enables students to acquire knowledge by engaging in learning activities and being active, creative, positive thinkers and problem solvers.

Results presented in Table 2 also show Items 1 and 5 got a mean of 3.93 and 3.66 and standard deviation of 1.26 and 1.11 respectively which mean that the participant agree with leading and controlling role of EFL instructor. This indicates that instructors want to have a high degree of control over classroom activities. They also need to have some influence over their classes that helps them manage the classroom carefully through effective leadership.

Successful online EFL classes require great leadership to achieve great results. A great EFL instructor can utilize the wide set of E-learning applications and processes such as web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms and digital

collaboration. E-learning applications provide interactive teaching management tools to help EFL instructors to lead learning activities and students actively. An EFL instructor can fully benefit from E-learning applications to set his plans carefully and purposefully to ensure that he achieves his teaching goals. Effective EFL leadership involves the right mix of good judgement and good decision-making together with successful dialogue that enable the instructor to engage, motivate, encourage and build strong relationships between instructors and students (Walabe, 2020).

**Table 2: Instructor's main role in language class**

Questions	N	S. Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	S. agree	Mean	St. Deviation	Rank
1. My role in class is to promote learning by helping learners stimulate their interest in learning English.	6	4	8	21	29	3.93	1.26	4	
	8.8	5.9	11.8	30.9	42.6				
2. My role in class is to assist learners use the previously learned knowledge and skills in new situations	3	1	3	21	40	4.38	0.98	1	
	4.4	1.5	4.4	30.9	58.8				
3. I organize and observe students' interaction in groups where they conduct joint activities	4	0	9	23	32	4.16	1.06	3	
	5.9	0	13.2	33.8	47.1				
4. I give my students tasks and assignments where they can apply previously learned concepts to new situations.	3	3	7	16	39	4.25	1.10	2	
	4.4	4.4	10.3	23.5	57.4				
5. I encourages students to give clarifications and explanations in their own words and participate in discussions.	3	8	15	25	17	3.66	1.11	5	
	4.4	11.8	22.1	36.8	25.0				
6. In online classes, I allow my students to learn on their own and take responsibility for their learning	3	11	20	26	8	3.35	1.04	6	
	4.4	16.2	29.4	38.2	11.8				
7. I encourage cooperation between students rather than competition	4	11	21	21	11	3.35	1.15	7	
	5.9	16.2	30.9	30.9	16.2				
Weighted mean							3.74		
St. deviation							0.55		



As a controller, An EFL instructor presents his linguistic utterances as the central means of promoting student understanding. The teacher talking time TTT is crucial factor in language classes but teacher has to be careful not to do too much talking. Students also need to have their own free time to learn the content covered, which means that control sometimes needs to be reduced. Otherwise, there is a risk of hindering the students' learning progress. Therefore, it is not advisable to talk too much, as the students will then not have the opportunity to communicate independently.

The results of items 6 and 7 were unexpected. The statistics show clearly that respondents had neither positive nor negative teaching role as authorities and motivators. The scoring weights reveal that items 6 received the mean of 3.37 and the standard deviation of 1.04, and item 7 received the mean 3.35 and the standard deviation of 1.15 (see Table.2). This means that instructors are doubt about whether they could allow students to learn on their own and take responsibility for their learning, and about whether they could encourage cooperation between students instead of competing between them.

The instructor's authority and influence on students' autonomy of the students are necessary in EFL classroom to achieve learning goals in relation to their responsibility and that of the lecturer in the learning process. The lecturer initiates and explores new material through the students, demonstrates new concepts, gives instructions and ready-made answers through listening, watching videos and reading texts. Instructor authority plays an important role in classroom interaction as it facilitates students' understanding of the subject matter and encourages them to actively participate in the learning process.

The role of the EFL instructor as a motivator is to arouse and encourage student's interest, motivation, desire and attention which are associated with strong feelings to learn the target language. A motivator Increases learner's satisfaction and promote positive self-evaluation. Motivational strategies aimed at increasing learner satisfaction usually focus on giving learners the opportunity to showcase their work and encouraging them to take pride in their learning.

Based on the assumption that Learning a foreign language in a country where language is not spoken requires many sustainable motivational strategies, whether intrinsic, instrumental, integrative or extrinsic. Motivation, thus, plays a crucial role in learning the target language, because it takes a lot of effort and a long time to master the basics. For a foreign language learner to sustain intrinsic motivation, he or she needs to create opportunities to practice the target language in different contexts.

The results generally agree with those obtained in previous studies which assure that active learning strategies require the instructor to engage in learning activities not as a mere transmitter of knowledge, but as a participant. An

instructor must be close to his students and become familiar with the students' learning difficulties. Involving learners in learning activities makes them participants and they enjoy learning because they have the lecturer in their midst. In addition, the instructor's responses to the students' difficulties provide him with the necessary feedback, correction, and motivate his students (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). The lecturer should be helpful and available to answer some of the students' questions and support them by involving them in the learning process (Pundak et al., 2009). It is important for EFL instructor to strengthen learners' self-confidence as a key part of successful language teaching and learning.

## 2. Instructors' attitudes towards online teaching and learning activities

Results presented in Table 3 show instructors' responses about their attitude towards online teaching and online learning activities. The results reveal that instructors' attitudes towards item 9: "E-learning technologies help me to assign more learning activities to my students" got the highest score with a mean and standard deviation followed by item 11: "online classes are a good platform for providing students with knowledge and skills for the course" with a mean (3.750) and standard deviation (0.983066).

These results mean that the EFL instructors' positive attitudes towards those items. Instructors often face the challenge of limited resources when trying to adapt lessons to the individual abilities and learning styles of their students. This is where online learning has a great advantage and can support instructors. E-learning offer several resources to engage learners actively in learning process such as: media delivering texts, audios, images, animations and streaming videos, and includes technological applications and processes such as audio or video tapes (Almahasees et al., 2021). A good e-learning platform adapts to students' personal progress, strengths and weaknesses, are available anytime, anywhere and can be self-directed, which is highly motivating and engaging for students. It allows students to practice real-life scenarios in a safe environment, which boosts learners' confidence.

A well use of technological communication and interaction tools, an online teaching provides the features similar to face-to-face communication in traditional learning. A learner can interact with the teacher and peers or ask them for assistance, guidance and receive directions. All this and more can be done with the help of teaching and learning communication and interaction tools. E-learning provides a suitable learning environment that helps students to participate in the learning process and increase their efficiency and performance in educational courses through the elements it can provide in electronic assessment and feedback.

**Table 3: Instructor's attitude toward online teaching/learning activities**

Items		S. Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	S. agree	Mean	St. Deviation	Rank
8. Online teaching met my expectation with active learning strategies	N	5	10	17	21	15	3.46	1.2	4
	%	7.4	14.7	25.0	30.9	22.1			
9. E-learning technologies help me to assign more learning activities to my students.	N	2	8	11	24	23	3.86	1.11	1
	%	2.9	11.8	16.2	35.3	33.8			
10. My online students do not respond to active learning activities	N	5	16	21	13	13	3.19	1.21	5
	%	7.4	33.5	30.9	19.1	19.1			
11. online classes are good platforms for providing student with knowledge and skills of the course	N	1	8	13	31	15	3.75	0.98	2
	%	1.5	11.8	19.1	45.6	22.1			
12. I believe that learning English in a conventional classroom is more effective than in online classes	N	6	7	12	21	22	3.68	1.27	3
	%	8.9	10.3	17.6	30.9	32.8			
13. Students can be evaluated in basic courses only by means of a final exam	N	13	17	12	18	8	2.87	1.33	6
	%	19.1	25.0	17.6	26.5	11.8			
Weighted mean						3.47			
St. deviation						0.64			

No doubt that online learning technology offers language instructors new ways to explain the subject matter. It can provide students with a better opportunity to engage with authentic material, which in turn helps them gain fluency. Active learning allows students to learn in the classroom with the help of the teacher and other students, rather than being left to their own devices. Compared to traditional classes, online students learn more in active classes, can retain information longer and enjoy the lessons more (Gholami et al., 2014). A great advantage of traditional classroom teaching is that the lecturer can intervene quickly if the students are not catching on. A lecturer can change the direction of the lesson or use a different technique to keep the students interested. The immediate feedback that is possible in the traditional classroom cannot be replicated as in an online environment. In classrooms, teachers can pull students to engage in collaborative learning activities.

Unexpectedly Item 12: "I believe that learning English in a conventional classroom is more effective than online classes" got the mean (3.72) and standard deviation of (1.24), and a moderate average was awarded to item 11: "My online students do not respond to active learning activities" with a mean (3.196) and Std. Deviation (1.21). These results show that respondents prefer direct contact with their students to online classes for the belief that conventional classes are more suitable for their EFL classes.

It is worth noting that to EFL instructors, conventional face-to-face teaching could be effective particularly for those who newly joined language classes because regular attendance to classes enforces peer interaction and students will be

disciplined and mentally alert. In a traditional classroom, students share their ideas, views and queries with the instructor, and get immediate feedback accordingly. Regular attendance to conventional classroom helps students and teachers know each other better due to a continuous interaction between them. Face to face class interaction enables instructor to evaluate students' strengths and weaknesses better, and guide students in better learning possibilities.

Beside all the advantages of conventional classes, EFL instructors should not ignore the fact that in online classes students can have access to rich and appropriate material that helps them to be more confident while working in class (Bailey & Cassidy, 2019). In addition to, shy students can find in online classes the opportunity to express their ideas and thoughts in class. Indeed, shy students, or those who do not find an opportunity in traditional face-to-face classes to participate language, can post questions, observations, or answers to questions either before or after class on the online discussion boards. Discussion boards are good places where students can meet and collaboratively develop and discuss their learning issues; and share learning materials. They can exchange written work, videos, presentations, or other assignments for peer feedback.

Crucially, however, EFL instructors believe that online learning activities can be challenging because some students do not have the basic digital skills, while others hide behind their screens or engage in other activities instead of learning. Beside spending many hours in front of a screen may students to flee from attending the class since there is no direct follow up. lack of appropriate devices. Hiding behind a screen



is easy because everyone has their mobile phone with them all the time.

## CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at investigating the role of EFL instructor in administering active learning class; and explores their attitudes towards applying active learning strategies in online EFL classes. The first important finding was that the main role of EFL instructors is to act as guide and a facilitator in the language classroom by motivating and supporting students to approach their learning or being aware of relevant learning strategies and styles. The results also show that instructors beheld that they should make every effort to identify and address students' learning difficulties.

This multi-roles of EFL instructors give the learner various opportunities to engage in the learning process and receives immediate feedback. Such engagement contributes to learners' academic success by helping them to identify their learning styles, participate in planning how they will learn and how they will demonstrate their learning success. Purposeful and active engagement increases learners' motivation as well. Also, through engagement instructors can have the opportunity to discuss learning difficulties with their students; identify learners' unique experiences and what difficulties that affect their learning needs to be addressed.

The findings also revealed instructors' positive attitudes towards guiding students in the learning process and assisting them with learning difficulties, suggesting that learner-centered strategies are important to achieve learning outcomes. Moreover, the results also show that EFL instructors use various active learning techniques to promote teaching and learning process. This is due to factors that instructors take students' learning problems into account by listening to suggestions, asking for ideas; giving learners enough time to share their ideas and take an active role in their own learning experiences. Helping learners to understand the main concept of the learning material is essential for learners as it increases learner understanding and enables better use of the learning material.

In conclusion, it is important to evoke that active learning, opposed to passive teaching, often requires more effort and time and sacrifice of course content covered in class. It is a departure from passive learning for it requires students to think critically and actively engage in the learning process. Implementing an active-learning techniques is not easy task and may involve overcoming many obstacles since the way a class is conducted depends on the character of the instructor. Some instructors are very open-minded and do not hesitate to put themselves at the centre of the lesson, while others prefer to give their students the opportunity to interact. Instructors have to be flexible to enable students to learn. It is also necessary for EFL instructors to adopt many different techniques and play different roles in the classroom to achieve the best learning outcomes.

As stated earlier, this study contributes to the process of teaching and learning beneficial for educators and stakeholders. Further researches may carry out comprehensive

studies on using surveys and class observation tools to investigate learning activities and both students and instructors' roles in EFL classes. Case studies can also be conducted to determine individual's teaching / learning activities and interest.

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