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STUDENTS CLASSROOM ACTIVENESS AS CORRELATE OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN IBADAN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

The study investigated students' classroom activeness as correlate of their academic achievement in English Language in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. Three research questions were developed to guide the study. An ex post facto research design of survey research type and the target population consists is SSSII Students in Ibadan Metropolis. Using simple random sampling technique, 150 SSS II students across secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis were selected as respondents for the study. Students' classroom active participation rating scale was used for data collection. Descriptive statistics and pearson product moment correlation were used in the data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that: majority of the students with the mean of 2.50 and above do participate actively during English Language lesson. Also, there is low negative correlation (r = -.103, p=.208) between students' questioning/answering questions in the classroom and academic achievement in English Language. Also, there is low negative correlation (r = -.114, p=.164) between students' initiation/contribution to classroom discussion and academic achievement in English Language. It was therefore, recommended that teachers of English Language should motivate students to participate more actively in the classroom by asking or answering questions during English Language lessons.

Key words: Classroom activeness, students, achievement, English Language

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Introduction

The level of students' activeness in the classroom setting and academic achievement is a phenomenon of research interest. The interaction could be between or among students, teacher or instructional materials. Student level of classroom activeness is ordinarily seen as a demonstration of academic brilliance. Abebe and Deneke (2015) observed that English Language as a foreign language of teaching and learning requires students' active verbal participation or engagement in the classroom during instructional delivery for individual and group achievement. Ken (2017) stated that students' activeness in classroom is an important learning tool for teachers to achieve instructional goals. He maintained that through students' questions and responses, teachers are informed of what students don't understand, and can adjust the teaching pedagogy or instruction.

Experience has shown that using second language as a medium of communication may be a task to many students. The inability to

communicate effectively in English Language may constitute a hindrance to students' communicative ability and activeness which may manifest in a variety of ways during lesson. As a result, some students' inactiveness during classroom interaction may be a manifestation of so many factors such as communicative disability, students' personality traits and phobia for public speech.

The identification of a non active learner in the class is an opportunity for a teacher to encourage and help such learner to get more involved in the teaching learning process. One way of doing this is the teacher deliberately and occasionally involving the student in class activities. A supportive and a democratic climate in the classroom make students feel more comfortable, more motivated and confident to participate in classroom activities.

Lightbown and Spada, (2006) cited in Dornyei (2007) asserted that 'when students engage in classroom activities with their teachers or among their peers, they are likely to boost their expressions and the clarification of their thoughts and opinions'. They further observed that the active participation of learners in the classroom activities may go a long way to boost confidence in students learning and improve academic achievement.

Students' active participation that impact on their academic achievement in English Language as a subject could take different forms, this can be written or oral participation. According to Warayet (2011) cited in Abebe and Deneke (2015), students' oral contribution is of great importance in teaching and learning. This is based on the opinion that verbal participation enhances learning. According to Garton (2002) the practice of active classroom participation by students is seen as a demonstration by Language teachers to reflect if they have conducted a good lesson or elicited sufficient responses from their students.

According to Hedge (2000), students' active participation in English class does not only enhance their achievement but also enhance their communication competence in the use of second language. He further explained that the competences so acquired through active classroom participation may include, coherent conversation, grammatical and linguistic competence. Kouicem (2010) also argued that learners' classroom activeness could lead to competence which consists of strategies involved in successful communication in writing or verbal expression. Learners' inactiveness in the classroom manifests in a student when he is reluctant or scarcely participates in classroom activities such as asking questions, responding to questions, interacting with his class mates or even with the teachers. Students'*classroom participation is seen as essential ingredient of learning but it is interesting for an empirical study to demonstrate if there is relationship between students' classroom activeness and academic achievement.*

Statement of the Problem

There is ongoing argument among educators that students' academic achievement is influence by their level of classroom activeness. It is however doubtful if there is correlation between students' classroom activeness and academic achievement. This study therefore investigated the relationship between students' classroom activeness and academic achievement in English Language.

Research Questions

This study provided answers to the following research questions:

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1. To what extent do students' actively participate in English Language classroom activities?
2. What is relationship between students' answering or raising questions in the classroom and their academic achievement in English Language?
3. What is the correlation between students' initiation/contribution to classroom ideas and their academic achievement in English Language?

Methodology

The study adopted an ex post facto research design of survey research type. This is because there was no manipulation of the study variables.

The target population for the study consists of all the Senior Secondary School (SSS ll) Students across Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State.

Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 200 Senior Secondary School two (SSII) Students from four (4) Local Government Areas. One secondary school (SSll) was randomly selected from each Local Government Areas of Ibadan where intact class was used.

Two instruments were developed by the researcher to gather information from the respondents. These are:

1. Students Classroom Activeness Scale (SCAS)
2. English Language Achievement Test (ELAT)

Students Classroom Activeness Scale (SCAS)

This instrument was developed by the researcher to measure how English Language Students participate in the classroom activities. The scale contained two sections (A & B). Section A was used to capture the bio-data of the respondents with respect to Gender. Section B contains items and the responses options to the statements in the scale ranging from almost always, often, sometimes to never. The initial scale consisted of 29 items and it was validated by administering the instrument on 80 samples which are equivalent but different from the samples used for the study. After the trial testing, the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was 0.71 and items that were not contributing positively considering the 'scale if item deleted' column were discarded. The reliability coefficient shows that the scale was internally consistent. The final scale consisted of 18 items.

English Language Achievement Test (ELAT)

The English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) was constructed by the researcher. The instrument contained the questions on the achievement test. It contained fifty (65) multiple choice test items with four option letters A to D. The items were trial tested by administering it to 80 students who did not form part of the study. The psychometric property was determined by Kuder Richardson 20 (KR-20) and this gave a value of 0.73. The number of items on the ELAT was reduced to 40. Correct response to each of the items attracted a score of 1 while an incorrect response attracted a score of 0.

The researcher visited the sampled schools and administered the instrument to SS II students. The instrument was administered, monitored and collected back on the same day.

Data collected for the study will analyze using descriptive statistics (frequency count, percentages and mean), and correlation statistical tools respectively.

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Result

Research Question 1: To what extent do students' actively participate in English Language classroom activities?

Table1: Descriptive statistics of students' classroom activeness and Achievement in English Language

S/N	Items	Almost Always	Often	Sometimes	Almost Never	Mean
1	I do ask questions in the classroom during lessons	23 (15.3%)	28 (18.7%)	94 (62.7%)	5 (3.3%)	2.46
2	I prefer answering questions in the class during lesson	29 (19.3%)	50 (33.3%)	66 (44.0%)	5 (3.3%)	2.69
3	I attempt answering most questions thrown open by the teacher in the class during lesson	30 (20.0%)	35 (23.3%)	74 (49.3%)	10 (6.7%)	2.55
4	I respond to questions asked by my mates in the classroom during lessons	31 (20.7%)	34 (22.7%)	74 (49.3%)	11 (7.3%)	2.57
5	I am shy answering questions in the classroom	16 (10.7%)	17 (11.3%)	64 (42.7%)	51 (34.0%)	1.96
6	I do not take down notes when the lesson is on-going	18 (12.0%)	10 (6.7%)	39 (26.0%)	81 (54.0%)	1.74
7	I combined efficient note taking with other class activities when the teacher is teaching	28 (18.7%)	28 (18.7%)	52 (34.7%)	41 (27.3%)	2.27
8	I copy the note teacher directs us to copy in the classroom	94 (62.7%)	22 (14.7%)	28 (18.7%)	5 (3.3%)	3.35
9	I cannot comprehend a lesson very well whentaking down notes in the class	18 (12.0%)	31 (20.7%)	58 (38.7%)	41 (27.3%)	2.15
10	I summit class assignment within the time given for submission	81 (54.0%)	32 (21.3%)	33 (22.0%)	4 (2.7%)	3.27
11	I assist my mates in answering difficult questions during lessons	29 (19.3%)	36 (24.0%)	81 (54.0%)	3 (2.0%)	2.59
12	I am called upon by the teacher to answer questions in the class	25 (16.7%)	30 (20.0%)	84 (56.0%)	11 (7.3%)	2.46
13	I am not very good in submitting class assignment	13 (8.7%)	10 (6.7%)	36 (24.0%)	90 (60.0%)	1.63
14	I prefer the teacher not asking me question during lesson in the class	6 (4.0%)	14 (9.3%)	55 (36.7%)	75 (50.0%)	1.67
15	I like being left alone from answering questions during lesson in the class	11 (7.3%)	17 (11.3%)	44 (29.3%)	74 (49.3%)	1.71
16	I am permitted by teachers to contribute my views in the class discussion	38 (25.3%)	30 (20.0%)	67 (44.7%)	13 (8.7%)	2.59
17	I am not very active in the classroom	12 (8.7%)	18 (12.0%)	41 (27.3%)	78 (52.0%)	1.75
18	I am only active during examination	39 (26.0%)	18 (12.0%)	23 (15.3%)	70 (46.7%)	2.17

Mean significant at 2.50

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The findings in table 1 above revealed that 62.7% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes ask questions in the classroom during lessons while 18.7% of them often asked questions and 15.3% almost always asked questions in the classroom during English Lesson. The mean of 2.46 in item 1 indicates that a significant number of students do not ask questions during English Language lessons. Also, majority (44.0%) of the respondents sometimes prefer answering questions in the classroom during English Language lesson, followed by 33.3% of the respondents who often prefer to answer questions in the classroom. The mean of 2.69 in item 2 indicates that a significant number of students participate actively in the classroom through answering of questions. On the other hand, 49.3% of the respondents sometimes, and 23.3% of them often attempt answering most questions that are thrown open by the English Language teacher in the classroom, while 20.0% of them almost always attempt answering most questions thrown open in the classroom. The mean of 2.55 in item 3 revealed that a significant number of students attempt answering questions thrown open in the classroom. In the same vein, most (49.3%) of the respondents sometimes respond to questions asked by their mates in the classroom during lessons while 20.0% of the respondents almost always respond to questions asked by their mates in the classroom during lessons. The mean of 2.57 in item 4 revealed that a significant number of students participate actively in the English Language lesson through answering questions asked by their mates. In addition, majority (42.7%) of the respondents are sometimes shy to answering questions in the classroom while 10.7% are almost always shy to answering questions in the classroom. In an attempt to find out if students do take down notes when the lesson is on-going, (54.0%) majority of the respondents responded that they never take down note when the lesson is on-going but 12.0% disagree and claimed that they always take down note when the lesson is on-going. The mean of 2.15 revealed that a significant number of the students do not take down note when the lesson is on-going. Findings also indicate that 34.7% of the respondents sometimes combine efficient note taking with other class activities when the teacher is teaching while 18.7% always combine efficient note taking with other class activities when the teacher is teaching. Also, most of the respondents (62.7%) always copy the note given by English Language teacher in the classroom. However, 3.3% of the respondents never copy the note given by the teacher for students to copy in the classroom. The mean of 3.35 to this item revealed that a significant number of students used to copy notes given by English Language teachers in the classroom. Furthermore, 38.7% cannot sometimes comprehend a lesson very well when taking down notes in the class while only 12% can always comprehend a lesson very well when taking down notes in the class. Moreover, in other to know the extent to which students submit class assignment within the time given for submission, 54.0% of the respondents always submit class assignment within the time given for submission while 2.7% of the respondents never submit class assignment within the time given for submission.

From the findings also, it is discovered that 54.0% of the respondents sometimes assist their mates in answering difficult questions during lessons while 2.0% of them indicated that they never assist their mates in answering difficult questions during lessons. The mean of 2.59 to this item indicates that a significant number of students do participate actively in the classroom through assisting their mates in answering

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difficult questions during the lesson. The result also revealed that 16.7% of the respondents are always called upon by the teacher to answer questions in the class while 7.3% of the respondents are never called upon by the teacher to answer questions in the class. On the other hand, 60.0% of the respondents indicate their response that they are not very good in submitting class assignment while 8.7% of the respondents are very good in submitting class assignment. The mean of 1.65 revealed that students who participate actively in the classroom through submission of assignment are not significant in number. Also, 50.0% majority of the respondents indicated in their response that they almost never prefer the English Language teacher asking them questions in the classroom while 4.0% of them prefer the teacher asking those questions during lesson. The mean of 1.67 to this item indicates that students who prefer the English Language teacher to ask them questions in the classroom during the lesson are not significant in number. Likewise, majority (49.3%) of the respondent like being left alone from answering questions during lesson in the class while 7.3% of the respondents do not like being left alone from answering questions during the class. Additionally, 25.3% of the respondents are permitted by teachers to contribute their views in the class discussion while 44.7% are sometimes permitted by teachers to contribute their views in the class discussion. In an effort to know how students are very active in the classroom, 52.0% of the respondents are not very active in the classroom while only 8.7% are very active in the classroom. Finally, the findings further revealed that (46.7%) majority of the respondents are almost never active in the classroom only during examination while 26.0% of them are almost always active during examination. the mean of 2.17 indicates that students who are active only during examination are not significant in number.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that majority of the students participate actively during English language lesson such as asking relevant questions, attempting answering most questions, responding to questions asked by class mates, note taking, submission of class assignmentsamong others. This implies that students engage in active learning during such lessons. The finding supports the study of Foster (1998) who found that students' classroom activeness creates a positive and relaxed learning environment in which the anxiety that prevents students from speaking up in front of their classmates could be reduced. Also, Gutierrez (2008) explained that students that are engaged in classroom activities have more opportunities to participate in oral discussion and can provide explanations to each other while silent learners may be encouraged to participate more easily. In addition, the study corroborates the findings of Swain and Lapkin (2000), who asked students in a French immersion class to take notes while they listen and then working in peers to rewrite the provided passage. They found that while students participated in such communicative tasks, they successfully supported each other in providing information about language structures and corrective feedback.

Research Question 2: What is relationship between students' answering or raising questions in the classroom and their academic achievement in English Language?

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Table 2: Correlation between students questioning/answering and achievement in English language

		Answering or raising questions	Achievement in English language
Questioning/ Answering	Pearson Correlation	1	-.103
	Sig.		.208
	N		150
Mean		20.67	54.73
Std.D		3.52	9.56

Table 2 reveals that there is a negative relationship between students answering or raising questionsduring English languagelesson and academic achievement and it is not significant ($r = -0.103$, $p > 0.05$). This implies that students who participate actively in the classroom activities achieve low scores in English Language.

The study revealed that there is a negative correlation between students answering or raising questionsduring English languagelesson and academic achievement. This implies that students activeness in asking and answering questions asked by teachers and other students do not significantly relate with the academic achievement in English language. The result shows that there is different between students' ability to speak in the class and ability to write in the exam. The disability could even include inability of students to interpret and understand examination questions. The finding however agrees with the study of Beaudoin (2003) who found that students' performance in online courses cannot easily be correlated with students' participation. Furthermore, the finding supports Picciano (2002) who studiedthe links between student interaction and active participation, and academic achievement but did not find a statistically significant relationship. However, the finding negates the study of Tatar (2005) who explained that active classroom participation plays an important role in improving the process of education as well as students' personal development. Students' classroom activeness, according to George and Singh (2003) has an added advantage of encouraging friendship among peers and prepares the minds of learners to take responsibilities. Likewise, the study disagree with the findings of Peterson (2002) and Petress (2006) 'who consider classroom activeness as an evidence of active learning or engagement that benefits learning, critical thinking, writing, appreciation of cultural differences, time management and interpersonal, listening and speaking skills'. Also, Fakeye and Amao (2013) found that there is a significant relationship between students' classroom activeness and students' achievement in Literature in English. In addition, Domike (2002) found a significant relationship between students' classroom activeness and students' level of academic achievement. Similarly, Balas (2000) doubts that students' classroom activeness helps in evaluating students' knowledge, particularly in classrooms with culturally diverse students.

Research Question 3: What is the correlation between students' initiation/contribution to

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English classroom ideas and their academic achievement in English Language?

Table 3: Correlation between students questioning/answering and achievement in English language

		Initiation/ Contribution	Achievement in English language
Initiation/ Contribution	Pearson Correlation	1	-.114
	Sig.		.164
	N		150
IMean		16.03	54.73
Std.D		3.62	9.56

The findings in table 3 above revealed that there is low negative correlation between students' initiation/contribution to classroom discussion and their academic achievement ($r = -.114$, $p > 0.05$) in English language. Also, there is no significant relationship between students' initiation/contribution and academic achievement in English language. The findings implies that students who initiate/contribute ideas and criticize others during classroom discussion or activities become more knowledgeable in spoken and written English language thereby, enhancing their academic achievement.

The study revealed that there is negative relationship between students' initiation/contribution to English classroom ideas and academic achievement in English Language. This implies that there is inverse relationship between students' initiation/contribution to classroom ideas and academic achievement in English Language. As students' initiation/contribution to English classroom idea increases, their academic achievement in English language decreases. This result may be emanating from the fact that there are other factors that contribute to students' academic achievement apart from cognitive factors such factors could include text anxiety, examination climate and other factors that are capable of interfering with students' performance. However, the result from the study is in agreement with Hedge (2000) who discovered that students active participation in English language classroom does not enhance their achievement but only facilitate their communication competence in the use of second language. He further explained that these competences acquire through active classroom participation include; abilities needed to create a coherent conversation, grammatical or linguistic competence. However, finding disagree with Lightbown and Spada, (2006) who believed that when students are engage in the classrooms with their teachers and peers, they are compelled to be actively involved in the expression and clarification of their intentions, thoughts and views. They further observed that

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the active involvement of students in the classroom instruction by the teacher develop confidence in a learner and makes learning real.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the study findings, it is therefore concluded that students' academic achievement in English Language is related to their classroom activeness in Ibadan metropolis. The relationship might be positive or negative; it all depends on the extent to which a student participates actively in the classroom teaching and learning activities. Students who ask questions to areas they are confused get better understanding and those who answer questions or perform other classroom activities also get better understanding of English Language as a subject.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Teachers of English language must try to identify factors such as anxiety, examination phobia and other personality traits that may hinder students from positive academic performance during English language examination
- English languageteachers should identify students with low scores in the subject and do a kind of follow up to improving students' achievement.
- Teachers should not be deceived by students' verbal display in the classroom but must find means and method of identifying students' performance by way of regular formative testing.

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