

EFFECTIVENESS OF SMART CLASS STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING BASIC SKILLS OF ENGLISH DURING ONLINE CLASSES

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ABSTRACT:

The present paper is focusing on effectiveness of Smart Class Strategy for developing basic skills of English and learning process for quality education during this tough time when whole world is struggling due to pandemic crises of Covid 19. Our present education system emphasizes more and more on bookish knowledge where as students of today's era are demanding extra knowledge so that they can explore their innate qualities and face challenges easily. The students today don't want to be a passive learner but want real education wherein they get chance to learn new things in a smart way they truly want to be an active learner. The main objective of the study was to highlight several ways through which teaching learning process becomes interactive and we can provide quality Education platform for students online though schools are off but studies are still going on. The biggest concern during lockdown was regarding academics. So as per C.B.S.E guidelines many C.B.S.E schools started teaching students through online classes. As a result of the wide spread of technology in our modern days, educationalists are forced to integrate technological equipment and programs through educational strategies and methods, for the main purpose of facilitating the learning experience. Accordingly, the main purpose of this study is investigating the impact of a zoom session as a synchronous Smart Class learning strategy on enhancing the Basic English skills i.e LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading Writing) & Motivation for C.B.S.E students of class IX. For that purpose, the researcher chose an experimental design with a mixed approach to conduct this study using a pre-test, and a post test to measure the change in the levels of EFL students, and a student questionnaire to examine the attitude of the students towards the zoom sessions taught through interactive ways and Traditional method. The findings indicate that zoom sessions taught through Smart Class Strategy w enhanced EFL students' English language level and motivation towards the learning process.

Key words: Zoom sessions, Smart Class Strategy, engagement, Listening skills, Speaking skill, Reading skill, Writing skill, Motivation, C.B.S.E students.

Introduction:

According to AL Jarf (2006), online technologies using real life based videos can foster the skill of reading and writing in the English language. Additionally, this topic caught the researcher's attention because of the technology booming spread across all daily life aspects in general, and the popularity that a zoom session and its specific features as a facilitating tool for communication and for educational use in particular.

Mainly, students lack the cohesive understanding and the lexical schemata to express themselves with words (Bialystok, 1994). Additionally, students mainly lack the motivation to study English due to the traditional pedagogy of teaching that teachers often adopt with respect to teaching English language (Kasper & Petrello, 1998). This factor is accompanied

by students' lack of ideas and ability to transform them into written words and spoken words (writing and speaking). The lack of ideas results from the lack of student-teacher interaction in a motivating environment (Shughnessy, 1998). Writing is considered to be a secondary skill to reading, which undermines its significance with respect to learning the English language (Berman & Cheng, 2010). Thus, teachers tend to focus less on filling the gaps of students' perception of the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Thomas, 1993). This results with weaknesses in students' level in English language (Nesamalar, Saratha & Teh, 2001). After reaching a certain level when students recognize the problem, they tend either to feel frustrated or give up on the task of enhancing their English language (Elias, Akmaliah, & Mahyuddin, 2005). If they do, they will find themselves stuck in confusion looking at a blank page (Fu-Lan, 2006). Returning to the notion of lack of motivation, students lose interest in traditional classes because simply they feel bored of regular classes (Shughnessy, 1998). Furthermore, the teaching strategy that should be implemented should function as an approach that may solve the issues mentioned previously taking into consideration the present needs of the 21st century technologies (Kasapaglu-akyol, 2010).

Statement of the Problem:

Within the topic of language teaching, a significant emphasis is given to the four skills of reading, speaking, listening, and writing. Particularly, a special focus is placed on writing because of its direct relationship with language proficiency. English language Students studying in C.B.S.E schools still suffer when asked to write a piece of writing or to speak regardless of the topic due to a poor proficiency in English as a foreign language. (Association MADA, 2008)

Teachers tend to focus less on filling the gaps of students' perception of the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. As a result, weaknesses develop in students' ability. After reaching a certain level when students recognize the problem, they tend either to feel frustrated or give up on the task of enhancing their English language. In this case, they will find themselves stuck in confusion looking at a blank page. As for the lack of motivation, students lose interest in traditional English language classes because simply they feel bored of regular classes.

Hence, this research integrates Smart Class Strategy during zoom sessions in order to prompt the English language and Basic English Skills of C.B.S.E students at this tough time when the world is facing pandemic crises due to Covid 19. Schools are closed but not the studies.

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Rationale of the Study:

This research is set to investigate the extent to which zoom sessions can influence the quality of the learning experience of C.B.S.E students. Moreover, the researcher aims at improving the foreign language acquisition and proficiency of English of these students. Additionally, this research tests the feasibility and validity of zoom sessions with respect to enhancing their English language. Furthermore, the popularity of the technology leads to its integration within every aspect of English language students' daily lives. As a result, technology can divert students' focus from their peruse of the academic learning to their peruse to follow the recent technological trends within the social spectrum. This created the need for the educational system to use technology for the benefits of the learning process in general. Hence, this study examines the influence of integrating zoom sessions within the learning process to benefit C.B.S.E students, the researcher investigates how the chosen synchronous learning strategy (zoom sessions) enhance students' motivation towards learning English. Moreover, the focus of the researchers' spectrum is on the manner that the previously mentioned strategy may help English language students bridge the gaps and overcome the

problems they face. Also, the emphasis of this study is placed on how English language students can enhance their participation and discussion with their classmates through using zoom sessions.

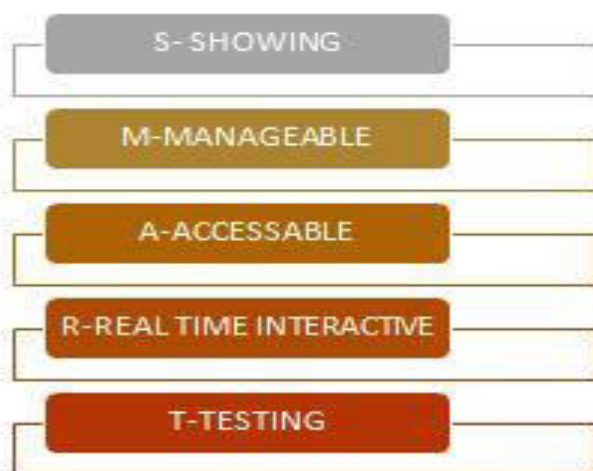
Significance of the Study:

This research examines the effects of Smart Class strategy for developing basic skills of English i.e LSRW. Teaching English through zoom sessions during this lockdown period when schools are off, where English language students suffer from their poor English language due to traditional teaching approaches used in English classrooms throughout their years of learning. By conducting this study and interpreting the results, the researcher tends to suggest practical conclusions and recommendations for teachers, educationalists, students, and researchers. This study encourages teachers to use such technology and modern strategies when teaching English through zoom classes. Thus, they will reconsider the designing of a lesson plan and integrate technology in teaching English. Furthermore, this study helps educationalists to design a curriculum that fosters technology for a better learning experience of English language students and develop a comfortable environment for the students. Moreover, this research may help students recognize the complexity of the English language and help them find new ways to recognize their weakness in order to enhance their language and to increase their motivation towards learning and develop their interest towards the subject. Finally, future researchers and scholars of the field will base their research on this study to improve the means of integrating technology into education to satisfy students' different needs within the learning environment especially teaching through online classes when schools are closed and students study from their homes.

Traditional way of teaching through zoom classes:

As per traditional way teacher reads the content and explanation is done by the teacher.

Smart Class Strategy of teaching English through zoom classes :



- Screen Sharing: During lockdown when students are not having their course book, with the help of screen sharing course content can be shared. Content can be made interactive by sharing PPT, You Tube videos.
- My CBSE guide (CBSE & NCRT Learning app): My CBSE guide is the best learning app for CBSE students that is recommended by the experts and followed by the toppers.
- DIKSHA – National Teachers Platform for India: the DIKSHA platform offers teachers, students and parents engaging learning material relevant to the prescribed

school curriculum. Teachers have access to aids like lesson plans, worksheets and activities, to create enjoyable classroom experiences. Students understand concepts, revise lessons and do practice exercises. Parents can follow classroom activities and clear doubts outside school.

- Khan Academy – Khan Academy is an American non-profit educational organization with the goal of creating a set of online tools that help to educate students.
- Play way method (Online Games) –
One way to change the pace in our classroom is by doing small group activity conducting quiz through Python programming, Kahoot, ESL Games online, Google form etc. It depends on the size of our class, the length of time you have available, the physical features of the classroom, and the nature of the group task.

Research Questions:

Two major questions are highlighted in this study:

- 1- How can zoom sessions enhance Smart class strategy for developing basic skills for IX class C.B.S.E students' interest in English language?
- 2- To what extent do using zoom sessions as a synchronous learning strategy affect Basic English skills for C.B.S.E students' motivation?

Literature Review:

Synchronous Learning through Smart Class :

A zoom session is one of the types of synchronous learning. Synchronous Learning through Smart Class is a modern notion derived from e-learning which focuses on integrating technology with teaching methodologies as a means of delivery within educational institutions for the sake of making the learning process easier for students and teachers. This concept is characterized by a combination of many traits such as a technological device connected to a network (zoom application), a suitable timing for both teachers and students, different locations, real time communication, online participants, screen sharing, PPT, You tube videos and instantaneous feedback through video, voice or text chat interaction between participants. (Hrastinski, 2007).

Many schools are training students to integrate technology like zoom applications to be used during instruction within education when schools are closed because people are rapidly adapting to accessing these technologies to facilitate communication which leads to the widespread popularity of distance learning (Romoszowski & Mason, 2004). This comes as a solution for educational researchers who are constantly trying to develop innovative means to enhance the interactivity of the learning process in order to stimulate students' motivation and engagement in discussions for knowledge exchange, which also leads to developing general language learning (Tanti, 2012). On the other hand, teachers integrate these tools into language instruction process to make the material easily comprehensible whether it is used on individual or group level of communication. (Blau & Barak, 2012).

Multiple studies have examined the importance and impacts of different synchronous means on language learning and basic skills. Zhao (2009) conducted a study that focuses on synchronous strategies such as text chat and video conferencing like zoom to start topic discussions about culture using the English language. The results showed that these strategies facilitated language acquisition of English and enhanced lexical schemata through the exchange of ideas. Moreover, Watson (2009) focused on the use of text chats and instant messaging in online sessions and stated that it yielded positive impacts on the cognitive acquisition of the language.

Sauro and Smith (2010) investigated the language input of the learning process during the use of synchronous strategies and noticed an improvement on the level of students' linguistic

comprehension and lexical schemata of the foreign language (English language). Furthermore, Ochonogor, Alakpodia and Achugbue (2012) investigated the effects of chat rooms on students' academic performance and discovered that students showed better writing and speaking skills after the experimental period of online sessions ended. Similarly, Grosz-Glunchman (2013) investigated text chats as a means of instruction for EFL students in a study that concluded that students showed progress in developing better message numbers, word count, lexical schemata and syntactic structuring leading to enhanced writing and speaking skills.

Zooms sessions (Synchronous Learning through Smart Class) and Academic Performance during lockdown period.

Various researchers proposed that a zoom session (a synchronous learning Smart class strategy) can have a direct link with positive impact on students' academic performance and motivation towards the learning process. Watkins, Carnell, Lodge and Whalley (1996) stated that a zoom session enhances the main skills involved in language learning such as high order thinking, critical thinking skills and problem solving skills through interacting, collaborating, and participating within the instructional process. As a result, McCloskey, Thrush, Wilson-Patton and Kleskova (2013) suggested that the designing and implementation of activities involved in a zoom session setting should help students to attain what the lesson design aims to achieve for the sake of motivating students through the instructional process. McLoughlin and Lee (2010) believed that using zoom sessions (a synchronous learning strategy) can facilitate students' acquisition of syntactic and semantic cognition with respect to sentences through the process of writing and rewriting before sharing these sentences due to the feeling of vulnerability of sharing them with their classmates and teacher which encourages them to structure correct statements.

During the zoom session, students may ask questions to help them structure their sentences or do their assignments before posting them; they may be exposed to listening input to increase their schemata that develops their error correction system which is directly linked to conscious learning of a language. At the same time students receive the essential feedback on their work from their teacher and classmates which can decrease the anxiety levels felt when sharing with others (Chen & Lee, 2011). This notion was investigated with students enrolled at the Virtual University of Pakistan and yielded better attitudes and academic results within a zoom session. Furthermore, according to Pérez (2013), when students are given the freedom to choose between synchronous and asynchronous learning strategies, they prefer the synchronous learning strategies more with respect to discussions and elaboration of the content material. That is because synchronous learning strategies are more communication oriented towards language teaching in its use of video, text, and voice chats (zoom sessions) to supply instantaneous corrections and elaborations that help students to enhance the acquisition of basic language skills. (Keegan et al., 2005).

Many scholars support the significance of a zoom session to the academic performance of students. In such a way that Marjanovic (1999) emphasized the importance of such a strategy when used for collaborative learning. Moreover, Chen, Ko, Kinshuk, and Lin (2005) stated that the feedback supplied in such a learning setting can lead students to discover both their strength and weaknesses with respect to language learning to enhance their initial level of motivation and academic performance. Similarly, Wang and Chen (2007) explained the findings of a pilot study they conducted to examine the importance of zoom sessions regarding teaching a second Language; they concluded that these strategies can be an appropriate choice for distance learning. Hastie and Hofer (2009) proposed that a zoom session obliges students to concentrate more during the online sessions which lead to higher levels of memorization and therefore learn more. These results are compared to those in an

asynchronous setting which concluded that teachers give greater efforts in synchronous settings than in asynchronous settings regarding activities.

In addition, Kerwin (2012) stated that social media applications such as Facebook and Skype can inspire students' innovation and creativity when delivering posts as modern day method of teaching and learning at any time and place. Dansieh (2011) explained that when using digital tools to produce a text/chat/post, students are using a compilation of the knowledge acquired skills within a traditional English language classroom which enable students to use synchronous learning strategies to improve their motivation and engagement. Thus, students take responsibility of their learning and their academic progress. Also, Behjat (2011) elaborated on how students show better attitudes when using a technological device through the writing process such as giving more time and resilience in producing their writings. Lin and Overbaugh (2007) laid great emphasis on the exchange of ideas, feedback, and essential data during zoom sessions.

Chapelle (2004) concluded certain aspects concerning zoom sessions after a comprehensive analysis of studies examining such notions, such as enhancing skills related to semantics, syntax, linguistics, and pragmatics. Additionally, Russell (2010) stated that using zoom sessions can positively contribute to enhancing students' language in a creative and effective manner. According to a study conducted by Liang (2006), chat texts can develop interaction through the learning process which may lead to better writing skills. Furthermore, Lin and Overbaugh (2007) stated that students prefer to choose chat texts (zoom chatting) as a means of instruction which can lead to a better quality of learning.

Dimensions of Integration:

According to Mick and Middlebrook (2015), three factors are related to the process of integrating synchronous Smart Class learning strategies or zoom sessions to a successful prospect of learning. The teacher should consider inclusivity, accessibility, technical viability, IT support, and pedagogical rationale. Pedagogical rationale is subdivided into permanence, pace, social impact and scale.

Effects of Zoom Sessions in English Classrooms For Developing Basic Skills:

Many researchers have affirmed that zoom sessions have many advantages and positive influence on learning outcomes and basic language skills. Daiute (1985) explained briefly some advantages of zoom sessions such as supplying a means of communication used by students for interaction among each other. Also, zoom sessions can increase students' interest and motivation. Moreover, Zhao (2009) stated that they can be used as creative tools for teaching, learning and practical use of the English language. In such a way that Liang (2006) proposed that zoom sessions allow students to take place in instantaneous discussions in an effective and efficient manner.

Alongside the positive influence of face-to-face interaction, communicating via texts can allow students to have the time to comprehend the message sent and develop a response with more time taking into consideration the digital rule set as netiquette. Furthermore, Jepson (2005) stated that there is a lack of research concerning typing errors being linked to the nature of the text at hand. However, Hamouda (2013) highlighted the importance of word processors in the process of acquiring a foreign language by supplying many aspects of the language like phonology, semantics, and syntax. As a result, students use this knowledge in the practical application of the language. He argued that word processors featured when using instant messaging can play a significant role with respect to enhancing students' skills especially when adopting the stages of four skills.

Moreover, Jenkinson (1994) clearly stated that in order for zoom sessions to have a beneficial impact on the learning process in general, the teacher should choose the topic suitably with respect to relevance and interest. In other words, the topic should ensure that students can

interact more when it is inspired through their daily life experiences. Also, students should be informed the reason that they are discussing this topic to increase its value with respect to the learning process. This is established by the teacher clearly stating the learning goals and objectives. On the other hand, Doyle (2005) declared that the teacher should specify a time frame for students' participation in the discussion. This can be accomplished by the teacher splitting the time for the development of the theme or topic students have to discuss and each learner feeling accountable for their questions and responses.

Additionally, Doyle (2005) insisted that the teacher should develop a comfortable and friendly environment where the learner can feel safe to express themselves without the fear of being judged or ridiculed within the discussion. This is a slightly difficult situation where using textual interaction can be vague and full of misconceptions. Finally, the teacher should set a clear picture of expectations of both the start and end and the rules of the discussion process.

Related Studies:

Many studies have investigated the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing zoom sessions with respect to improving the classroom environment. In addition, other studies were set to examine the impact of online learning on motivating students.

Knipe and Lee (2002) conducted a study for the purpose of investigating how the learning and teaching experience would vary. The subjects were 66 students, 45 students were subjected to a traditional teaching method, while the other 22 students were involved in distance education. The results showed that distance learning had both negative and positive implications due to their subjective approach to the intervention variable. Also, a study conducted by Marsh (2010) focused on examining the advantages of explaining theoretical lessons using zoom sessions. This study was collaborated by Sussex University and 6 schools. The results eliminated the factors that hinder the zoom session experience. In such a way, students' access to the content material and application was facilitated. This in turn prompted the students' memory with forgotten material.

Another study was conducted by Skylar (2009) in order to compare between the impacts of synchronous and asynchronous learning strategies on students. Within the course of this study, a group of students was instructed using synchronous delivery methods while the other group is subjected to traditional delivery methods. The results showed that 80.5% of participants attained positive results on quizzes in a synchronous classroom. Also, 88% of participants showed better comprehension of the content material in a synchronous context of learning.

Methodology of the Research:

Type of Research:

This study proposes a number of variables to be examined according to a true experimental method, in which the participants are randomly assigned to both the experimental and control groups, that aims to investigate a cause-effect connection that confirms the influence of one of the variables on the other. Furthermore, this study uses the mixed approach involving experimentally based instruments to collect quantitative and qualitative data, as a mixed approach for more elaborate results. Quantitative data are collected by the means of a pretest and post test which students sit for to compare their English language levels before and after the zoom sessions, whereas the qualitative data is collected by the means of a questionnaire (Appendix A) given to the students. These data are examined thoroughly, and interpreted using SPSS program which tackles qualitative data and transforms them into quantitative data with analysis of this data. In addition, the data are used to draw conclusions. This study tends to examine the effects of implementing zoom sessions (Appendix B) on the teaching of an English class. The pretests and posttests are done to students before and after the intervention

process takes place. Additionally, the questionnaire is given after the intervention process ends to fill in for the sake of examining attitudinal information regarding the topic of experimentation (motivation).

This paper aims to study the relationship of zoom sessions which aid students through the learning process. Additionally, the experiment took place during the lockdown period where all the schools were closed and C.B.S.E schools decided to teach students through online classes.

Participants and Setting:

The participants of this study are 80 students enrolled in The Emerald Heights International School (C.B.S.E affiliated school). The researcher narrowed the population into a representative sample categorized according to convenient sampling criteria. The sample is divided into two groups (control and experimental), each containing 40 students who belong to different academic levels. These academic levels are labelled as weak, average and excellent. Students were primarily informed about the study and the researcher is their teacher at the Emerald Heights International school.

Research Design:

As it has been previously mentioned, this study adopts a mixed approach with respect to investigating the connection between the independent and dependant variables. In other words, this study fosters both quantitative and qualitative instruments for data collection. The significance of choosing such an approach is that researchers can investigate the topic with a broader and deeper scope with comparison to the choice of a quantitative or a qualitative approach on its own. Furthermore, a mixed method of study can give more credibility and validity to the findings and analysis of the collected data. Therefore, this notion can help the researcher through answering the research questions in a more detailed manner.

On the first hand, the quantitative data is collected using a pretest and a posttest for the purpose of determining the state of the students' level at the start and end point of the experiment. As a result, the analyzed data and conclusions can sufficiently answer the first research question which focuses on the progress of the students after using zoom sessions as a synchronous learning strategy.

On the other hand, qualitative data are collected via data extracted from the questionnaire filled by the students. In such a way that the items within the questionnaire indirectly concludes the attitude of the subjects towards using zoom sessions as a synchronous learning strategy chosen within this experimental study. Furthermore, the data extracted from the questionnaire may convey the answer to the second question which concentrates on the motivation factor.

Instruments:

Mainly the researcher in this study used two types of instruments with distinct natures for the purpose of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. On the first token, the pretest and the post test accumulates certain information which are later transformed into quantitative data of a numerical form. On the second token, the questionnaire designated for students supplies the researcher with qualitative data. Furthermore, each instrument is tested for validity and reliability. The pretest and post test within this quasi experimental research involve a similar format which is to measure the initial and final state of the students' level in English language. These two tests consist of two parts: a reading comprehension and a writing section. They are carefully designed to establish content validity due to the measurement of the dependant variable (the students' level in English). Moreover, this study employs one questionnaire (Appendix A) which is designated to the EFL students within the experimental group after the intervention period ends. Most importantly, the researcher

consulted a number of educational coordinators, teacher colleagues, and university professors to validate these instruments.

Procedure of the Study

First, the researcher chose The Emerald Heights International School students since it is the place where she teaches to carry out the study in. The sample represented the population of 80 students of class 9th in the academic year 2020-2021. Furthermore, she divided the students into groups with different academic levels and randomly assigned to the control group and experimental group. Thus, each group contained 30 students with different genders and academic levels with respect to the English language level. After the control and the experimental groups were assigned, a pre-test was administered to both groups to determine each learner's level in English within these groups. This pre-test consisted of two parts: reading comprehension and a writing part. At the end of this phase, the pre-test papers were collected through emails corrected, graded and analyzed by the researcher to collect data and notes about the EFL students' level.

The students were informed about the zoom sessions, the objectives, rules, and setting of the experiments. Specifically, the researcher explained how to use the application and asked the students to download the application to use. Then, the researcher and students scheduled timing for each session in order to insure the online presence of all the participants within the time of the session. The final agreed time to conduct the sessions was set from 8:00 AM till 9:00 AM. The experimental group were taught through Smart Class Strategy using screen sharing, PPT, Tata edge class, You Tube Videos, Content from DIKSHA app, Khan Academy, My CBSE guide, Online Study material etc. On the other hand, the students within the control group were taught according to the traditional instructional strategies through zoom classes.

These zoom sessions represented the implementation of the synchronous Smart Class learning strategy within this study. Additionally, the researcher conducted these sessions along a period of 12 weeks. Within each session, the teacher started by greeting the students and taking absences with the help of Co-Host assigned during Zoom Classes different from the group session in order to avoid irrelevant interaction between these students. Then, the teacher sent a message to stimulate the students to start their questions, clarifications, ideas, and interaction regarding the given C.B.S.E class 9th course. The students raised hands, shared their doubts. In this part, the students interacted freely about the task they were given. When they finished their work, they were asked to share it via the group so that their classmates could see and comment on through chat.

Each week the teacher taught the students and took notes concerning what was happening within the group to monitor the students' progress. After the intervention period ended, the students of the control and experimental group sat for a post test to measure the development of their English language level. Similar to the pretest, the post test was corrected and graded by the teacher. Moreover, the data extracted from the post test were quantified into numerical data using SPSS. The final phase was giving the students of the experimental group a questionnaire to fill it out in order to collect qualitative and quantitative data.

Findings and Analysis

The sources of data within this study were the pretest of the control and experimental groups, the researcher's notes and reports of the zoom sessions, the post test of the control and experimental groups and the questionnaire given only to the students of the experimental group. The data within the pretest, the post test, and the questionnaire were treated using SPSS version 23. These treatments were divided into qualitative and quantitative data.

Results

The pretest and the posttest

The following table, Table 1, shows the significant differences between the control group and the experimental group:

Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	Control	30	5.10	1.90	0.35	0.807
	Experimental	30	5.23	2.30	0.42	
Posttest	Control	30	5.16	1.91	0.35	0.013
	Experimental	30	6.45	1.98	0.36	

Table 1: Inferential statistics for the pretest and posttest of the control and experimental groups.

In the pretest phase, the researcher looked for differences between the two groups through the use of the T-test. The statistical significance was 0.807, which was greater than 0.05. This meant that there were no statistically significant differences between the levels of the two groups. Moreover, the means of both groups at this stage was 5.10 and 5.23, which was a close statistical result with a statistical difference of 0.13. Thus, the level of the students was relatively insignificant.

In the post-test phase, the T-test showed a statistical significance of 0.013, which was less than 0.05. This indicated that there was a significant difference between the control and the experimental group. In addition, when the researcher compared the means of both groups, the results showed a statistical mean of 5.16 for the control group and 6.45 for the experimental group. In other words, the statistical mean of the experimental group was greater than that of the control group by a value of 1.29, which indicated that the chosen synchronous Smart Class learning strategy enhanced the level of the students by the statistical value of 25%.

The Questionnaire

Table 2 displays the results of the questionnaire that the students filled:

Zoom session Items taught through Smart Class Strategy.	Mean	Result	Order	Std. Deviation	Median	Mode
1. is appropriate and easy to understand	3.43	Agree	12	0.86	3	3
2. is flexible.	2.70	Neutral	16	1.42	3	1
3. is encouraging and motivating.	4.40	Strongly Agree	4	0.72	5	5
4. is stimulating.	3.50	Agree	11	1.04	4	4
5. is effective with teaching and writing	4.47	Strongly Agree	3	0.86	5	5

speaking.						
6. is self-paced.	3.30	Neutral	13	1.44	3.5	5
7. helps to share and speak freely .	3.63	Agree	10	0.93	4	4
8. has no pressure while answering questions and speaking.	2.37	Disagree	17	1.47	2	1
9. Online English Test Games enriches the vocabulary words.	4.27	Strongly Agree	6	1.01	5	5
10. removes writer's and speaker's block.	4.53	Strongly Agree	2	0.73	5	5
11. helps with setting a clear plan for writing and speaking.	3.97	Agree	8	1.19	4	4
12. provides academic interaction with other students.	3.27	Neutral	14	0.83	3	3
13. provides quick feedback from the teacher.	4.07	Agree	7	1.08	4	5
14. provides real-time interaction with other students and teacher (live, same time).	3.13	Neutral	15	1.17	3	3
15. provides a non-threatening environment	3.87	Agree	9	1.20	4	4
16. motivates participation.	4.37	Strongly Agree	5	1.03	5	5
17. is easy to use.	4.67	Strongly Agree	1	0.66	5	5

Table 2: Inferential statistics for the zoom session (mean median & mode)

The above table, Table 2, displays the students' answers to the questionnaire consisting of 17 items for measuring their attitude and motivation during the zoom sessions. The table displays the mean, the result, the standard deviation, the median and the mode. The second item had a mean of 2.70 closer to 3 indicating that the EFL students cannot decide on whether this strategy was flexible for teaching writing or not, with a median of 3 showing that 50% of the students agreed that it was flexible while the other 50% cannot agree on that fact. The third item had a mean of 4.40 indicating that the students decided that the zoom session was encouraging. The median of 5 showed that the students strongly agreed that this strategy encouraged them to learn English. The fourth item had a mean of 3.50 closer to 4, showing that the students perceived this learning strategy as stimulating with a median of 4 indicating that these students agreed that the zoom session was stimulating with respect to the learning process. The fifth item score had a mean of 4.47 closer to 5, signifying that students decided that the zoom session was effective with teaching English. The median of 5 indicated that students strongly agreed on the effectiveness of zoom sessions in teaching English. The sixth item had a mean of 3.30, which showed that students cannot decide whether it was a self-paced application. The median of 3.5 indicated that 50% of students agreed that it was self paced, while the other 50% cannot agree that it was self paced.

The seventh item had a mean of 3.63 closer to 4, showing that students reported that it helped them learn easily. It also scored a median of 4 which indicated that students agreed that it allowed them to write and speak without restrictions or discomfort. While the eighth item had a score of 2.37 which indicated that the students decided that it did not decrease the pressure levels during the learning process. This was supported by a median of 2, showing that the students disagreed with the fact that pressure was not an obstacle while writing and speaking through the use of the chosen strategy. On the other hand, the ninth item had a mean of 4.27, showing that the students reported that their vocabulary increased after the use of the chosen strategy. The median of 5 emphasized that the students strongly agreed that zoom sessions enriched their vocabulary words. Similarly, the tenth item scored a mean of 4.53, signifying that the students of the experimental group confirmed that it removed writer's and speaker's block. This result was supported by a median value of 5 which was interpreted as a strongly confirmed agreement by the students that zoom sessions helped remove writer's and speaker's block. Similarly, the eleventh item had a mean of 3.97 closer to 4 and with a median of 4 which both signified that students agreed that this strategy helped with setting a clear plan for writing and speaking.

In contrast, items 12 and 14 had a mean of 3.27 and 3.13 which showed that the students in both cases cannot agree or disagree that zoom sessions provided academic interaction with other students or provided real-time interaction with other students and the teacher (live, same time). This neutral result was supported by the median value of 3 which indicated a confused attitude towards the treatment. This contradicted the results of items 13 and 15 which had a mean value of 4.07 and 3.87, which indicated that the students viewed zoom sessions as providing both quick feedback from the teacher and a non-threatening environment. This was also confirmed by the median value of 4 which highlighted that the students agreed on the notion of quick feedback and a comfortable environment. As for items 16 and 17, they had mean values of 4.37 and 4.67 with a median value of 5, which showed that the students strongly agreed that the zoom session motivated their participation and was easy to use as an educational application to facilitate the learning process of the English language.

Reliability of the Measurement Scales

Reliability involves the consistency within a research study in such a way that the implemented instruments should produce similar results when re-conducted (Ursachi, Horodnic, & Zait, 2015).

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.683	17

Table 3: The reliability statistics of the items of the students' questionnaire

The table above is a representative of the results of the Cronbach's test on SPSS of the research survey. The results indicate the value of alpha less than 0.7 for items for measuring the attitude of the students with respect to zoom sessions as the chosen synchronous learning strategy using interactive ways which is (0.683) showing a sufficient value to be considered as reliable to be used for an acceptable consistency in measurement and good correlation.

Discussion of the Results of the Pretest and Posttest

The data within the inferential statistics of the experimental group and the control group were compared together with respect to the phase of the pre-test and the post-test on a separate basis. This data was extracted through subjecting the SPSS input of the students' grades during each phase through the T-Test which indicated a mean value of 5.10 for the control group and a mean value of 5.23 for the experimental group. Hence, both the control and the experimental groups had a relatively similar level. Furthermore, the pretest of both showed a statistical significance value of 0.807 which was greater than 0.05, indicating that there was no significant difference within this phase.

On the other hand, the results of the control and experimental groups scored a mean value of 5.16 for the first and 6.45 for the second. Hence, there was an observable difference between the mean values of both groups during the posttest phase. Moreover, the posttest phase recorded a statistical significance value of 0.013 which is less than 0.05, indicating that there was a remarkable influence on the level of the students. On the first hand, the increase in the mean value of the experimental group was a result of the implementation of the treatment which was the use of zoom sessions using interactive ways. Hence, the chosen learning strategy influenced the students' level of writing skills positively as the results indicated. This notion aligns with the statement of Ochonogor, Alakpodia and Achugbue (2012), which is that students show better academic performance post the experimental period of online sessions via chat rooms. In addition, the results confirm the notion of Grosz-Glunchman (2013), who investigated text chats as a means of instruction for EFL students and found out that students indicated improvement in developing better message numbers, word count, lexical schemata and syntactic structuring.

Discussion of the Results of the Students' Questionnaire

The data of the questionnaire (Likert 5-Scale Rubric) were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. In the descriptive statistics table, the findings showed that the students displayed a positive outlook towards the items which tackle the descriptive aspects of the zoom session. In such a way that the Likert percentage value of each item ranged from 54% to 93.3% , except for item 8 which showed a value of 47.3%.This confirms the notions stated by different researchers with respect to different aspects. First, Hamouda (2013) highlighted that it helps enhancing different disciplines such as phonology, semantics, and syntax. As a result, students use this knowledge in the practical application of the language. Second, Behjat (2011) elaborated that students show better attitudes when using a technological device through the writing process such as giving more time and resilience in producing their writings. Third, Lin and Overbaugh (2007) focused on the exchange of ideas, feedback, and essential data during synchronous learning strategies such as text chats. Fourth, the findings

confirm the notions of Watkins, Carnell, Lodge and Whalley (1996), who stated that synchronous learning strategies enhance the main skills involved in language learning; such as high order thinking, critical thinking skills and problem solving skills through interacting, collaborating, and participating within the instructional process.

However, the value scored on item 8 which involves the pressure factor contradicts with the notion of McLoughlin and Lee (2010) who believed that using synchronous learning strategies can facilitate students' acquisition of syntactic and semantic cognition with respect to sentences through the process of writing and rewriting before sharing these sentences due to the feeling of vulnerability of sharing them with their classmates and teacher which encourages them to structure correct statements.

Answers to Question One and Two

The results of the pre-test and post test phases in this study showed clearly the success of the Emerald Heights International School students within the experimental group in English language after the implementation of the zoom sessions (Question one).

The increase in the scores of the experimental group shows that the students' attitude toward the learning process developed positively leading to remarkable results. Hence, the use of zoom sessions conducted using Smart Class Strategy contributed to enhancing the motivation factor of the students of the Emerald Heights International School students (C.B.S.E affiliated)(Question Two).

Conclusion

The findings of this study showed that zoom sessions taught through Smart Class Strategy can stimulate the students' engagement, motivation and success within the learning process as it has been stated by Skylar (2009). The students are responsible for their learning, which means that they are motivated to learn. This notion is discussed by Hrastinski (2008) who stated that using zoom sessions as a means of instruction can enhance learner's motivation toward the learning process. Moreover, Alexander and Robin (2007) emphasized the use of zoom sessions as reliable and beneficial for enhancing the quality of the learning, the communication and motivation of students during the instructional process. As a conclusion, a zoom session is designed to consolidate and build on the content of a course discussed in the classroom. In particular, it should give students opportunities to discuss any reflective tasks from those courses that aren't covered.

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Appendix A

The Questionnaire:

NB	I think a synchronous learning strategy using Zoom sessions:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	neutral	Agree	strongly agree
1	is appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
2	is flexible.	1	2	3	4	5
3	is encouraging .	1	2	3	4	5
4	stimulating.	1	2	3	4	5
5	is effective with teaching writing and speaking .	1	2	3	4	5
6	is self-paced.	1	2	3	4	5
7	helps to write and speak freely.	1	2	3	4	5
8	has no pressure when writing and speaking.	1	2	3	4	5
9	enriches the vocabulary words.	1	2	3	4	5
10	removes writer's and speaker's block.	1	2	3	4	5
11	helps with setting a clear outline for writing and speaking.	1	2	3	4	5
12	provides academic interaction with other students.	1	2	3	4	5
13	provides speed of feedback from the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
14	provides real-time	1	2	3	4	5

	interaction with other students and teacher (live, same time).					
15	provides a non-threatening environment.	1	2	3	4	5
16	motivates participation.	1	2	3	4	5
17	is easy to use.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

Creative ways to utilize Synchronous Zoom sessions:

1- Meetings with Students

Schedule meetings with students that you would normally meet fact-to-face with by using a ZOOM meeting. If you have distance students, or when inclement weather prohibits travel to campus, you can still meet with students over ZOOM. This is especially useful when you need to record a meeting for future reference.

2- Office Hours:

Run your office hours remotely. Send your students an invite through Outlook or post the meeting information on your Blackboard site letting them know that you will be available during a set time. This will make the virtual room active and students can come in and leave as needed.

3- Paper and Research Reviews

Using the Share Screen feature, you can have students submit work and you can review it with them within a ZOOM session. This would provide the student real time feedback on work and allow for any clarification that was needed.

4- Exam Review Sessions

Open up a ZOOM session and allow students to enter as necessary. You can choose to either moderate a student led discussion or lead the review on your own.

<https://zapier.com/blog/zoom-tips/>