Omani Teachers' Perception of Active Learning-Impact on Classroom Practices

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Abstract

The present study is designed to investigate Omani Cycle II EFL teachers' perceptions of active learning and their impact on classroom practices, drawing conclusions on the correlative link between them. The population of the study covers Cycle II EFL teachers from Batinah-North Governorate for the academic year 2017/2018. The questionnaire population consists of 30% of the actual total EFL teachers in the region. The observation tool population consists of 18 teachers. The analysis of the research data indicates a mismatch between teachers' perceptions of fundamental aspects, such as teacher role, student role, and active learning cycle. This mismatch influences the actual efficiency of classroom practices and is the core element in the recommendations the study suggests. The study highlights the need for further awareness, training, and knowledge among teachers. It brings all educational environment stakeholders into the scene, suggesting role distribution in a spirit of partnership and collaboration.

Key words: Active learning cycle, Learner involvement, Role distribution, Motivation, Engagement, Learner responsibility, Reflection.

1. Introduction

The 21st century is characterized by A revolutionary change of the educational environments as a response to ongoing social and technological developments and emerging job market needs. One of the major implications this change brought about is the pedagogical shift OF the focus and the approaches from the teacher to the learner. Learner involvement is a theme that has gained momentum in recent decades. Involving learners actively in their learning process implies that they will not just develop high-level thinking skills or meta-cognitive knowledge but they will also be equipped with the skills needed for enhancing their learning (Blok, Oostdam, & Peetsma, 2007; Bonwell & Eison, 1991). According to Bellanca (2009) "students will develop new habits of learning that will influence their learning well beyond the test day, students will learn how to learn smarter" (p. 23). Concomitant to this, different kinds of learning approaches, such as collaborative learning, cooperative learning, effective learning, and problem-solving have emerged. These fit into a category of pedagogy called Active Learning (Prince, 2004; Prince & Felder, 2007; Hyun, Ediger & Lee, 2017).

The actual English language proficiency levels in the Omani context of high schools remains below the expected targets. Overemphasis on the learning product rather than the learning process (Goodliffe, 2005; Al Muqbali, 2017) is one main reason behind low proficiency. Mahmoud and Al-Mahrooqi (2012) claim that it is the current dominant teachers' role play that hinders the engagement of learners and thus the improvement of their proficiency levels. Teachers' dominance of the T&L scene is strongly linked with learners' reluctance to actively engage in learning.

Active learning started gaining considerable attention in the Omani context as it is one of the T&L methods with proven effectiveness in increasing students' engagement in their learning process[1]. Observing the implementation of active learning in English classes reveals a sort of confusion in the application of some of active learning fundamentals which influences its usefulness and effectiveness. Therefore, the need emerges to explore in-depth teachers' perceptions of active learning and its impact on classroom practice.

The strong belief in active learning and its presence in several official documents cannot hide the modest implementation in real life in the context of Omani high schools. It remains an approach that totters its early steps in a learning environment mainly characterized by a dominant teacher role and T&L scene protagonists, teachers and students, reluctant to adopt change. Active learning is left to be a personal diligence, with limited proper training. EFL classes in the context of Omani high schools suffer a chronic lack of students' motivation and participation and a dominant teachers' role. The paper relates this to a misconception of active learning and its implementation. This problem was noticed by the researcher's observation of EFL classrooms, the informal interviews conducted with teachers and the consultations with other colleagues. Exploring teachers' perceptions is evidently of a valid importance and is expected to diagnose the problem and yield constructive recommendations for effective practice.

The current study then aims to investigate Cycle II EFL teachers' perceptions of active learning and the extent to which these perceptions influence classroom practice. It aims to answer the following questions:

1- How do Cycle II EFL teachers perceive active learning from their classroom practices?
2- What do these perceptions tell about the actual classroom practice?
3- Is there a clear link between the 'modest' practice and teachers' perceptions?

The answer to the research questions set for the study is of valid significance and is expected to achieve the following objectives:

1. contribute to the body of research and literature in relation to the topic of active learning, in fact, mostly void in the Omani context[2],
2. raise teachers' awareness of active learning and its fundamentals for better and effective application,
3. inform stakeholders and curriculum designers about the current practices and needs in order to be included in the newly developed ones,
4. Highlight areas of training needs for teachers to focus on in the future plans.

2. Literature Review

The review of active learning literature in the current section revolves around the aspects of theoretical framework, rationale, the learning opportunities active learning provides and the degree of learner involvement it stipulates. It also discusses the elements and the cycle of active learning and closes with the role distribution active learning environments yield.

1.1. Setting the Theoretical Scene: Defining Active Learning

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[1] Analyzing the English course books used in Cycle II which are based on communicative approach to language teaching, the term 'active learning' is introduced in the general aims section as "to encourage students to be actively involved in their learning process", "to encourage students to reflect on and evaluate their own learning process" and "to encourage students to cooperate with their peers to help each other to learn". It is also reflected in different activities like role plays, group projects, jigsaw reading, brainstorming, puzzles and many others that encourage students to interact with the course materials, their teachers and their colleagues (English for Me (EFM) books grades 5 to 10, 2015). It also appears in the Teacher's Evaluation Form. It equally exists as an important aspect under the "effectiveness of teaching strategies used" section which encourages the teachers to adapt active learning as a teaching and learning method with the use of a variety of strategies (MoE portal, 2017).

[2] Al Rawahi, 2011; Al Kharousi, 2015; and Al Shkaili, 2014.

Collins and O'Brien (2003) define active learning as "the process of having students engage in some activity that forces them to reflect […] keeping students mentally and often physically active in their learning through activities that involve them in gathering information, thinking and problem-solving" (p. 8). Watkins, Carnell, and Lodge (2007), define the word 'active' in active learning to mean "engaging one's energies behaviorally, cognitively and socially" (p. 71).

Prince (2004) views active learning as an instructional method that engages students in the learning process, adopting an engaging stand, getting involved with the context where the main aim of teaching is skills development more than knowledge transmitting (See also Bonwell & Eison, 1991). In the same vein, the element of skills development is highlighted by Demirci (2017) who views that active learning is "a student's active impact on learning […] with an emphasis on skills such as analytical thinking, problem-solving and metacognitive activities that develop students' thinking" (p.130)[3]. Acikgoz (2003) defines active learning as a learning process that develops the learners' sense of responsibility of their learning and provides learners with opportunities for decision making and self-regulation (cited in Aytan, 2017). Similarly, Myers and Jones (2006) suggest that active learning requires a learning environment that provides learners with opportunities to talk, listen, read, write and deep thinking through the use of different strategies like problem solving, small groups, simulations and others where learners apply what they have learnt in the world of reality[4].
Barkely (2010) defines active learning as "a collection of teaching practices that put into practice the fundamental concept that to truly learn, we need to make an idea, a concept or a solution our own by working it into our personal knowledge and experience" (p. 16).

Active learning is linked with the concepts of learner involvement, learner responsibility, learning opportunities, reflection, and cognition and skill development. Watters (2014) suggest that active learning can have different natures: a T&L philosophy, a T&L approach, a T&L method, and a tool for T&L (See Figure 2.1).
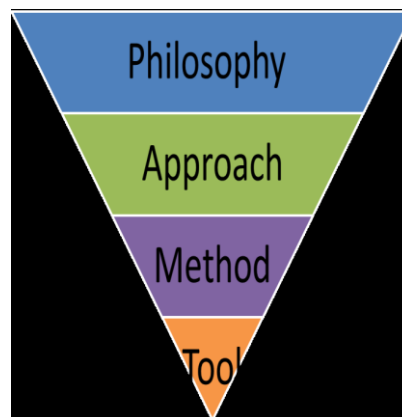

Figure 2.1 The nature of Active Learning (Watters,2014)

To serve the purpose of this study, active learning is perceived as a T&L method that encompasses many tools.

2.2 Rationale behind Using Active Learning

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[3] This is also emphasized by Bonwell and Eison (1991) in their discussion of AL characteristics that place learners' skill development in a more emphasized and demanded position than knowledge transmitting. Wilke (2003) also adds that active learning places more emphasis on skill development than on transmitting of knowledge, and on students' own exploration of their abilities and attitudes towards learning.
[4] Aytan (2017) adds that learning opportunities are available as "knowledge is obtained during actual experience" (p. 41).

Silberman (1996) suggests that when learning is active, students do most of the work as they use their minds effectively, study ideas well, work on solving problems where at the same time they apply their skills and knowledge. According to him, this makes learning fun and raises learners' understanding by activating high-level thinking skills. In other words, learners promote their critical thinking which is needed to go beyond the mere use of the language at the survival level. Language learning requires thinking of how to negotiate ideas, opinions and communicate effectively. This critical thinking is required because "languages are culturally determined and as culture differs so do languages" (Vdovina & Gaibisso, 2013, p. 57). Being involved in active learning leads learners to use their minds to think of their ideas and opinions and to evaluate arguments which will increase their understanding of their abilities and limits and so work on developing them for better learning which is the main aim of ELT in Oman.

Active learning then gives the students the responsibility for their own, providing learners with opportunities that make their learning effective and permanent (Al- Maqbali, 2017). This responsibility, according to Blidi (2017), will also increase the feeling of ownership which will reduce the negative attitudes and develop students' readiness and motivation towards learning.

Demirci (2017); Aytan (2017) and Al Kharousi (2015) experimental studies revealed a positive impact on students' attitudes towards learning when active learning approach was used in teaching, increasing solidarity and cooperation, fun and interest. The investigation of students' satisfaction (Hyun, Ediger, and Lee in 2017) reveals a significant factor active learning played, especially with students' group and individual learning process. Changing attitudes positively, raising satisfaction and making learning interesting will lead to motivating students' positively and so solving one of the major factors affecting students English proficiency level in the Omani context (Al-Mahrooqi, 2013).
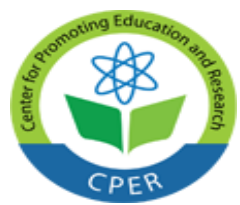
Active learning merits suggest a mounting need for T&L environments and stakeholders to provide learners with learning opportunities that engage collaboration, peer-support and redefined roles of teachers and learners to draw the benefits active learning brings about. Blidi, Chaou and Al Ajmi (2018) advocate the variation of learning opportunities and environments as support that enable students to learn, develop and improve in a partnership, shared responsibility and collaborative environment.

2.3 Active Learning and Learning Opportunities

Active learning is one of the novice approaches gaining momentum and dominating the T&L contexts worldwide. Dewey's progressive theory is believed to underpin the development of active learning with the redefined roles it gives to both students and teachers. Knowledge is viewed as a personal experience which is constructed and modified through learning that is facilitated by teaching. Therefore, students need mental activities to process their experience into knowledge.

Piaget's theory of assimilation and accommodation (1953) discusses the three aspects of knowledge, learning, and teaching from the theory's related perspectives. Piaget perceives learning as the construction of knowledge and teaching as providing a simulation environment with concrete materials. Vygotsky's (1978) focus on social interaction suggests that the mental activities for active learning to take place within the zone of proximal development. Based on Vygotsky's contribution, learners and teachers need to share the understanding of the aim, purpose, tool, and context of the task before starting it. The constructivist theory emphasizes the constructive mental activity of forming and interpreting the learning experience. Leaners create interpretations of the world based on their experience and to do so they should be actively involved in activities that enhance social interaction (Pardjono, 2002).

These theories suggest that active learning comprises learning opportunities provisions to construct knowledge and interpret experiences through different types of mental and social activities. These opportunities enhance learning through developing knowledge, interaction and so skills. Learning opportunities refer "to a cognitive or meta-cognitive activity that a learner get engage in which is likely to lead to learning" [which are] "available to learners everywhere at all times" (Crabbe, 2003, p. 117).

Learning opportunities provided in an active leaning environment reflect what Demirci (2006) describes as a dynamic type of learning where students interact with teachers, materials and each other so each student is exclusively paid attention. A considerable amount of research tackles the low achievement level among EFL learners and considers neglecting low achievers during class interaction as a major reason for it. This leads stakeholders to encourage teachers to adapt remedial plans to raise students' achievements through increasing the learning opportunities and task involvement of low achievers. This raises the importance of active learning which provides learners with pools of learning opportunities and involvement chances. In Table 2.1, Eison (2010) illustrates the difference between low-risk and high- risk strategies[5]. The shorter and more structured (e.g., short writing activities, debates...) active learning strategies are, the less risk they involve of losing the class time and not covering the course content. Thorough planning and clear instructions from the side of the teacher also reduce the risk of losing students' attention and learning aims.

Table 2.1 Low-risk vs High-risk Active Learning Strategies

Dimension	Low-risk strategies	High-risk strategies
Class time required	Relatively short	Relatively long
Degree of structure	More structured	Less structured
Degree of planning	Meticulously planned	Spontaneous
Subject matter	concrete	Abstract
Student's previous knowledge of the subject matter	Better informed	Less informed
Student's previous knowledge of teaching technique	Familiar	Unfamiliar
Instructor's prior experience with teaching technique	Considerable	Limited
Pattern of interaction	Between teacher and students	Between students

The differences between the active learning strategies based on their level of risk will help the researcher to classify the active learning strategies that the teachers use in their lessons. It will also provide a framework for English teachers to classify their strategies, evaluate them and so work on developing their applications.

2.4 Active Learning and Learners' Involvement

Watters (2014) states that there is an association between active learning and the engagement of students in their learning and this are viewed from the perspective of improving students' learning experience. Learner's engagement according to Purnell (2006) is evident: "when students share similar values and approaches to learning as their lecturers, spend sufficient time and energy on educational tasks, learn with others inside and outside the classroom, actively explore ideas with other people and learn to value perspectives other than their own" (cited in Watters, 2014, p. 74). Purnell's (ibid) specification of learner's engagement shares many characteristics of active learning and this makes it one of its principles. This involvement takes different forms as discussed by Edwards (2015) who proposed an active learning framework[6]. Learners should be encouraged to get intellectually engaged with the content by being active participants

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[5] See various active learning classifications: Adams and Ray (2016), Silberman (1996), and Bellanca (2009).

[6] The framework is adapted from active learning advocates (see also Edwards, Kemp & Page, 2014; Neisn, 2012) who suggest that the most lasting learning is a result of direct interaction with the intellectual, social and physical environment. Therefore, Edwards' framework (2015) specifies intellectual, social and physical involvement as requirements of active learning framework. Edwards' framework (2015) suggests that learners need social interaction as this is one of the characteristics of young adolescents who prefer to work. Keeping this type of interaction in mind, one can see that it is one aspect of active learning which involves learners in all sorts of discussions, pair, and class works. Congruent to this, Farrel (2009) argues that "engagement is inseparable from empowerment…. [explaining that] when students make a contribution to the collective activity they are a part of [….], they are empowered to learn" (p. 3) and this certainly implies that "failure to learn is a result of exclusion from participation" (ibid).

rather than passive listeners. They need to be directed to go beyond memorization and use their higher forms of thinking which are reflected by the top three levels in Bloom's Taxonomy: analyzing, evaluating and creating. Through active learning techniques such as inquiry or concept mapping, problem solving exercises and high-level questioning learners need to use their high-level thinking skills.

2.5 Active Learning Cycle

Learning goes in a process that starts by doing the learning activity where students interact with the content and with others (individually, groups or whole class). This is followed by a review of what they have done, engaging their reflective skills. The third phase involves a teacher-student discussion. Finally, students apply what they have learnt in other context to demonstrate learning.
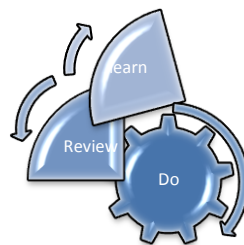

Figure2.2 Active Learning Cycle (adapted from Anderson & De Silva,2007)

The active learning cycle matches Kolb Learning Cycle (part of the experiential learning theory) which states that learning is represented by four stages cycle (See Figure 2.3). This cycle presents four modes for learning to occur. According to Kolb (1984) leaning moves between the four modes and that there should be a balance between these modes (cited in Kayes, 2002)
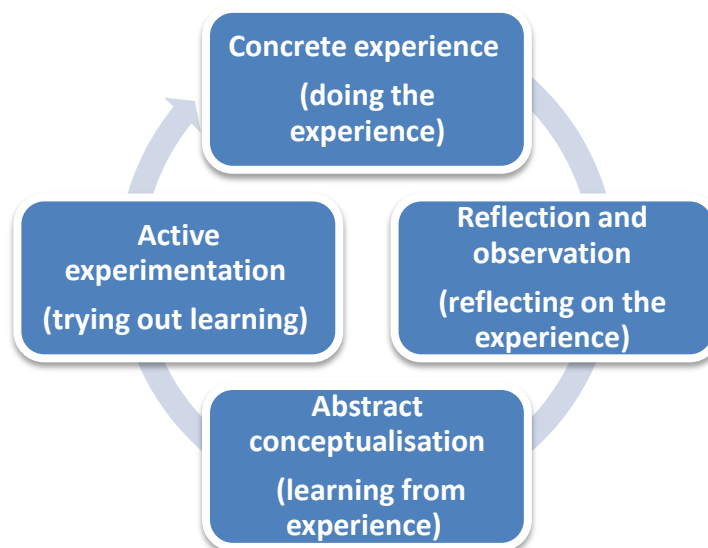

Figure 2.3 Kolb learning cycle (cited in Kayes,2002)

Observing current practices in EFL teaching, more emphasis is found to be given to the first stage of both cycles which deals with doing the tasks or the learning. The other stages which deal with reviewing and reflecting on learning are mostly neglected either due to misconception or lack of knowledge. Bergh et al. (2012) argue that learners need

qualitatively feedback in order to achieve the goal of learning and this to be done through reviewing and reflection. This suggests the need to address existing perceptions that tend to discard the elements of review and reflection.

2.4 Active Learning Elements

Bedair (2008) suggests active learning has four basic elements that need to be adequately addressed for optimal learning to take place (See Figure 2.4). When learners are given the chance to answer questions, discuss and share ideas and opinions orally or explain points to each other, they reinforce their understanding and learning. Learning reinforcement will be expanded through meaningful listening were students relate what they hear with what they know.
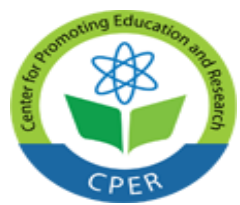

Figure2.4 Elements of Active Learning (Bedair, 2008)

A great deal of learning takes place through reading but reading effectively is not an easy job because most learners don't receive instructions on how to do this. Active learning provides learners with the support to read, focus on the main parts and process what they are reading. Writing also provides means for students to express their learning and this makes learning visible for students as well as teachers. This visibility provides feedback and evaluation of how well is the learning (See also Badawi, 2010). Allowing learners to pause, think of what they have done or learned helps in developing their retention of information. Reviewing and reflecting are processes reflecting two important stages of the active learning model cycle as discussed earlier. Active Learning elements align with the four skills of English language and this suggests the applicability and efficiency of AL method in teaching and learning English in EFL contexts.

2.7 Role Distribution in Active Learning

One major implication of active learning is the role distribution change in the T&L scene, having teachers and learners

embracing new roles. El Salhi (2013) argues that active learning partly shifts the focus to students and their engagement with materials while in traditional methods teachers and their ways of delivering the content were the main focus. This shift in role forces the students to give up their traditional role as passive receivers of information to active participants in the learning process. Watkins, Carnell and Lodge (2007) state that "In order to get more activated learners we need the learners to be involved in activating the classroom" (p.72) [and this leads to] "change in the balance of roles" (ibid). Teachers become facilitators who give more responsibility to learners and who are viewed as resources for each other. Teachers are also seen as partners in a learning team where learning environment consists of individual work, collaborative arrangements, more open questions and projects where learners are socially active. Teachers in this sense work on providing support, context, relevance and constant feedback (Cattaneo, 2017). Teachers have to give more space and opportunities to learners as well.

The below table discusses teacher and student role in Active Learning:

Table 2.2 Distribution of Roles in Active Learning

Teacher role	Students role
• encourages students and support their learning process	• understand and appreciate their skills and abilities
• finds a balance between group and individual strategies	• interact actively with the teacher, other students, and course materials
• structuring active learning experiences	• Enrich the learning and teaching process with their participation
• creates learning opportunities for students	• activate any learning opportunities available
• creates social interaction	• Appreciate others' ideas and interact actively with them
• provides constant feedback (meta-cognition and social learning) on the learning process	• think and reflect on their learning and learning process • provide feedback to each other.
• negotiate meaning, ideas, opinions, and information	• construct their knowledge
• motivate students to actively participate in the learning process	• be responsible for their learning /take suitable decisions

Note: adapted from *Altaulum Alnashit* (p.67) by A.M. Rifaei,2012, Alexandria; (*altalum alnashit bein al nadharia wa altatbeeq* (p.71-74) by J.Sa'ada al elt., 2006, Jordan, copyrights: Dar al Shurooq Active learning, (p.29-31), R. Badawi, 2010, Egypt, copyrights: Taibah.
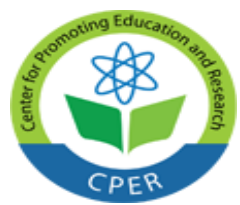
3. Methodology

The current study aims to explore teachers' perceptions of active learning and the impact they have on their classroom practices. Since active learning pedagogy and perceptions are multi-faced, the study opted for the use of the mixed method approach to collect data.

3.1 Research Design

The mixed method approach used in the current research study refers to the integration of qualitative and quantitative forms in tandem. The study combines the use of a questionnaire (quantitative) and observations with interviews (qualitative) to ensure greater validity and reliability, seeking the flexibility (Creswell, 2009), cross-validation (Patton, 2002) and expanded comprehension of the research problem (Al Muqbali,2017) are the main reasons behind the use of a mixed method in z study.

3.2 Research Population

The population of the study is cycle two EFL teachers from Batinah North Governorate. According to MoE portal, the total number of the target population is 560 teachers teaching grades five to ten for the academic year 2017/2018; 273 male teachers and 287 female teachers. The choice of cycle two stems for the fact that it represents a bridge between Cycle where students learn by doing and Cycle III (post basic) where more focus is placed on content. The English courses in cycle two aim at encouraging students to be actively involved in their learning process through reflection and evaluation (Teachers' books grades5-10). Accordingly, learners are then expected to take an active role in their learning process and teachers are expected to face the challenge of selecting meaningful active learning strategies that optimize the grasp of language and content at stake.

The questionnaire was distributed among 170 teachers (59 males and 111females) with various levels of years of experience. The population represents 30% of the total population in Oman (See tables 3.1 and 3.2 for details). The participant teachers have different years of experience as shown in table (3.2).

Table 3.1 /Sample Population Distribution based on Gender

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	59	34.7
	Female	111	65.3
	Total	170	100.0

Table 3.2 /Sample population Distribution Based on Years of Experience

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1-5years	11	6.5
	6-10	57	33.5
	11-15	75	44.1
	16-20	12	7.1
	more than 20	15	8.8
	Total	170	100.0
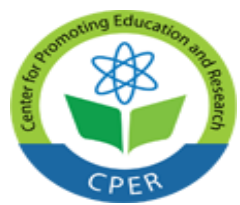
Observation forms were distributed among eighteen teachers. Observation sessions took place in classes of all Cycle II grades (V to X).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten teachers from different schools. The selection of teachers was based on their degree of belief in active learning and their advocacy of it as a T&L approach. The interviews took between 20 to 25 minutes each.

3.3 Instruments and Design

As stated above, triangulation was at stake with the use of tools of questionnaire, observation checklist, and semi-structured interview to collect data for this study, each with specific purpose, content and expected output.

3.3.1 Questionnaire

The rationale behind using the questionnaire instrument is to investigate teachers' perceptions and answer research question one. The expected questionnaire output can be summed up as follows:
1. Teachers' perceptions of their general knowledge of active learning in terms of its relation to the concepts of learner involvement, skill development, collaboration, feedback and motivation.
2. Teachers' perceptions of role distribution which covers both teacher and student role in active learning.
3. Active learning strategies that teachers use in their classes and reasons for using them.

The questionnaire content covers three sections:

Section 1: participants' educational information,
Section 2: a. teacher's general active learning knowledge[7]; b. teachers' role in active learning; and 3. Students' role.
Section 3: the use of active learning strategies in terms of their types and their frequencies from the participant's point of view with justifications (See Appendix A).

The design of the questionnaire went through a pilot stage where twenty teachers gave their feedback on the questions and helped through their suggestions in finalizing the questionnaire. The pilot stage consisted also of informal interviews where teachers were asked to talk generally about the use of active learning in their classes. This discussion helped in the formation of some statements and sub-section in a way that is most suitable for the participants.
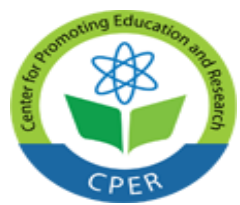
3.3.2 Observation Checklist

Observation is the method used in to investigate teachers' real practice of active learning. Baker (2006) states that "the value of observation is that it permits researchers to study people in their native environment in order to understand things from their perspectives". To reduce the effect of the observer paradox, an observation checklist was prepared, consisting of four sections. Sections one and two cover teacher's role and student's role during active learning lesson using a rating scale of Yes or No. Section three focuses on active learning strategies used during the observed lesson where the observer record the name of the strategy and its nature. The Last section covers the four steps of the Active Learning Cycle (See Appendix B).

3.3.3 Semi-Structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews were used to get a deep insight into teachers' perceptions and perceived outcome upon implementation of active learning sessions. They seek answers and explanations of some behaviors occurred during observations. Questions cover teachers' perceptions, role in active learning, and impact of active learning on learner involvement, motivation, and self-learning (See Appendix C).

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[7] Knowledge in this respect covers teachers' awareness of active learning merits, learners' engagement, collaboration, motivation, learning opportunities and feedback as well as the active learning cycle.

3.4 Reliability and Validity

The questionnaire was checked for relevance and clarity by four Assistant Professors from Sohar University and six regional supervisors. The evaluators were also asked to give any suggestions deemed essential or relevant to the purpose of the study.

The reliability of the questionnaire was determined through a piloting sample of twenty teachers selected randomly. The reliability coefficient was found to be 0.81 which is good since the absolute value is between 1.2 and 1.4. The piloting also provided some valuable information regarding the questionnaire layout and timing which were considered later during the administration.

The observation checklist inter-reliability was established by calculating the percentage of agreement between two observers (the researcher, the regional supervisor or the senior teacher) checking the performance of five teachers. The reliability coefficient related to the observation checklist was 0.89 which indicates that the checklist is sufficiently reliable.

3.5 Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed electronically first and was sent to supervisors and teachers from Batinah North. Two weeks later, printed copies of the questionnaire were also distributed as the responses to the electronic questionnaires were limited. The data from the questionnaire were collected through the months of March and April 2018. Data was collected during the months of April and May 2018. The observation took place in 10 different cycle two schools in Batinah North. Three classroom observations were done in each grade from grade five to grade ten.

The second stage of collecting data was the semi-structured interviews which help the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the topic by exploring more information and ideas (Wagner, 2010). The semi-structured interviews took around twenty minutes to twenty-five each and in order to provide privacy to the teachers, the interviews were done as one-on-one. To achieve to best of the interview time, an interview guide was prepared beforehand (See Appendix C). The interview guide serves the purpose of exploring many respondents more systematically and comprehensively while keeping the interview focus on the line (Dicico-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

3.6 Data Analysis

Data emerging from the research instruments was processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS 11.0) for relevant and adequate statistical analysis to generate required statistical evidence. The descriptive analysis used in this study was means, standard deviation, and percentages.

For finding the correlations between the variables, T-test, One-way ANOVA and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient were used. As for the descriptive data of section three of the questionnaire, they were analyzed qualitatively by the matizing them into headings and sub-headings.

4. Research Results

The presentation of the research results focuses on the two areas of: 1. Teachers' perceptions of their knowledge, and 2. perceptions and practices correlations with related sub-areas.

4.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning

For the sake of clarity and organization, results related to teachers' perceptions are presented along three sections: General Knowledge, Teacher Role, and Student Role. They are based on the calculation of frequencies, means and standard deviations of the questionnaire questions. Active leaning strategies used in classes, reflecting teachers' perceptions, were classified into low-risk and high-risk and then frequencies and percentages were calculated manually.

4.1.1. Teachers' Perceptions of their General Knowledge of Active Learning (AL)

Teachers' perceptions of their general active learning knowledge are an important parameter in determining its success at the implementation stage. This knowledge comprises four components on: Teachers' perceptions of active learning merits, cycle, types of interaction, and feedback.

### 4.1.1.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning Merits

Statistical evidence, means and standard deviations from Table 4.1, indicate that teachers have high perceptions of AL's impact on skill development, learning styles and understanding. Teachers' responses to statements one, two, three and five have mean values 4.4 and 4.3 which fall in the high category according to Oxford Scale and with low standard deviations which indicate general agreement. Chart 4.1 shows that more than 80% of teachers perceive that active learning helps in developing students' skills, serves different learning styles and deepen understanding of the content. Answering statement one, 32.9% of participants perceive that active learning tackles skill development more than knowledge transmitting and 47.6% agree. In addition, 50.6% of participants strongly agree and 41% agree to statement two that "Active Learning develops students' critical thinking skills that can be transferred to real life". Participants' answers to statement three regarding active learning serving different learning styles indicate that 50.6% strongly agree and 40% agree. Moreover, 37.1% of the participants strongly agree and 56.5% agree that through active learning students deepen their understanding of the content. These percentages explain the high positive perception level teachers have towards the impact of active learning on students' skill development and understanding.

Table 4.1 Teachers' Perceptions of AL Merits 1

	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Statement 5
Mean	4.4941	4.4176	4.4000	4.3000
Std. Deviation	.60123	.65879	.69145	.60423

Statistics in Table 4.2 indicate teachers' high positive perceptions of active learning role in providing students with opportunities to take decisions. Means values of related statements (four and nine) gets in the high level (4.1 and 3.9) according to Oxford's (1991) scale.

**Chart 4.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning**
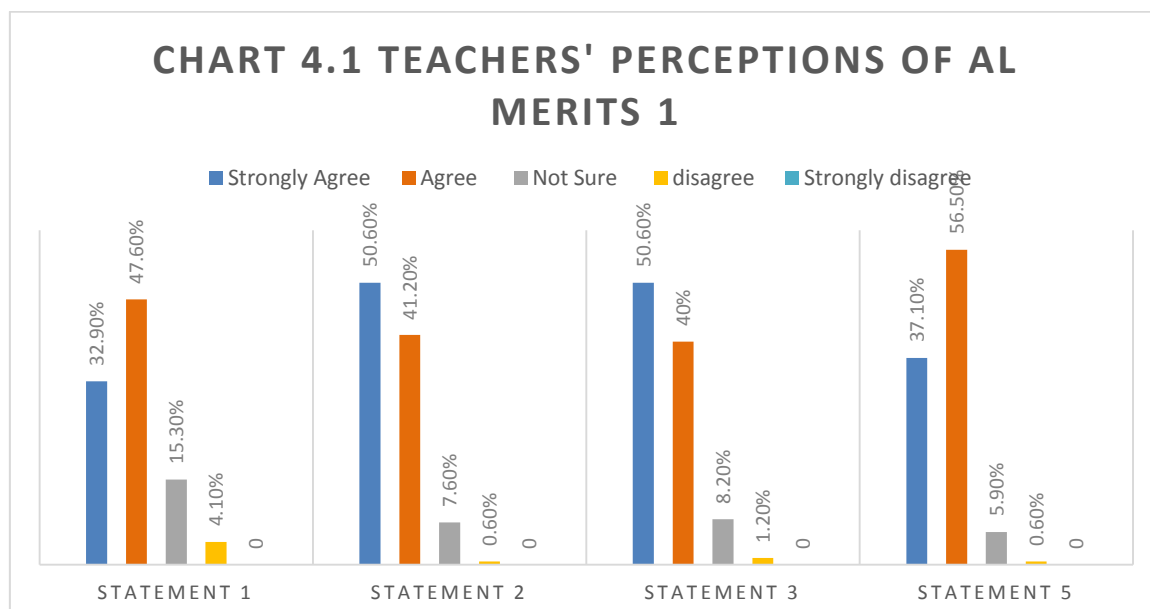
More than 70% (21.8% strongly agree and 50%% agree) of participants (See Chart 4.2) agree to statement nine that active learning provide learning opportunities for all students with no eliminations. More than 50% of teachers view any learning activity as an active learning opportunity whereas 32.4% indicate that they are not sure and 10% disagree.

Table 4.2 Teachers' Perceptions of AL Merits2

|	Statement 4	Statement 9	Statement 14
Mean	4.1824	3.9000	3.6118
Std. Deviation	.78200	.77421	.86475

This inconsistency between teachers' perceptions (statement fourteen) may indicate a certain degree of active learning misperception in that it should be based on specific learning activities and that not any learning activity can be modified to serve active learning purposes.

Chart 4.2 Teachers' Perceptions of AL Merits2
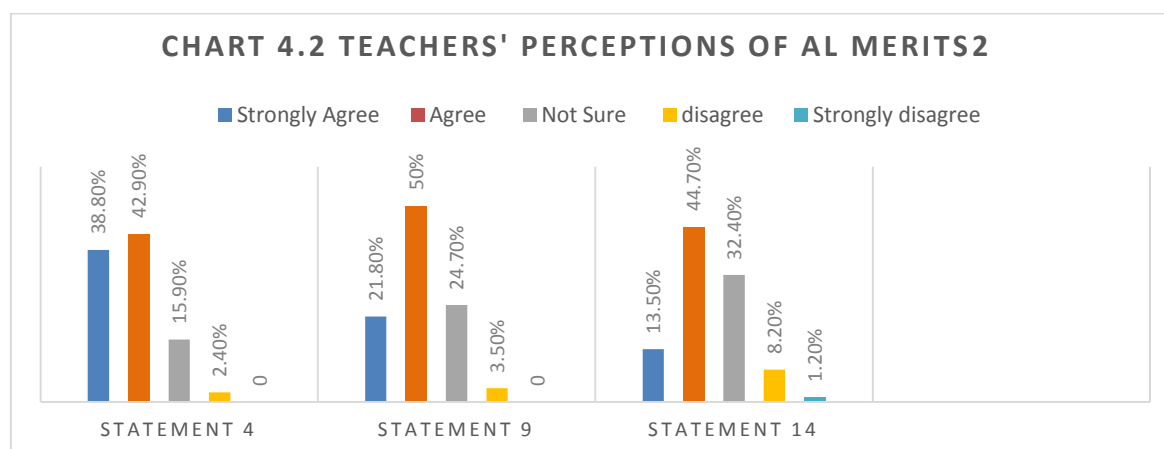
Another misperception about active learning can be traced in the inconsistency of responses towards statement ten (See Chart 4.3). Responses spread nearly equally between the scales as 36% agree, 31% are not sure and 32.4% disagree. This variation between responses shows teachers' misperception that active learning can be applied during every lesson or every day. Interviews further confirm the existence of this misperception and relate it to the intensity of the content. The mismatch between the content size and the allocated teaching time is behind such misperceptions.

**Chart 4.3 Teachers' Perception of AL Merits 3**
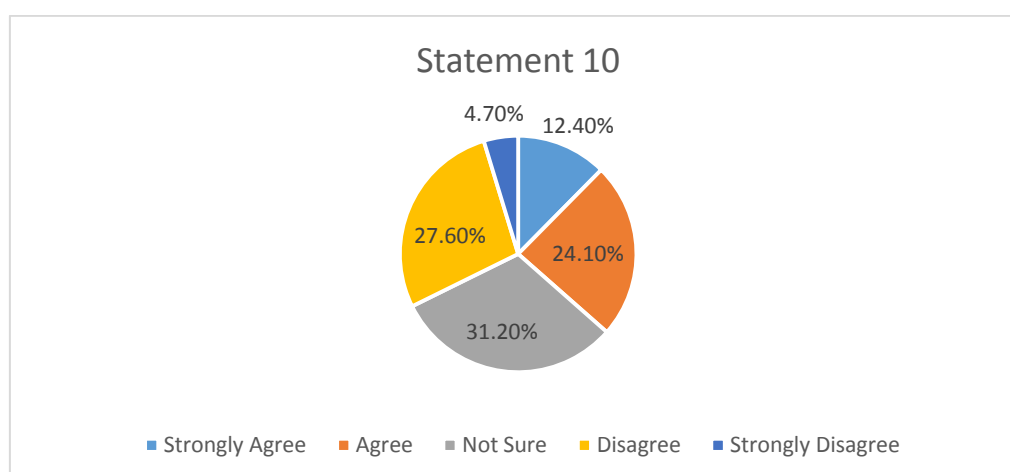
Teachers are kept in a rush to finish the content within the time given. This rush forces the teachers to reduce the use of AL strategies as they may require time for grasp and implementation. As table 4.3 shows, there is a consistency between teachers' responses to statements 7, 11, 12, and 15 as standard deviations remain low (0.6 and 0.7) which shows a good agreement between answers. Teachers perceive that active learning increases students' participation (statement seven) in the class and affects their learning attitudes positively (statement eleven).

Table 4.3 Teachers' Perceptions of AL Merits 4

	Statement 7	Statement 11	Statement 12	Statement 15
Mean	4.4235	4.1529	4.5882	4.2647
Std. Deviation	.70294	.67070	.65802	.71785

The majority of teacher respondents also agree (67.1% strongly agree and 25.9% agree) (See Chart 4.4 statement twelve) that using active learning makes the lesson interesting. Responses to statement fifteen indicate teachers' agreement (50% agree and 39.4% strongly agree) that students feel motivated especially if they are given the responsibility for their learning.

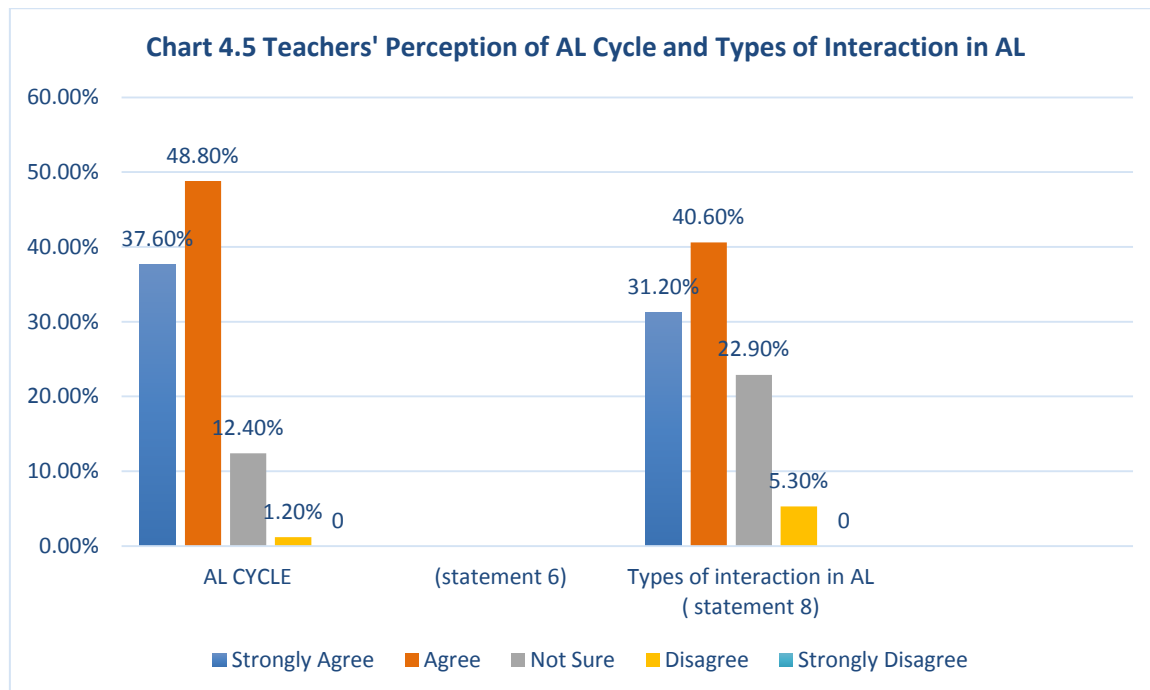*Chart 4.4 Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning Merits 4*
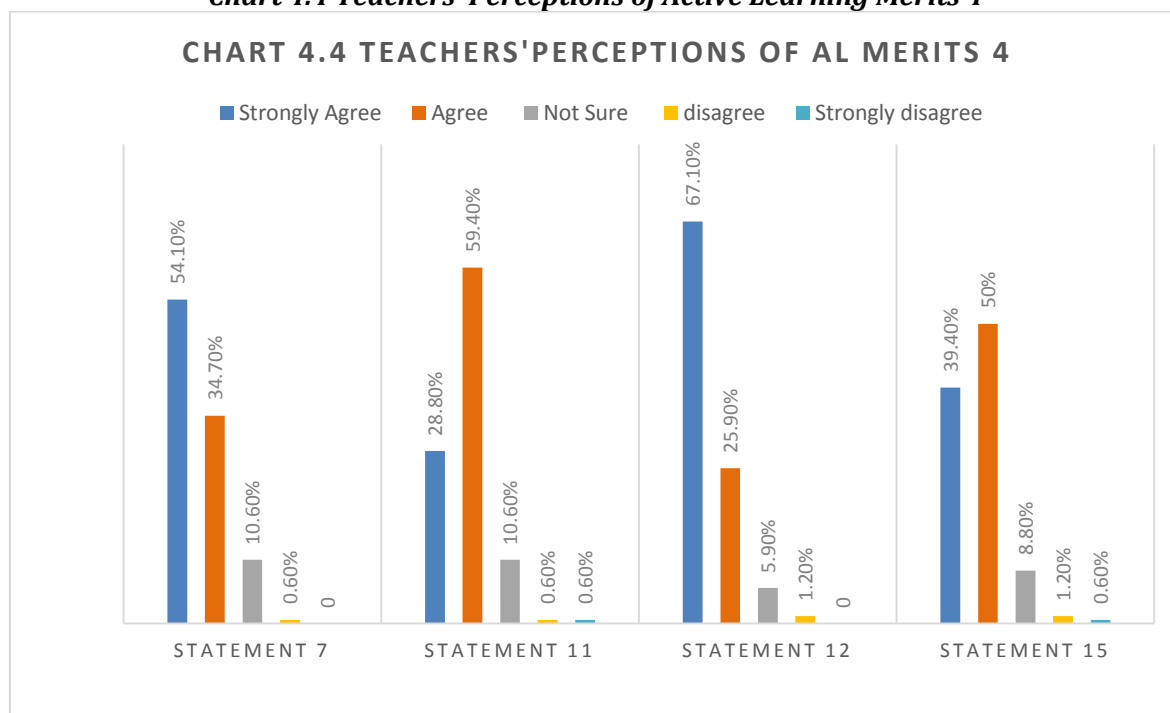
The agreement between teachers' responses (See Chart 4.4) and the high mean values (4.1 and above) with low standard deviations (below one) as shown in table 4.3, reflect teachers' positive perceptions regarding active learning and its effectiveness in increasing students' participation, and motivation.

4.1.1.2 Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning Cycle and type of Interaction
As Chart 4.5 shows, there is a rare consistency in teachers' perceptions of active learning (AL) cycle and the types of interaction therein. The majority of teachers (39% strongly agree and 49.2% agree) agree that active learning goes in a cycle that starts by doing the activity and ends in applying learning. During this cycle, students should be involved in three types of interaction: intellectual, social and physical (statement eight).

Responses to statement eight reveal that more than 70% (30.4% strongly agree and 40% agree) of teachers perceive that the three types of interaction should take place within active learning.

Chart 4.5 Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning Cycle and Types of Interaction

The skewed answers towards the agree side reflect a promising degree of awareness among teachers. This tendency can be built on to improve real active learning classroom practice.

4.1.1.3 Teachers' Perceptions of Feedback during Active Learning (AL)

Responses to statement 13 as shown in Chart 4.6 show that 87.1% (60.6% agree and 26.5% strongly agree) of the teachers perceive that Active learning provides constant feedback on students' learning. These percentages and high value of mean (4.1) indicate teachers' belief in the role active learning has in providing them with constant feedback about students' learning and achievement (See Chart 4.6 and Table 4.4).

Responses to statement sixteen in relation to how the feedback should take place within active learning indicate that 54% of teachers agree and 22% strongly agree that students are given time to think and reflect on what they have done after the active learning activity whereas 20% are not sure which shows lack of knowledge that could affect their use and implementation (See Chart 4.6).

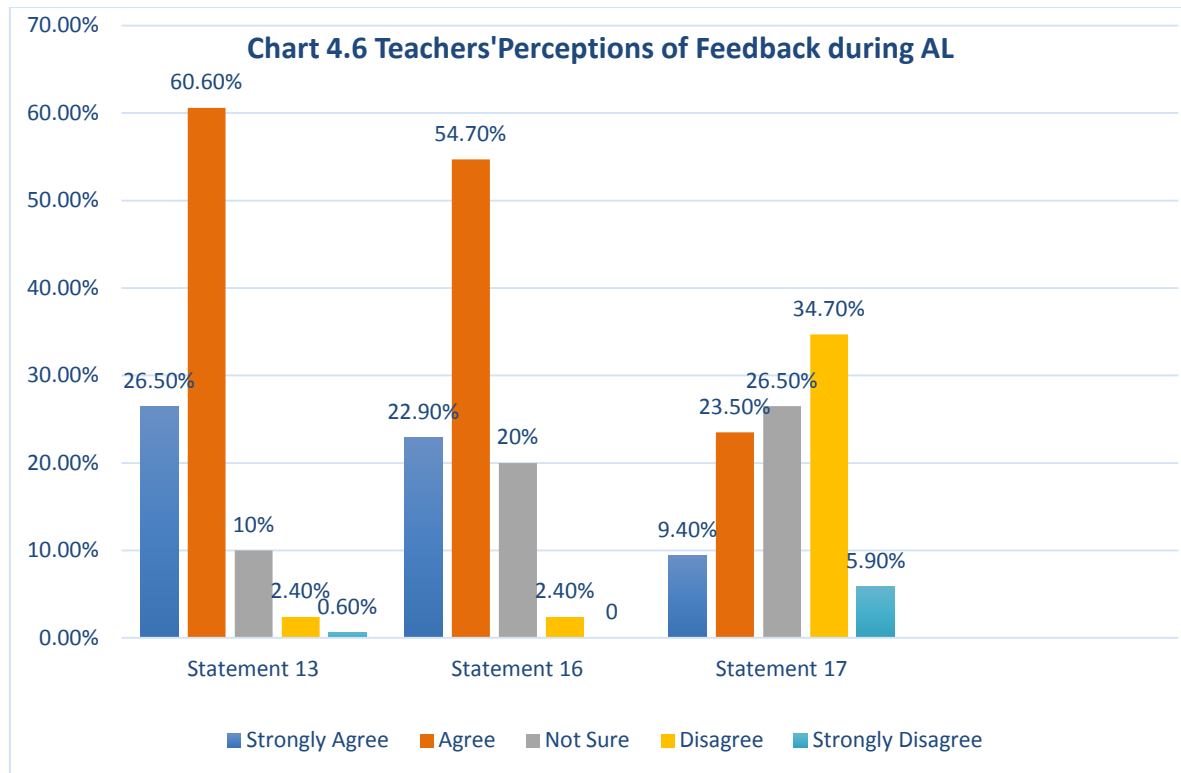**Chart 4.5 Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning Feedback**

Chart 4.6 Teachers'Perceptions of Feedback during AL

Table 4.4 Teachers' Perceptions of Feedback during AL

	Statement 13	Statement 16	Statement 17
Mean	4.1000	3.9924	2.9588
Std. Deviation	.71045	.72547	1.09521

The standard deviation in statement seventeen (See Table 4.4) is high (more than 1) and the mean value (2.9) is considered a bit low which proves the inconsistency of responses. This inconsistency is also shown by the frequencies of responses.

Though 40.6% of teachers disagree to that feedback during active learning lessons is only given by the teachers referring to their fair knowledge, 26.5% are "not sure" and 32.9% "agree". It appears that there is a degree of misconception with how feedback can take place during active learning. These waters down to teachers' perceptions of their role and that of their students in active learning.

4.1.2 Teachers' Perceptions of their Role in Active Learning (AL)

Means and standard deviations in table 4.5 indicate that teachers have moderate perceptions of their role in active learning as the means of statements eighteen to twenty-four range from 4.2 to 4.3 (which is considered moderate on Oxford's (1991) Scale).

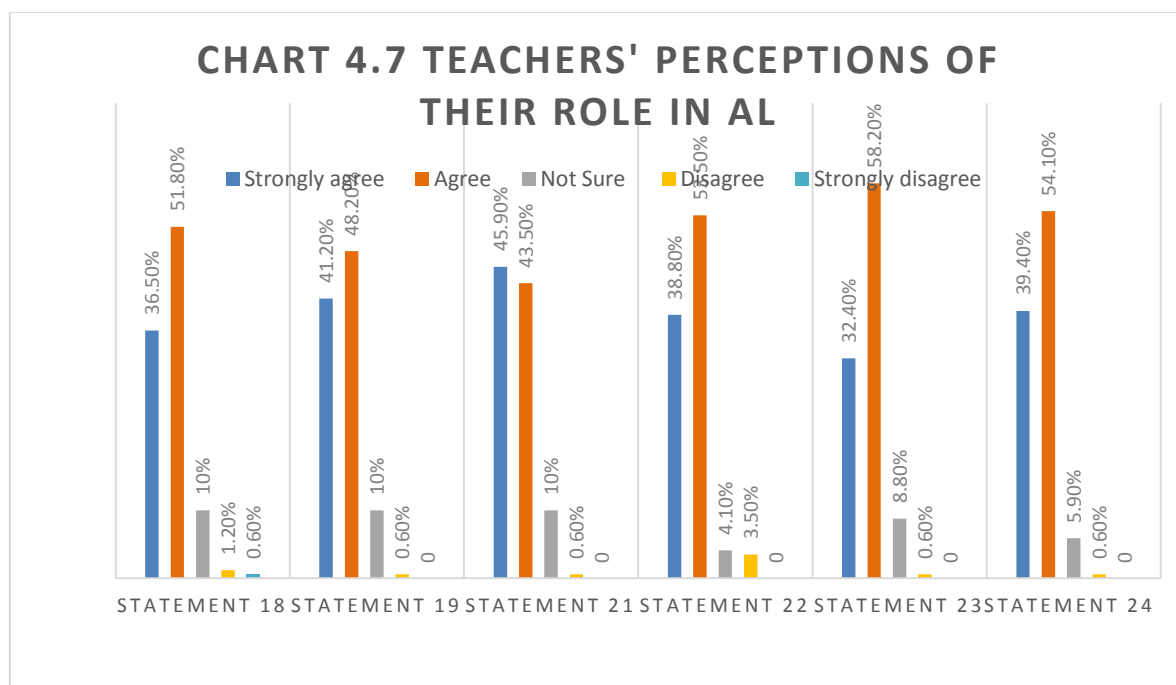**Table 4.5 Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role in AL**

	Statement 18	Statement 19	Statement 21	Statement 22	Statement 23	Statement 24
Mean	4.2235	4.3000	4.3471	4.2765	4.2235	4.3235
Std. Deviation	.71900	.66921	.66121	.70501	.62211	.61111

Responses to statement eighteen indicate teachers' positive perception of their role in negotiating ideas, opinions and information to create discussions rather than to lecture only as 51.8% agree and 36.5% strongly agree (totaling at 88.3%) to this statement (See Chart 4.7). Teachers also perceive giving feedback to students as an essential role to be carried over by teachers in AL. Feedback needs to be given on the learning process and not only on task achievement. This belief can be traced in the responses to statements nineteen (41.2% strongly agree and 48.2% agree) and twenty-two (38.8% strongly agree and 53.5% agree) where more than 80% of participants agree that their role is to provide feedback on the learning as well as the achievement of the task (See Chart 4.7).

Statistics from table 4.5 also indicate a degree of consensus among teachers in their answers to statements 21 and 24 as standard deviation is considered to be low (0.6). In both statements, more than 80% (45.9%, 39.4% strongly agree and 43.5%, 54.1% agree) of teachers perceive creating collaboration among students as one of their roles in active learning. They agree that enhancing collaboration comes through asking students to work in pairs and in groups but at the same time they need to balance between group and individual work.

A stronger consensus appears in responses to statement twenty-three as 32.4% of teachers strongly agree and 58.2% agree that creating opportunities for efficient involvement is one of their main roles in active learning. This reflects a sound understanding of their role as facilitators in active learning and not lecturers.

Chart 4.7 Teachers' Perceptions of Their Role in AL

CHART 4.7 TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ROLE IN AL

4.1.3 Teachers' Perceptions of Student Role in Active Learning

As can be inferred from statistical evidence, teachers think their students can play various roles in active learning. Information search pre and post lesson is believed to be a role carried out by students with 70% agree, 18.2% not sure and 10.6% disagree.

The situation is not different for statement twenty- nine which tackles teachers' perceptions of students' collaborative role in doing work with peers or groups with almost the same tendency. Teachers' responses to statements thirty, thirty-one and thirty-four, add an agreement among majority of teachers regarding students' role in providing feedback to each other and in reflecting and self- evaluating their own learning. 70% of teachers (51.8% agree and 17.1% strongly agree) view that providing feedback to each other is a role that students need to take over in active learning whereas 23.5% are not sure. The percentage of agreement increases in statement thirty- one to reach above 70% (14.7% strongly agree and 58.8% agree) and the percentage of "not sure" reduces one percent to reach 22.4%. This indicates teachers' belief in giving students relevant chances to reflect on the activities done. The situation differs with statement thirty-four as the agreement percentage reduces to 64.1% (48.2% agree and 15.9% strongly agree) and the percentage of "not sure" increases to 25.9%. This shows some uncertainty in relation to self-evaluating own assignment being an essential role in active learning that students need to take over. This percentage of uncertainty appears in interviews as a result of teachers' lack of trust in students' abilities in handling this work.

The variation between responses becomes lower with statements thirty- two and thirty- three. The majority of teachers (74.7%: 22.9% strongly agree and 51.8% agree) think that students have the opportunity to be engaged in social interaction through interacting actively with others and appreciating their ideas.

Chart 4.8 Teachers' Perceptions of Student Role in AL
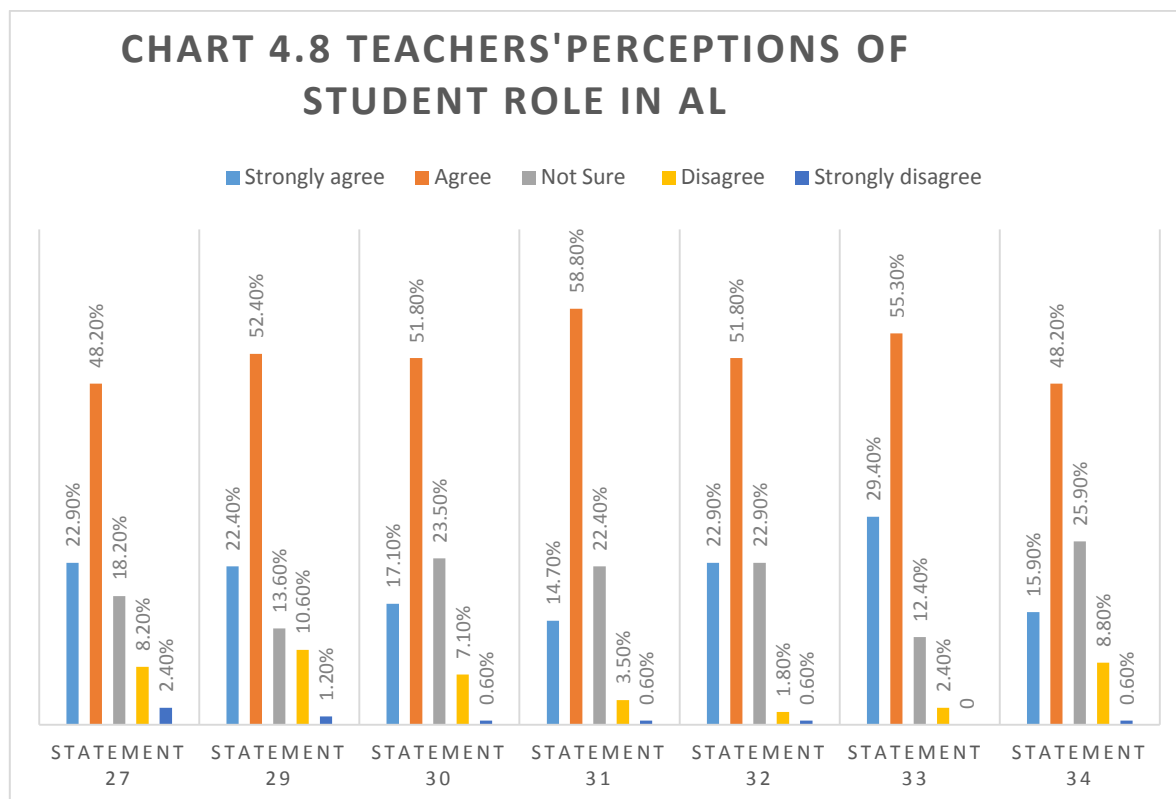
They also have the opportunity for intellectual interaction with the content by applying skills and knowledge as 84.7% (29.4% strongly agree and 55.3% agree) of participant Reponses fall in the agree scale (See Chart 4.8). The situation

differs with statement thirty-five where consensus becomes limited in relation to the third type of engagement in active learning. Around 20% of teachers were not sure if students should only be physically active during active learning, whereas 40% disagree and more than 30% agree. This inconsistency in answers reveals confusion between teachers' perceptions that hopefully would be clarified during observations.

4.1.4 Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning Strategies Used in their Classes

Section three of the questionnaire tackles the active learning strategies that teachers use in their classes and the rationale behind using them from teachers' perceptions. These strategies as shown in table 4.6, range from high-risk to low-risk strategies[8]. 71% of the active learning strategies used are of the low-risk level type and only 29% are of high-risk level type (See Appendix D for more details).

This focus on using low-risk level strategies reflects and confirms the initial expectations discussed in the interviews. This is explained by the fact that low risk-level strategies reduce the challenge level of losing time and control over class. Table 4.6 sketches out the frequency of use in relation to active learning strategies from teachers' perceptions.

Table 4.6 Teachers' Perceptions of Frequently Used AL strategies

| Strategy	LR	HR	Frequency	Strategy	LR	HR	frequency
Games	√		99%	Group work	√		73%
Role play		√	15%	mini teacher	√		3%
Brainstorming	√		31%	competitions	√		23%
Gallery walk	√		7%	Jigsaw	√		15%
Snowball	√		3%	mind maps		√	3%
Video show	√		3%	Corners	√		8%
reading strategy	√		15%	Songs	√		3%
acting/miming		√	12%	individual presentations		√	3%
think, pair, share	√		3%	pair work	√		3%
hot seat	√		12%	problem-based learning		√	3%
Flipped learning		√	3%	Discussion	√		15%
				Total	16 (73%)	6 (27%)	

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[8] This is based on Eison's (2010) classification.

Teachers perceive games and group work as the most frequent strategies used. This is explained by many reasons according to teachers' responses to section three of the questionnaire and during the interviews. First, they make lessons interesting and fun and this motivates students to participate. Second, they change the pace and mood of the class and create competitive spirit and atmosphere among students. Lastly, they make learning super-efficient. Brainstorming and competitions came in the third place according to their frequency of use as they make learning easy, quick and involve students in tasks that force them to think and answer. Jigsaw, reading strategies, role play and discussions are also used frequently though relatively in small instances from teachers' perceptions.

Most of the discussed strategies (73%) in table 4.6 are of a low- level of risk. This is normal at this level of education as students are still in young age to handle high-level risk strategies as reported by some interviewees. Another explanation is that low-level risk strategies offer a limited degree of challenge compared to high-level risk which makes the teachers in ease and comfort that the class is well managed.

The choice of active learning strategy to be used in the lesson is believed to be based on selective criteria. This appears in the answers to statement twenty-six (See Chart 4.9). These criteria were described in section three of the questionnaire and were also emphasized by the interviewees as the following: students' levels and needs, time available (preparation and conduction), lesson aims and learning styles.

Chart 4.9 Statements 26

Chart (4.9) statement 26

- strongly Agree — 22%
- Agree — 58%
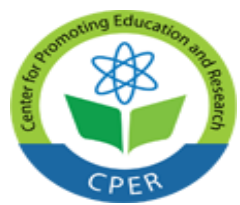- Not Sure — 19%
- disagree — 0%
- Strongly disagree
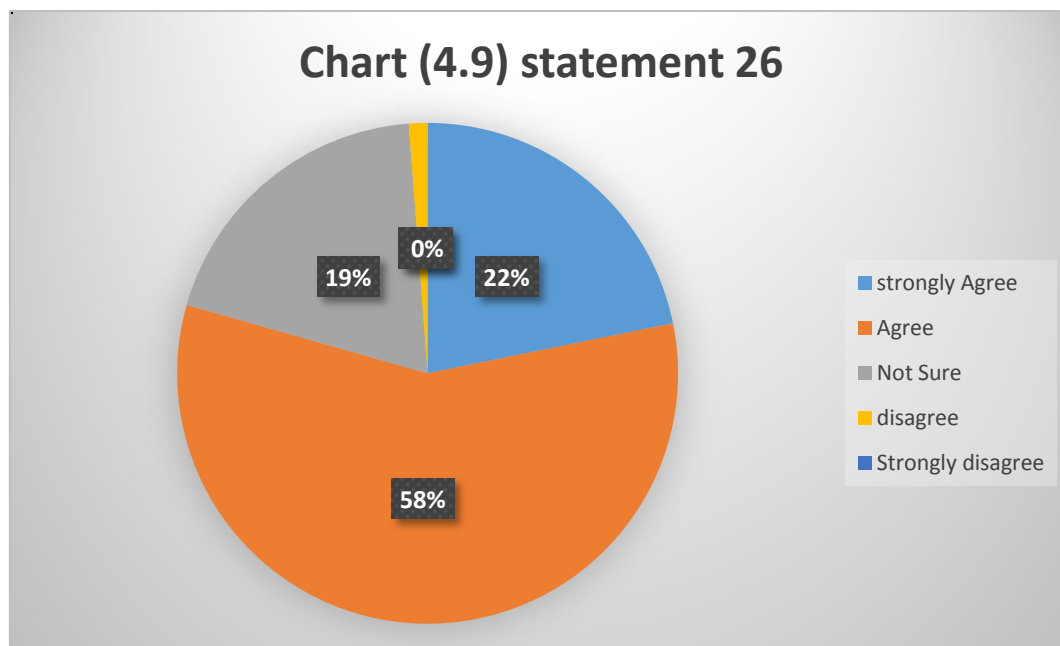
4.2 Correlation of Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning and their Classroom Practices

The third research question in this study seeks to explore the correlation of teachers' perceptions and their practices. T-test, One-way ANOVA, and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient were calculated to determine the nature of such relation.

4.2.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning General Knowledge and their Gender and Experiences

In this section, T-test was used to determine the influence of Teachers' gender on their perceptions of active learning general knowledge. As table 4.11 indicates, there are no significant statistical differences at (.05) between male or female teachers in their perceptions of their general knowledge of active learning. This implies that both male and female teachers have sufficient knowledge and beliefs about active learning. This may be attributed to T&L background similarity.

Table 4.11 / T- test of Teachers' Perceptions and Gender

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Teachers' perceptions	Equal variances assumed	-.903-	168	.368
	Equal variances not assued	-.881-	110.683	.380

To determine if there are statistical differences between teachers' perceptions of their general knowledge based on their years of experience a One-way ANOVA test was used. Results in table 4.12 show that there is no statistical difference at (.05) between teachers' perceptions according to their years of experience. This may be attributed to the encouragement that teacher receive from stakeholders in applying new teaching methods that assure students involvement in their learning like active learning.

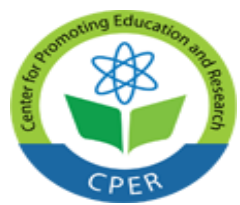**Table 4.12 / One-way ANOVA for Teachers' Perceptions based on their years of experience**

	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups within Groups Total	.555 21.333 21.888	4 165 169	.139 .129	1.074	.371

4. 2.2 Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of their Role in Active Learning
The Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used to find the correlation between teachers' perceptions and the practices of their role in active learning. Correlation test results are in Table (4.13) below:

Table 4.13 /Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of Teachers' perceptions and Practice of their Role in AL

Teacher role	Pearson correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Create social interaction	-.108	.668
Provide feedback on learning	.086	.735
Provide feedback on task achievement	.183	.683
Negotiate ideas, opinions and information	.193	.442
Balance between group and individual strategies	.223	.390
Create opportunities for efficient involvement	-.086	.735

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As table 4.13 shows, there is low, and sometimes negative, correlation between teachers' perceptions and their practices of their role in active learning. The correlation is negative with role one and six and too low with role two as it reaches .086. Correlation between roles three, four and five is available but considered a bit low. This indicates that teachers' perceptions meet their practices in a low degree which might be related to the wrong application of the knowledge or lack of knowledge at the first place.

4.2.3 Teachers' Perceptions and their Practices of Student Role in Active Learning

As table 4.14 demonstrates, there is a negative correlation between teachers' perceptions and their practices in relation to two of students' roles in active learning namely "interact actively with others" and "think and reflect on the activities done". This identified anti-correlation indicates that teachers have positive perceptions but when it comes to application they never practice them. There is a correlation between teachers' perceptions and their practices of the other students' roles but of low degree (0.130 is the correlation value for role two and around 0.2 for the other roles). This also proves lack of knowledge of the distribution of roles and what students should do to be involved actively in their learning process.

Table 4.14 /Pearson's Correlation coefficient of Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Student Role in AL

Student role	Pearson correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Interact actively with others	-.086	.735
Self-evaluate their learning	.130	.608
Think and reflect on the activities done	-.478	.045
Negotiate ideas, opinions and information	.175	.486
Apply their skills and knowledge to interact with the content	.200	.426
Provide feedback to each other	.239	.339

4.2.4 Teachers' Perceptions and their Practices of Active Learning Strategies

Sections 4.1.4 and 4.2.4 discuss the active learning strategies used from the perceptions and the practices of teachers. Correlating teachers' perceptions with the real practices shows that there is a positive correlation between perceptions and practices. For instance, low-level risk strategies were the dominantly used strategies from both practices and perceptions. Games, group work, and discussions were the highest used strategies from both perceptions and practices. This indicates teachers' interest in using a variety of strategies that can help students to learn actively and a clear match between the perceptions and practices.

Correlation tests conducted to explore teachers' practices and their perceptions of active learning cycle indicate a limited degree of correlation (See Table 4.15). This aligns with findings of sections 4.1.1.3 and 4.2.3 where teachers neglect the reflection and application of learning and mainly focus on doing the learning activities. Based on the researchers' observation, this is mostly related to lack of knowledge on proper applications of active learning as a teaching method form the side of the teachers.

Table 4.15 / Correlation of Teachers' Perceptions and their Practices of AL Cycle

	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Teacher perception and practice of AL cycle	.213	.464

5. Research Results Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter builds on the main research findings presented in chapter four, discussing the main findings in relation to the major ideas and studies presented in the literature and in line with the research questions. The chapter discusses the main findings in relation to three axes of perceptions, practices and correlations between them.

5.1 Findings and discussions

As stated earlier in chapter one, the purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions and practices of Cycle Two EFL teachers of active learning. It also aims to determine the correlation of teachers' perceptions and their practices. The following are the main findings of the study:

5.1.1. Teachers' Perceptions of Active Learning

Teachers' perceptions of active learning reflect their perceived positive impact of this mode of learning on students' understanding of the content, skill development and learning styles. This perception and agreement support Taylor's (2003); Anderson's and De Silva's (2007) and Wilke (2003) argument that active learning support different learning styles by providing multi delivery system that helps learners to understand the content and develop skills. Teachers suggest that active learning has a vital role in providing students with constructive learning opportunities, especially for learner involvement, responsibility and opportunities for making decision about their learning and this supports Blidi's (2017) and Aytan's (2017) arguments. Teachers also believe that not any learning activity can serve the purpose of active learning and that active learning is only based on specially designed learning activities. Debbek (2015) in her study suggests that strategies like student-led discussion and group-work can be easily adapted to serve active involvement from the side of the student and can raise students' interest who reported eagerness in using such strategies. This finding and Bell's and Kahrohoff's argument that any activity can be an active learning opportunity defea EFL teachers' perception that active learning is only based on designed activities.

Although teachers strongly believe in the advantages of applying active learning in their classes, they still think that it cannot be applied every day or in every lesson. This is echoed in the interviews, claiming that such learning opportunities may be time consuming. Selecting active learning strategies, preparing them and applying them take too much time from teachers. This justifies their reluctance to adopt it as a mode of learning. The time constraint attributed to the heavy burden formal learning involves, with much focus on content that needs to be covered. Time constraints are the misperception that teachers have even though reviewing literature proves that learning opportunities are available everywhere (Crabbe, 2003) for students so teachers need not to create or prepare them. This time constraint was one of the reasons behind instructors' hesitance in applying active learning in their classes as reported by Debbek's (2015) study.

Teachers highly believe in the role active learning plays in creating excitement in classroom, motivating students, increasing their participation and changing their attitudes to learning positively. This perception correlates with findings from previous researches suggesting active learning effectiveness in changing students' attitudes, raising their satisfaction and motivating them to learn (See Demirci,2017; Hyun, Eidger, and Lee, 2017; Blidi, Chaou & Al Ajmi, 2018).

Teachers believe in the essential role of active learning in providing learners with constant feedback on their learning. They also believe in the importance of giving students time to think and reflect on their learning. This aligns with teachers' perceptions in Zamel's (2006) study, who positively perceives providing constant and constructive feedback to students as an important role that should take place for active learning to be effective. Statistical evidence and agreement values prove teachers' perceptions of their essential role in active learning. Teachers view that negotiating ideas, opinions and information, providing feedback on learning, creating collaboration and opportunities for efficient involvement are their major roles in active learning. This can be attributed to teachers' awareness of their role in active learning as facilitators of learning rather than controllers. Neimi (2002) in her discussion of teachers' role, view that teachers are facilitators who give more space for students to take over the responsibility of their learning.

Teachers believe that students play an essential role in active learning. Students need to search for information, collaborate with each other in doing activities, reflect on their learning and provide feedback to each other. However, teachers are not sure if self-evaluating own assignments is one of the student roles in active learning. This uncertainty is believed to be related to teachers' lack of trust in students' abilities in handling this work. Teachers also have positive perceptions towards verifying the types of active learning strategies to be used in classroom. They view, as suggested by interviewers, this verification of strategies as a chance of giving students more time to spend on tasks and creating a favorable environment for active learning. This perception echoes Blidi's, Chaou's and Al Ajmi's (2018) argument that the variation of opportunities and environment leads to better development.

5.1.3 Correlations between Perceptions and Practices

Gender and years of experience do not have any impact on teachers' perception of their active learning Knowledge. This is in part attributed to the fact they all belong to the same culture and have more or less the same background knowledge and education. It can be also explained by the interest of both male and female teachers, novice and experience teachers in searching and trying new teaching methods and in attending trainings and reading about new innovations in education. This finding defies Zamel's (2006) suggestion that teachers' perceptions differ based on their gender in favor of female teachers.

There are a weak, and sometimes a negative, correlation between teachers' perceptions of their role and student's role in active learning and the practices they are engaged in. This can be attributed to the misperceptions that teachers have of some of their roles which affects practice. This might be equally due to over simplification and uncritical view of active learning knowledge and its fundamental principles as suggested by Watters (2014).

EFL teachers use a variety of active learning strategies which indicates their interest in creating an active environment for their students to raise their motivation in learning. This interest is mostly related to the idea that active learning is related to quality teaching as Watters (2014) suggests. If the teachers want to prove their proficiency in teaching, they need to adapt new teaching methods like active learning. Most of these strategies used by Omani EFL teachers fall in low-risk level category based on Eison's (2010) classification. This can be related to the fact that teachers want to reduce the challenge level and so to ensure students' success in achieving the aims of the strategies easily. It can be also related to teachers' desire not to spend time on demanding activities as they are limited with forty-minutes for each lesson and they have a crowded course book to cover.

5.2 Conclusions

As stated earlier, the current research aims at exploring Cycle Two EFL teachers' active learning perceptions and the impact they have on classroom practices. The impact was calculated by means of correlation tests. The investigation conducted in the current research through quantitative research tools and the qualitative tools, mainly the observation helps portray a clear picture of the current status of active learning in Omani schools. It allows the understanding of the relation between perceptions and practice, elaborating on reasons behind potential deficient practices and coming out with recommendations for improvement. These recommendations stem from field and real-life practice by practitioners.
Research findings and conclusions can be summed up as follows:

1. Omani EFL teachers share a strong belief in the merits of active learning and the impact such mode of learning has on students' skills development, involvement, collaboration, participation and motivation.
2. There is a misconception among teachers regarding the type of students' involvement that should take place within active learning. The research finds that teachers place more emphasis on one type than the others and suggests that it is a defect that needs to be addressed.
3. There is a lack of balance in the practical application of active learning cycle in the EFL classrooms where the research finds that more emphasis is given to phase one of the cycle that consist of the learning proper. Phases two and three which focus on reflection and phase four which is related to the application of learning are being neglected. This is the deficiency and lack of balance that characterizes the implementation of active learning in Omani schools.
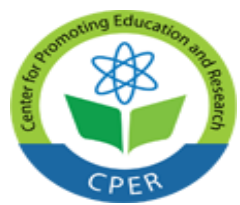
4. Teachers in the Omani context rely heavily on low-risk active learning strategies in EFL classrooms. This, the research suggests, is attributed to the novice character of the concept in the Omani education tradition.

5. There is a reluctance of using active learning as a mode of learning in the Omani schools due to the heavy burden placed by formal learning system adapted in the Omani schools. This formal learning system limits the opportunities for creating a variation of learning opportunities and environments where both teachers and students gain more freedom.

6. There is a misperception regarding to teachers' and students' role in the Omani schools. Teachers tend to play the traditional role of being knowledge provider than facilitators of learning and students tend to be passive receivers of knowledge. This is attributed, as research suggests, to that teaching has more of exam driven and content coverage tendencies. Therefore, a change in role distribution is needed where shared responsibility and collaboration featured the classroom environment.

7. There is a clear relationship between teacher's perceptions and practices and students' role even though this research suggests a negative effect. This indicates the need of raising teachers' awareness for a change in their perceptions if a change is required in students' role in the Omani contexts.

8. There is a weak correlation between perceptions and practices which indicates the existence of barriers that affect the application. These barriers are, as the interviewers suggest, related to logistic, affective and cognitive factors that need to be addressed to ensure proper implementation.

Research findings reveal that much effort is needed in EFL classes in Oman. They provide impetus to further practices and generate a number of recommendations deemed useful for more efficient active learning classroom practice. These are:
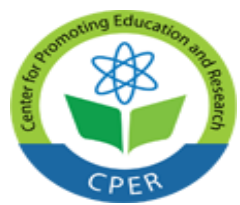
1. Teachers need to equip themselves with proper knowledge about active learning and its application in other countries to be able to apply it correctly. Broadening their expertise and awareness is important and can only draw benefits.

2. A radical change in the learning environment should take place in relation to role distribution. Teachers need to stop viewing their students as recipients and start perceiving them as their partners in the teaching and learning process. It is high time students' passive and receptive role ends up. There is much to share in the teaching and learning environment in a balanced and productive manner within an atmosphere of collaboration and partnership.

3. Proper training should be provided by supervisors and trainers to teachers to ensure adequate grasp of the concept, aggressing of misconceptions and the productive implementation of active learning strategies and activities.

4. Curriculum designers need to reevaluate the EFM textbooks to include more active learning strategies that will increase students' involvement in their learning process.

5. Teacher education and training institutes and colleges need to adapt active learning as a teaching method in order to give the perspective teachers the chance of experiencing active learning by them and so to evaluate its effectiveness and drawbacks.

6. Stakeholders at the Ministry of Education may need to reevaluate the teaching methods used currently in the Omani schools; time allocated for teaching English and the assessment system used (formative and summative assessments).

7. Out of class activities should be integrated into the syllabus of teaching English as learning is not limited to class learning only and in order to reduce the formality system of teaching English in the Omani contexts. This should be considered by stakeholders at the Ministry of Education and the curriculum designers.

8. Stakeholders of the educational pyramid in the Omani context need to work collaboratively to create partnership environment where responsibility will be shared by everyone in order to build strong educational system.

Further research investigation is required to deeply investigate the issue in the Omani context. These researches need to include larger sample population to have clear picture of EFL teachers' perceptions in other regions of Oman or even in other Arab countries. They also need to carry an observation study with larger sample and longer period to produce a more comprehensive picture of EFL real practice of active learning in the Omani context. Investigating teachers' perceptions and practices of other issues related to active learning like students' readiness to handle the responsibility of their learning can also present a hot topic for future research.
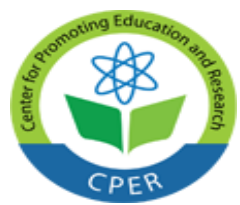
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