

ZOOM APPLICATION FOR ONLINE LANGUAGE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Flexible learning in this pandemic combines a specific percentage of synchronous and asynchronous sessions. In this research, the adoption of Zoom as a discussion platform tool in teaching communicative English skills to tertiary education students in a public HEI is discussed; based on the Leapfrog Principle. The study investigated the effectiveness of Zoom as a language teaching tool in Language courses. It also examined the platform's role in new learning spaces with today's learners. Data for the study was collected via online class observation, followed by a recorded interview conducted among fifty-five students. The analysis of the data was done qualitatively. The findings of the study indicated that Zoom is perceived as an effective teaching tool; in terms of both delivery and pedagogy in Intensive English programs. It was also believed to cater to a flexible and motivating language learning environment for the current flexible learning academic scenarios. The integration of zoom application into the intensive Language courses for tertiary level learners, enriched the teaching-learning experiences.

KEYWORDS

Flexible Learning, Zoom Application, Effectiveness

1. INTRODUCTION

Su (2022) posits that success rate in language learning in these difficult and trying times is highly dependent on the kind of application that teachers utilize. This was found specifically true among Higher Education research studies conducted by Twainy (2021) and Zurik (2022). As the essential pillar in the educational system in this pandemic, zoom application assured learning gains. Hence, educational organizations are now motivated to accomplish language competence, efficacy and proficiency by remote means. This indicates the necessity of utilizing break out rooms, aside from the virtual teaching preparation teachers do for daily academic engagement.

However, engaging students in a variety of remote activities is not sufficient. To measure if they successfully enhanced their language competencies, the priority to conduct engaging remote communicative sessions are necessary. In their paper, Strei (2022) and Buor (2021) conclude that when zoom break out session rooms are activated, more students are able to freely share their ideas. Hence, this vital information to design the research plan was deemed necessary. The study therefore investigated the effectiveness of Zoom as a language teaching tool in Language courses. It also examined the platform's role in new learning spaces with today's learners.

2. METHODOLOGY

Discussed as follows are the methods and procedures of this study.

This research employed the descriptive and investigative research designs. The researchers gathered data from the research respondents through online class observation, Focus Group Discussion sessions and recorded interviews among the student-respondents. The need to develop communication skills through online discussion utilizing break out session rooms were identified; focusing on teaching strategies and communicative activities.

The paper utilized focus group discussion prompts modified from Zurong (2018). The same set of transcripts were employed during the individual interviews. The online class observation scrutinized the communicative measures used by the Language teachers. Nunan's (2015) communicative teaching observation tool was used. These validated instruments formed the descriptive and investigative research processes.

The respondents of this research were the fifty-five Higher Education students who were enrolled in English subjects for the second semester of school year 2021-2022. They were purposively chosen based on their teachers' recommendation to participate in the research plan, being the less participative. The researchers kept in touch with them through their language teachers. Group chats and zoom conferences were also conducted.

3. DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

In this study, the researchers facilitated five focus group discussion sessions among the student-respondents. The modified FGD prompts were utilized for this purpose. The same group of respondents participated in the individual interview via zoom. This highlighted on their perception about the impact of zoom usage to their language competencies; the types of teaching strategies employed with their motivation to use the application, how the zoom sessions enhance their communicative abilities and critical thinking skills.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are discussed subsequently.

Table 1. The benefits of Zoom application as a learning tool

Zoom Application advantage	Number of Respondents
Increased motivation	16
Self-directed learning	10
Active interaction	35
Enhance communicative ability	33
Avenue to develop critical thinking skills	19

Table 1 shows that among the identified zoom application advantage, active interaction ranks first. The data is similarly situated with the study conducted by Levin (2022) which revealed that more students perceive zoom to be an enabler for discussion. This implies that the break out rooms helped the respondents to freely express their ideas, without fear of being corrected. Similarly, more students responded that zoom sessions are avenues to develop their critical thinking skills. This accordingly happened during break put sessions.

Table 2. Satisfaction levels with Zoom video conferencing

Satisfaction level	Number of Respondents
Very satisfied	40
satisfied	10
normal	3
dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	0

Table 2 presents the satisfaction level of the respondents in zoom video conferences. Majority of the respondents were very satisfied of the application. Only ten ticked satisfied while three opted for normal satisfaction and two very dissatisfied. Consequently, the respondents found zoom nice even in listening to lectures. They were able to look at the professor's face which gave them the feeling similar with that of face-to-face lectures. More respondents shared that it was good to communicate with the professor, and it was also good that the professor listened to their opinion. With the screen sharing function, they found it easy to understand the subject by taking classes while watching PPT and class materials together. Some respondents also commented that zoom is a good application because it was like a customized class for them. The annotation button likewise made them share ideas in writing.

The study of Roierys (2022) revealed similar findings. The paper discussed that the respondents of the study likened zoom to an actual physical class session. The only difference was that they were online. Moreover, Zerty (2021) in his study on zoom application implied that break out rooms provide comfort for the learners to express their interest in sharing ideas to topics that were assigned to them. They had interactive sessions as they were not governed by anxiety.

5. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, zoom application was found to gain popularity in the academe which was perceived by the respondents to enhance their communicative competence. Most universities converted their classes from face-to-face to online lectures in the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Within this context, the existing study attempted to examine the effect of real-time remote video lessons using Zoom on learners' English communication skills. The study also investigated learners' opinions on and satisfaction with real-time zoom video lectures. The study's purpose is to provide a better direction for instructors who wish to use zoom video lectures for real-time lessons in the future by more clearly understanding the efficiency of zoom video lectures and considering important points that must be supplemented. The results of this study showed that real-time zoom video lectures have a positive effect on learners' English reading achievement.

From the perspective of both learners and instructors, zoom is recommended to be supplemented with automatic attendance processing, convenient data uploading and downloading, and more efficient video screen management functions. Language instructors, must become further aware of the efficiency of Zoom technology in the EFL classroom. If remote classes must be prolonged due to the spread of COVID-19, instructors must learn how to implement technological tools including Zoom and develop class activities and teaching strategies suitable for video lectures that can encourage learners' active participation.

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