

A REPORT ON 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, and focus group discussion followed by a recorded interview conducted among fifty-five student-respondents. 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 process.*

Keywords – Flexible learning, Zoom application, effectiveness

1. INTRODUCTION

[1] posits that the 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 [2] and [3]. As one of the indispensable pillars in the educational system during this pandemic, the zoom application assured learning gains. Hence, academic institutions are now motivated to develop language competence through 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 the learners’ language competencies, the priority to conduct and introduce engaging remote communicative sessions are necessary. In their paper, [4] and [5] 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 investigative research plan was deemed necessary. The study, therefore, investigated the use of Zoom as a teaching tool in Language courses. It also examined the platform’s role in new learning spaces with today’s learners.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design and Instruments

This study employed descriptive and investigative research designs. The researcher gathered data from the research respondents through online class observation, Focus Group Discussion sessions, and recorded interviews among the student-respondents. The need for online discussion via the use of break-out session rooms was identified; with emphasis on teaching strategies and communicative activities employed.

2.2 The Instruments

The researcher utilized the modified focus group discussion prompts of [6]. Online classroom observation was likewise conducted among zoom-enabled classes, using the matrix of [7] for communicative lessons. The remote interview sessions used the same fgd prompts.

2.3 The Respondents

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

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

In this study, the researcher 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 of the impact of zoom usage to their language competencies; alongside the type of teaching strategies employed with their motivation to use the application.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. The Benefits of Zoom as a Learning Tool

Zoom Application advantage	Number of Respondents
Increased motivation	6
Self-directed learning	10
Active interaction	35
Ease of Access	3
Ease of information retrieval	1

Table 1 shows that among the identified zoom application advantage, active interaction ranks first. The data is similarly situated to the study conducted by [8] 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. The results of the study by [9] indicated that grammar, lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, and public speaking are identified as the main factors that provoke speech anxiety. Furthermore, the findings of the study, together with the review of the literature and the experiences of the participants, raised the impact of language anxiety on foreign language acquisition. The causal link between vocabulary, comprehension, and fear of being corrected was deemed high. The zoom break-out rooms made the research respondents communicate spontaneously, with the given teacher directions.

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 reveals the satisfaction level of the respondents in zoom video conferences. The majority of the respondents were very satisfied with the application. Only ten ticked satisfied while three opted for normal satisfaction and two were dissatisfied. Accordingly, the respondents found zoom nice even in listening to lectures. They were able to look at the professor's face which gave them a feeling similar to 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 and sketching fun images.

The study of [10] 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, [11] 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.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

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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