

**Original Research Article**

# Active Learning as a Means for Learner Autonomy and Achievement

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## Abstract

This research paper explores the impact of Active Learning (AL) on learner autonomy and achievement in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom at the University of Khartoum. The research addresses the pressing challenges of passive learning and the declining English language competence among university students. The research problem stems from the widespread monotony of traditional lecture-based teaching methods, leading to disengagement, low achievement, and reliance on spoon-fed learning. Active Learning is proposed as a means to counteract these issues by encouraging student engagement, critical thinking, and independence in learning.

The study investigates two primary research questions: (1) How does Active Learning influence learner autonomy? (2) To what extent does it enhance the academic achievement of EFL learners at the University of Khartoum? By incorporating AL activities into English language courses, the study examines the effects of these activities on students' learning behaviors, involvement, and overall academic performance. A pre-test and post-test methodology, combined with qualitative observations, assesses the outcomes of the AL approach.

The results suggest that Active Learning fosters greater learner autonomy, promotes higher-order thinking, and significantly improves student achievement. The study's findings contribute to the broader discussion on reforming higher education pedagogy, providing a practical framework for integrating Active Learning into university-level English instruction. The study's scope is limited to EFL learners at the University of Khartoum, but the findings offer valuable insights for similar educational contexts seeking to implement learner-centered teaching approaches.

**Keywords:** Active Learning, Learner Autonomy, EFL (English as a Foreign Language), Academic Achievement, University of Khartoum, Student Engagement, Critical Thinking, Higher Education Pedagogy, Classroom Interaction, Pre-test Post-test, Qualitative Observation, Scaffolding, Prior Knowledge, English Language Teaching,

Curriculum Reform, Student-Centered Learning, Higher-Order Thinking, Classroom Presentations, Autonomous Learning Skills, Educational Reform

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Introduction

None daresay that old traditional norms of teaching of the pre-millennium will attract today's nanotechnology and digitally absorbed youngsters. Being active, rather than passive, during classes is perhaps the small ray of hope that the learners of today would endure even a one-hour-sit lecture.

### 1.2. The statement of the problem

Deteriorating levels of English language in competence and performance are no longer confined to general education and schooling stages. The issue of university graduates with low level in the spoken and written English language skills are now inescapable realities. Calls for reform and change regarding the issue have become an everyday rite. However, English language teaching and learning continues to head the challenges which consumed both general and higher education scholars. Efforts to resolve the issue multiply on daily basis; nevertheless, true advancement remains dilute/fable. These challenges necessitate a succinct investigation and academic research for present day curricula, delivery fashions, and classroom instructions.

As a teacher of English language for more than ten years, the researcher has realised a few common features of today's EFL classrooms including those experienced at the University of Khartoum. To conduct quality teaching, teachers have to take into consideration those invariable features in today's teaching and learning context.

To begin with, classrooms rattle with inattentive and disruptive learners. The monotonous nonstop two-hour teacher talk time of today's lectures may not appeal to digitally-motivated learners of the present day. Therefore, learners, unsurprisingly, would be occasionally distracted and often disruptive.

Second, the unfortunate consistent lecture style based mainly on lecturers' presentations has encouraged a spoon-fed generation of learners. The learners become bizarrely dependent on their teachers' words, photocopied hand-outs, and previous exams.

Invariably, boring curricula ignored learners' interests and preferences, and the subsequent passive attitudes towards course books in particular and language learning result in low grades and poor achievement. The all-time talking teachers and the absolute passive learners mismatch the norms of real life action flow; therefore, low grades and poor learner achievement are not surprising, to the contrary, they are intuitive outcomes of such inconvenient conditions.

### 1.3. Research questions

There are two questions that the research intends to answer:

1. What effects does active learning have on autonomous learning?
2. To what extent does active learning improve achievement of EFL learners at the University of Khartoum?

### 1.4. Research assumptions

This research assumes that the utilization of Active Learning (AL) fosters autonomous learning skills of EFL learners at the University of Khartoum. AL activities maintain interactive classrooms and eliminate the common passive setting of many classes of today. The lecture mode at EFL classrooms at the University of Khartoum (this is the case with many universities across the Sudan) caused the creation of boring and unattractive classes on the one hand and less attentive and rather disruptive EFL learners on the other hand. The conclusive subsequence to these setbacks is low grades and poor achievement. Therefore, the other assumption this research presumes is that AL improves the achievement of EFL learners at the University of Khartoum.

### 1.5. Research significance

A unique trend this study follows in tackling classroom mismatches between the teachers and the learners is the creation of an operational fashion of classroom interaction. Existing classroom action research though useful, it often *prescribes* what applied linguists, educators, and/or the learners ought to do during class sessions. Unlike the ones mentioned, the current study *builds a pattern* in action. It traces particular challenges: overwhelming teachers' role, passive dependent learners, and low grades. Then it builds, step by step, an alternative pattern which evolves gradually during the course of research and emerges as the treatment course continues. Thus, the research introduces a preliminary pattern for similar courses at the University of Khartoum and higher education in general. The pattern is threefold: the teacher's role with regard to engaging the individual students and the class at large, the response of the learners to initiated interaction, and the effects of each incorporated AL activity. An extensive account on this pattern is detailed later in section five of this research document. The modified course materials, the detailed reports of the learners' approaches of engagement during the presentations, and the teacher's presumed role are demonstrated extensively later in the sections of data analysis and results.

Also important is the looked-for contribution of this research to the pursuit 'reform and change' of EFL delivery and education in general. Often these projects of 'reform and change' are voiced, theorized and implemented by and through authorities; while major partakers (teachers and learners) are paid little attention if any. Since AL is basically concerned with learners' involvement and professionally considers teachers' orchestral role and succinct observation, the study thus introduces an alternative package to approach reform and change.

### 1.6. The scope of the study

Approaches and activities contributing to learner autonomy and achievement are varied and diverse; however, this research is concerned only with the influences of AL activities on autonomy and achievement.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Definitions of active learning

Definitions of Active Learning (AL) are diverse and elusive. Therefore, Bonwell and Eison (1991) believe that educators' use of the term AL has relied more on intuitive understanding than on a particular common definition. Nevertheless, flashing a number of these definitions is significant to elaboration on this research. Mabrouk (2007) believes that 'active learning' represents the teaching and learning strategies that actively allow learners' engagement during a class development. Consequently, active learning can be used with students working either independently or in small groups, in small and large classes, and for every proficiency level. Monk and Silman (2013) state that being active means that a learner engages with the issued experience actively (as opposed to passively) bringing his or her existing knowledge and understanding to bear on what is currently being delivered/learned. Though diverse, all the definitions of active learning focus on the engagement of the learners and the elaboration of thinking about learning experiences. Thus, the question has been the *volume* and the *excellence* of that involvement rather than its presence at all. Since approaches and interpretations to EFL active learning vary significantly, it is rather benevolent to indulge into types/genres of AL and the activities they encompass.

### 2.2. Activities relate to active learning

Activities relating to AL are classified based on a number of principles and constrains. For instance AL activities are nominated in association to the teaching perspective i.e. activities based on

- learners' previous knowledge
- teacher's expectations
- class stages: beginning, presentation, practice, and evaluation

The classifications of AL endeavours are varied and are regularly updated. The aforementioned are few examples of these classifications. This variation necessitates the need for a comprehensive set of principles to align AL wide spectrum of activities. Bonwell and Eison (1991) state that there are few common characteristics of AL activities:

- The learners are involved in more than listening.
- Less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on developing learners' skills.
- Learners engage higher-order thinking (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation).
- The learners are put in charge of several activities (e.g., reading, discussing, presentations, debates, and writing).
- Classes are judged *active* in reference to the quality and frequency of allowed involvement during class development rather than in the teacher's eloquent presentation.

As stated earlier, the exposition of all AL activities is by no means possible. However, a beneficial detail would rather highlight examples of those endeavours which expand learning autonomy and enhance learner achievement.

### **2.3. Autonomous learning activities**

Since AL tasks are diverse, they could be grouped in sets according to the faculty they serve. For the purposes of this research only, learner autonomy activities are subdivided into two sets: building on prior knowledge and scaffolding (inculcating learner autonomy).

#### **2.3.1. Building on Prior Knowledge**

It is believed (Ambrose, 2010) that the prior knowledge of learners directly influence their current learning experience. Conversely, prior inaccurate knowledge can also hinder concurrent learning experiences. Thereupon, educators find themselves burdened with the initial assessment of their individual learners' prior knowledge. Positioning learners through these assessments enable class instructors to utilize individual faculties effectively and accurately while feeding new learning experiences. This placement is also functional for generating activity groups and nurturing peer learning. The assessment can either be formal following existing tools such as 'concept inventory' or can be collected during initial class(s) rather casually. Whether formal or casual, these assessments equip educators with the baseline necessary for selecting, developing, and /or employing appropriate AL activities for the course materials (curriculum) and actively-instructed class sessions.

Oxford (1990) categorized a number of AL endeavours under the umbrella of review techniques. Below is a set of the mini tasks assigned to learners during a review, restate, and synthesis of prior knowledge.

1. Learners are motivated to write down everything they did yesterday that did NOT involve memory.
2. Learners are asked to alternatively read aloud and perform a series of operations while they remember words and utterances. For example, a volunteer is shown a sentence/a word on a card and is asked to perform, mime, or gesture the meaning of the sentence to another volunteer; then, the rest of the class shall indicate whether or not the guess is correct.
3. Learners are cued to establish charts [flow charts, pie charts, etc.] which match the gist, for instance, of a reading text or grammar classification.
4. Students work in groups to create flash cards to use during a review of a learned topic or in a summary presentation. Then, these groups are timed to write quizzes for other group members. Later, during the same class session, the objectives of single questions of the test could be examined or discussed in groups or across the class.
5. Learners write a reflection of either a produced piece of work or a learned concept.

6. A further development includes moving around the class and finding a similar or an opposing viewpoint.
7. Students work individually or in groups to create mnemonics or chants that facilitate learning a set of lexical items, a structure, or any other learned skill.
8. Every student is given a timeframe to paraphrase a reading text, a structure, a learned concept etc. using their own language.

### 2.3.2. Scaffolding (inculcating autonomy)

According (Westerlund, Luciana C. de Oliveira, & Ruslana, 2013) scaffolding as a dynamic process underscores the significance of three instructional conditions: firstly, contingency, which entails responsiveness to learners' performances and needs; secondly, fading or gradual withdrawal, denoting the gradual reduction of teacher supports as learners acquire proficiency; and thirdly, transfer of responsibility to enhance learner autonomy. Kist (2010) introduces variations of scaffolding activities:

1. Form learners into groups of three to five and assign each of them a scene from a book, a historical event, or a scientific process.
2. Explain that each group is going to have to visually disclose this event using only their bodies. That is to say, they will not be permitted to draw a picture or say it verbally. They ought to recount the event in such a way so that it is recognizable.
3. Groups could be permitted time to "rehearse."
4. Ask the expert (a famous scientist): the purpose of this activity is to develop research skills and to maintain self-learning, D'Amico and Gallaway (2010). A readymade table is introduced to various groups. The columns are: the name, the discovery, the date, and the impact on the society. The learners are supplied with hard copies of information on the focused character and/or alternatively are provided with an internet access. Each group elaborates on one of the characters under investigation. The teacher may give support utilizing the pool of data gathered in the initial placement and prior knowledge. This activity is assumed adaptable / modifiable to suit different levels of learners. Alternatively, and with delayed readers, the teacher could suggest a video or a tape recorded material to be watched; simultaneously, copies of the tape script about the character are afforded. With talented learners, a Power Point presentation would excite the class. A further exploitation in the same or the following class is to make a comparison between the various discoveries/accomplishments of those experts/scholars/famous people in order to evaluate their impact. A debate could be held for advanced level speakers.

An alternative approach to this activity was suggested by Inala and Walsh (2010). The class is divided into small groups and each group is assigned a topic / character for research and further study. The teacher may help provide relevant materials for the topic / person researched. The activity is then timed according to the nature of the activity and the level of the learners. Then, groups rotate coming to the front of the class making presentations for their accomplishments.

A development of this activity is that after studying the topic, every group sends members to teach and present their research to other groups. Finally, every group stand at the front of the class ready to answer class questions on the topic as experts. This activity could be conducted using social media and smart phones. It is fun and it prepares the learners for academic debate as well as for life.

The aforementioned sets are only few examples and relevant scenarios to show the range of implementation / application modes for AL activities to enhance learner autonomy. Learners are motivated to involve themselves in their learning using review techniques. Review is not a closed set. Benevolently, AL advocates can invent their own activities inspired by stated approaches to help their classes / individual learners review what they have studied or experienced. Teachers may develop their particular versions for each activity taking advantage of the flexibility available in their individual

contexts. Nevertheless, a crucial reality concerns the responsibility of preparation and modifications necessary for every choice a teacher makes within his / her context.

## 2.4. Current research contextualization

The previous and relevant studies followed the two-group approach (a treatment group and a control group) for data collection and data analysis. The two-group method allows the efficacy of extraneous factors such as the setting, the attitude of delivery, the learners' individual differences, etc. Again previous studies were rather theoretical. None of the previous studies measured the effects of AL on autonomy; they were investigating group work and classroom interaction. The most challenging constraint for relevant studies has been time affordability for course delivery and learners' participation.

Nevertheless, the perspectives of the previous studies have been beneficial in regard to preparing and selecting appropriate approaches for data collection and data analysis. The current research holds a number of advantages. First, it is the pioneer study which investigates active leaning in the Sudan (and the first carried out at the University of Khartoum.). Second, it adopts the one-group pre-test and post-test method for investigating the effects of active learning on autonomy and achievement. Third, the course book used for the treatment is the home-tailored accredited course taught throughout the University of Khartoum for the freshman. Consequently, course material of the treatment course was the standard authorized course book, and the teaching hours were the same for every lecturer of English at the university. These factors would, it is believed, inspire the adoption of AL approach set out in this study. Moreover, the research contributes to various bodies. A crucial contribution relates to material development advocates and theme writers through the diverse class room strategies, fun activities, implementation patterns and class stages inaugurated in the literature of the study and in the discussion of the data analysis and the results later in the pointed sections.

## 3. Methodology

The current study encompassed two major pools of data. First, participants' performance in the classroom during class sessions which is reported by means of qualitative tools (the documented participant observation). Hence it denotes the evidential learner autonomy of the subjects during the treatment course. The second data repertoire is collected via the pre- test and the post-test and is denoted through the t-test. The t-test measures the effects of the treatment courses (the modified active learning instructed course books) coupled with the class AL activities on the EFL learners' achievement at the University of Khartoum.

### 3.1. The subjects of the study

The University of Khartoum freshman students represent the population of the study. The sample of the study is in two groups, that is the first-year students of two colleges: The School of Management (represents humanities) with 169 students and the Faculty of Dentistry (represents science colleges) with 90 students. The total of the subjects is 259 of a pool of 3200 students of the University of Khartoum freshman subjects. The researcher, who is also the teacher of the treatment courses, conducts the study over 13 classes for each study group during a general English language course for the University of Khartoum freshman students in the period 2016 – 2017.

The average age of the study population is 17; the features of the study subjects are as follow: 187 are females and 72 are male students. The subjects are non-English majors. The admission of 107 of the students is private and 152 of the students are of the state admission, yet they all scored above 80% in the Sudan High School Certificate (university-entry exam). Only 47 learners reside in Halls of Residence. 133 students are from Khartoum and the rest come from other states.



**Table 3.1:** The subjects of the study

Variables		Frequencies	Percent	Total
<b>Gender</b>	Males	72	0.28	259
	Females	187	0.72	
<b>Origin</b>	Khartoum	133	0.51	259
	States	126	0.49	
<b>Residence</b>	Homes	212	0.82	259
	Halls	47	0.18	
<b>Admission</b>	State	152	0.59	259
	Private	107	0.41	

### 3.2. Data collection

The study elected participant observation tool and pre-post and post-test for data collection. The tests are mediated with treatment courses. The pre-test and post-test results are correlated and t-test is used for significance. The data regarding the tests are exhibited later under the subsection of test results. The treatment courses had been revised to accommodate AL instructed-materials. AL presentations represent the data collection tool for observation. These presentations are developed, introduced, and recorded by volunteers from the subjects themselves. In each of the two groups of the study (the School of Management and the Faculty of Dentistry), the subjects designed the presentations to deliver before their classmates during formal classes as extracurricular activities. PowerPoint slides, debates, competitions and a software programme were used to deliver these presentations. These presentations are employed in threefold. They represent the practice activity for autonomy, autonomy enhancement tool for data collection, and the source material documented for data analysis. The volunteering subjects of these presentations enrich their speeches with the diverse styles and varying materials they employed. Generally, during the presentations the subjects:

1. Showed slides while asking the class.
2. Directed questions to the class.
3. Listened to their answers.
4. Responded accordingly (approved or corrected).
5. Then moved on.
6. Made an organized account of past events.
7. Provided the class with a text with figures and dates about the University of Khartoum.
8. Checked comprehension through open ended questions and emphasized dates.
9. Approved correct answers and corrected the wrong ones.
10. Asked questions.
11. Selected individual participants for answers and hinted answers when necessary.
12. Approved and corrected answers.
13. Rewarded correct answers with gifts (chocolate cakes).
14. Spoke in sound assertive tone.
15. Organized roles and parts coherently.
16. Interacted with the class.
17. Posed questions during the presentations.
18. Repeated questions occasionally to get attention.
19. Corrected information.
20. Apologized for misinforming.
21. Checked understanding using expressions such as: understand me, what do I mean by, etc.
22. Connected their talk to the previous ones.

23. Exploited the presentations to introduce some grammar items e.g. plural forms.
24. Rearranged the order of planned stages to meet the new condition.
25. Introduced a brief talk on food culture.
26. Checked comprehension in a variety of questions: open ended, yes or no, true or false, etc.
27. Introduced a vocabulary activity, e.g. match A with B.
28. Accepted the class correction for mispronounced words.
29. Read a few sentences a loud and asks the class to fill in blanks.

### 3.3. Procedures

Both tests have been administered following the same setting and modes of the university formal final exams. This procedure eliminated extraneous factors if any. In regard to observation, as stated earlier, the researcher adopts the documented observation (of the focus group) type which represented a convenient choice. Being the teacher of both treatment courses, the researcher elects one of the students for each of the two sample groups to videotape the presentations quietly. During the participants' presentations, the researcher directly observes the performance of subjects in the classroom. After the delivery of the presentations, the researcher writes the report as he watches the videos at pace in his office for further analysis and result interpretation. The following subsection sheds light on the results of data analysis of the data collected by tests and through documented observation.

## 4. Data Analysis, Results, And Interpretation of The Results

The data analysis subsumes two components. The first regards the interpretation of data collected from the tests for calculation of the significance of the achievement test results. The second concerns the observation of the participants during AL instructed sessions where data is extracted from the documented presentations. Below are the analyses of the data collected through both tools and the interpretation of those results.

### 4.1. Data analysis

The results of the pre-test and post-tests are quite overt. They are demonstrated, tabulated and interpreted in the subsection test results later in this section. In concern to observation, prior to the discussion of the connection between the class presentations and autonomous learning, it ought to be noted that coming forward to address the class is in itself an act of autonomy. It seems active learning guaranteed a safe development of being in charge.

### 4.2. The results

The results divide into two categories according to the tools of data collection and data analysis.

#### 4.2.1. Observation Results

This subsection exhibits the results of the data relating to the presentations and their linkage to autonomous learning. Nine presentations were developed and introduced by the two study samples. Though each presentation is unique, five of these presentations approximately cover most AL endeavours that relate to learner autonomy. These five presentations are underscored below to elucidate hands-on practice of autonomous activities.

The presenters of the first presentation emphasised their ability to manage their own learning in various ways. Their presentation was on family connections, where the presenters made a family tree on a PowerPoint slide. They used sense relations (synonyms & antonyms) to cover a larger context of the topic they were teaching. They came up with a game which required the competitors to stick flash cards of family members on the board as they were listening to a loud reading about that family. This strategy combined note-taking, responding through action, and listening skills in a single activity.



They picked content objectives and consequently decided which methodology would be appropriate to follow. Conclusively, the pressing need to interact efficiently with the class has led to genuine thoughts and autonomous acts.

In presentation two, the presenters created a contest wherein competitors were rewarded (with chocolate cakes). The researcher expected just PowerPoint slides; however, the participants of this group were able to manage their presentation in a way that is unique and popular! The major presenter in the first section addressed questions on their presentation topic 'air travel instructions and the relevant vocabulary'. She had chosen to introduce common air travel instructions before plane taking off, during flights, and at final destination. Those situational language chunks are future-oriented and select few learning outcomes for every university graduate. The presenter demonstrated considerable autonomous acts when she envisaged future situations of the learned items. She presumed which instruction would be valuable for the learners when they fly somewhere in the few coming years. Logically, university graduates, whether they pursue postgraduate studies or seek jobs, they will need to travel; therefore, they will need to acquire travel-related expressions. Knowing what is prior to learn now is an essential feature of autonomous learners. The second presenter brought about another creative idea which was anagrams, which is a genuine act of autonomy. Recalling, practicing, and employing learned items are related to learning management which is a subsection under autonomous learning.

In presentation three, the presenters showed competent communication skills; moreover, they exemplified learning management:

1. The encyclopaedic task division: the presenters streamed the presentation into different parts based on a profound understanding of the content: types of healthcare (short & long), plurals, and articles.
2. The paperless talks: each presenter has learned her part independently which she had structured according to her own knowledge and language.
3. The text exploitation: the presentation included plurals and articles which did not relate directly to the topic, however, they thought of the linguistic content of their topic which indicated their autonomous skills.

Learner autonomy was clearly portrayed in the fourth presentation. A particular plausible feature of this group of presenters was their readiness to react immediately as they were presenting. It was expected that the sense of disappointment, because of the technical failure of their presentation sets they had, would affect their performance; it did not. Conversely, the presenters showed sound individual and team skills. Moreover, they demonstrated their ability to improvise new methodology for their presentation. They proclaimed their autonomous skills when they restructured their presentation. They recreated new methods and reassigned the new roles in a plausible way. They met the requirements of autonomous learners; they managed to take responsibility; they managed the content skilfully.

The simulation activity in the fifth presentation was an observable indication of the presenters' autonomy. The original idea of simulating the presentation to TV shows is in itself a proof of the presenters' learner autonomy. The presenters managed their learning and devised a way to teach. Among all the presentations, the simulation was the most popular and cheerful to the class. As a rule, a learner is named autonomous when he / she manages one's own learning, not to mention managing and predicting the best ways another party learns. The game at the second section of the presentation deserves particular consideration. The genuine competition which the presenter introduced, articulated her deep understanding. Where would someone go if he / she wanted to buy an object or a certain product? This activity is deemed basic in everyday communication.

To sum up, the learners showed an unprecedented willingness and enthusiasm towards these presentations. Their enthusiasm could be attributed to frequent active engagement of the learners during the treatment courses. Eventually the learners (research subjects) sounded tempted to take greater part in the

class development via class presentations. For instance, during the treatment courses, the learners have experienced proclaiming personal viewpoints and they practised stating a stance confidently. This unthreatening context has evolved through timed and paced stages during the treatment course which has been absorbed with active learning instructions and led to the accommodation of the class presentations.

All in all, the class presentations have been an indescribable indication for the engagement /participation of the subjects of the study which has denoted, developed, and reinforced their autonomous skills. The learners were required to create basic PowerPoint slides for their presentations; however, they chose to do these presentations to their likings. They surprised the course instructor (the researcher) with the unprecedented approaches they came up with. They incorporated fascinating visuals; they downloaded YouTube videos; they quoted previous research statistics, etc. Needless to say that the participant learners did not have to include any of these components; they included these elements out of self-development. Therefore, the presentations have been particularly evidential to the inculcation of autonomy.

#### 4.2.2. Test Results

The tests results included ones regarding autonomous skills within the achievement test and the test overall results to denote the learner achievement. Table 4.1 shows the grades of the learners regarding autonomous learning. The full mark is 24. The mean of the grades was 12.1 in the pre-tests, but it has leaped to 21.3 in the post-test. The significance difference value is 0.001 which is  $< 0.005$ . There is a significant difference between pre-tests and post-tests in the autonomy grades of the subjects. The significant difference is in favour of the autonomous skills of the post-test.

**Table 4.1:** Learner Autonomy

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Devi.	T	Sig.
Pre-test	259	12.1	12.1	33.4	0.001
Post-test		21.3	13.0		

**Figure 4.1:** illustrates the significance of the difference in the subjects' autonomous skills in the tests.

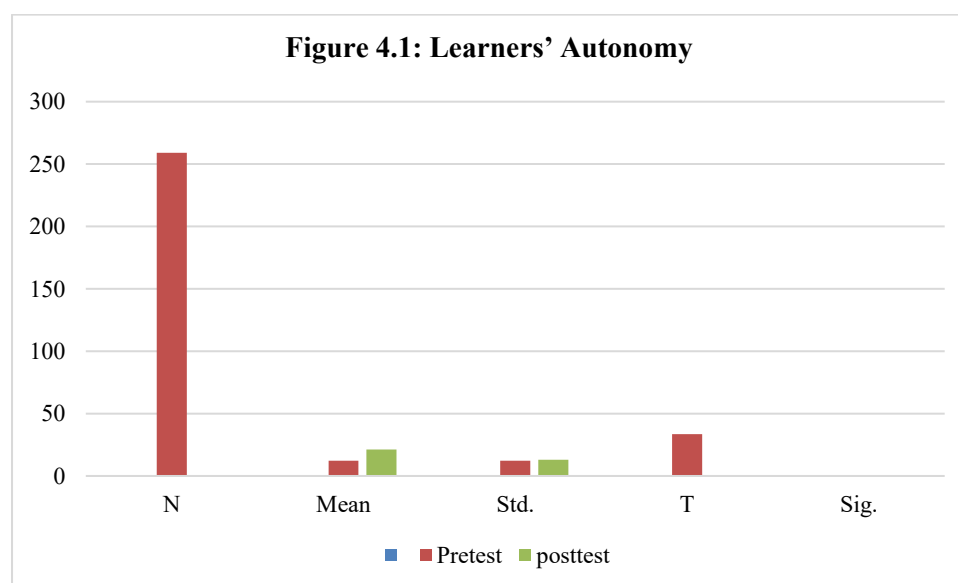


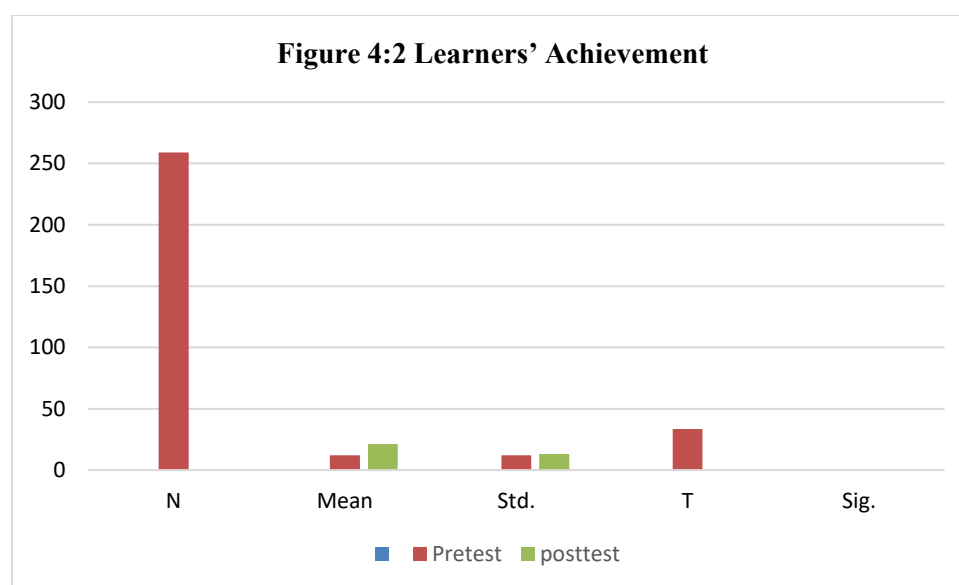
Table 4.2 shows the results of the t-test for the paired groups of the subjects. The table demonstrates the students' achievement in the pre-tests and the post-tests. The achievement here refers to summation of the total grades of the individual subjects of the research in each test. Approximately, the mean of the grades of the learners has shifted from 43.9 in the pre-test to 75.2 in the post test. The t-test

compared every individual grade in the pre-tests and in the post-tests. The significance value is 0.001 which is  $> 0.005$ . There is a significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test results, which is in favour of the post-test.

**Table 4.2:** Learners' Achievement

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Devi.	T	Sig.
Pre-tests	259	43.9	16.0	33.8	0.001
Post-tests		75.2	13.4		

**Figure 4.2:** demonstrates the shift of the mean of frequencies of the subjects' grades. Moreover, the figure demonstrates the standard deviation and the significance value.



In essence, the core hypothesis of this research is concerned with the effects of AL activities on autonomous learning and subsequently overall learner achievement. The performance of the two groups of the study sample whether in the tests or during the presentations has exemplified these effects and verified them. Undoubtedly, the active engagement of the learners during the treatment course awakens the learners' potential/indigenous autonomous skills and maintains their faculties and skills of autonomous learning.

## 5. Active Learning Practice Pattern

As stated earlier under the subsection 'research significance', this research intends to nurture an AL practice pattern. The pattern is threefold: the teacher's role with regard to the involvement of the individual learners and the class at large. Second are learners' AL endeavours and participations. Third are AL instructed classes (modified treatment courses).

### 5.1. The teacher's role

In AL instructed classes, the teacher's orchestral role is the cornerstone. He/she anticipates the launch of the course with preparations necessary for inculcating AL within existing course materials. Moreover, educators embracing AL ought to develop a bank of AL activities for learners' candidacy. Also important is the baseline placement of the learners which helps integrate AL assignments to meet the individual conditions of the participant candidates. It is worth noting that AL instructed programs are tentative; they are modified occasionally and adapted continually to suit concurrent situations. Thus, AL advocates dwell a nonstop commitment of deliver-evaluate-modify. In addition, AL educators should stay in contact with their individual

learners and provide guidance and counsel anticipated weaknesses/drawbacks. This leadership and endorsement may entail regrouping, reassigning tasks and repositioning of the learners. Last but not least, the educators' burden of preparing achievement tests remain the inevitable accomplishment finalizes/concludes every teaching program.

## 5.2. Students' AL endeavours

Active Learning (AL) candidates, as the name suggests, actively participate throughout the course, both in classroom settings and independently at home. Their involvement is shaped based on the assessments, whether formal or informal, which grant them the freedom to choose their preferred mode of engagement and activity schedule. The coordination, cooperation, and connection among peers are considered essential principles in AL classes. Many of the activities undertaken by AL candidates are collaborative in nature, such as presentations, role-plays, debates, competitions, and interviews. Group formation often occurs voluntarily among learners, although occasional guidance from teachers may be provided.

## 5.3. AL instructed classes (modified treatment course)

Educators and curriculum scholars do not have to author AL materials for every active learning instructed program. Course books and EFL teaching materials accommodate AL instructions invariably providing that AL activities are flexible and adaptable. For instance, a teaching material with themes on sports, science, travel, or history may neatly and artfully employ the AL activity '*ask the experts*' (elucidated earlier in the subsection scaffolding). Needless to say, this activity is resilient in both content and mode; variations of this activity take the shape of: making charts, writing briefs, role-playing an interview, debating prospective, simulating TV shows, etc.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the class presentations carried on what the treatment courses carried off; the learners had the unique opportunity of exposing their AL acquired faculties through the class presentations. They exhibited an unprecedented independency throughout the treatment courses. Not to mention, their evident involvement during class sessions and via the class presentations (they prepared, managed, and introduced) which flowed spontaneously. The findings show that AL activities stimulate learners recall their prior knowledge, then evaluate, and eventually relate to concurrent learning experiences. These endeavours polish learners' potential/indigenous autonomous skills through instructional AL activities. Thus, actively instructed classes stimulate learner engagement and thereafter learners grow more creative, autonomous and eventually competent. The significant shift in the grades at the post test ensures that AL improves learner achievement. The research has also envisaged few recommendations in regard to AL and learner autonomy. EFL instructors and lecturers are recommended to inculcate AL activities in existing course materials particularly at university level. Intermediate learners are deemed responsible for their learning. Obviously, autonomy is a way of doing things rather than a subject or a course in itself; autonomous learning is enhanced through autonomous activities. Learner autonomy is practiced rather than being theorized. Conclusively, this is a seminal research on AL; it may materialize the headstream for further investigations on the efficacy and approaches of AL in humanities and sciences educational methods. This research inaugurated a practice pattern (detailing orchestral notes for classroom stalk holders: educators, curriculum scholars, and learners) though basic it underpins inspirations and resilience for further developments.

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