

Smart Classroom Management: How Does it Influence EFL Learners' Anxiety, Engagement, and Language Achievement¹

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Abstract

Smart Classroom Management (SCM) is an approach proposed by Linsin (2013) that takes into account students' needs and interests in class. It has four main strategies: Planning, Organization, Leadership, and Control. This study investigated experimentally the role of English as a Foreign Language teachers' use of SCM in response to learners' second language (L2) anxiety, engagement (behavioral, emotional, and cognitive), and language achievement. To gauge the students' L2 anxiety, six items out of the Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Motivational Self System were used. To measure student engagement, the Student Engagement Scale (SES) was employed. To conduct the research, a mixed methods design (integrating experimental and interview methods) was utilized. In the experimental phase, two classes at the same level were selected. In the experimental group, a treatment that was prepared based on SCM strategies was utilized. In the qualitative phase, four students of the experimental class were voluntarily interviewed about the effects of using SCM strategies on their learning. The results demonstrate that using SCM strategies as a treatment, that was prepared based on students' needs and a humanistic approach, had a significant impact on learners' engagement and its subscales up to 46%. Moreover, applying SCM was influential in reducing students' L2 anxiety and enhancing language achievement. The findings of this study are expected to inspire policy makers, teacher educators, and supervisors to facilitate the implementation of SCM in language classes.

Resumen

Smart Classroom Management (SCM) es un enfoque propuesto por Linsin (2013) que tiene en cuenta las necesidades e intereses de los estudiantes en clase. Tiene cuatro estrategias principales: Planificación, Organización, Liderazgo y Control. Este estudio investigó experimentalmente el uso de SCM por parte de los maestros de inglés como lengua extranjera en respuesta a la ansiedad, el compromiso (conductual, emocional y cognitivo) y el desempeño de los estudiantes de inglés como segundo idioma (L2). Para medir la ansiedad de L2 de los estudiantes, se utilizaron seis ítems del Sistema Motivacional del Yo L2 de Dörnyei (2005). Para medir el compromiso de los estudiantes, se empleó la Student Engagement Scale (SES). Para llevar a cabo la investigación, se utilizó un diseño de métodos mixtos (integrando métodos experimentales y de entrevista). En la fase experimental se seleccionaron dos clases del mismo nivel. En el grupo experimental se utilizó un tratamiento elaborado en base a estrategias SCM. En la fase cualitativa, cuatro estudiantes de la clase experimental fueron entrevistados voluntariamente sobre los efectos del uso de estrategias SCM en su aprendizaje. Los resultados demuestran que el uso de estrategias de SCM como tratamiento, que se preparó en función de las necesidades de los estudiantes y un enfoque humanista, tuvo un impacto significativo en la participación de los estudiantes y sus subescalas hasta en un 46%. Además, la aplicación de SCM influyó en la reducción de la ansiedad L2 de los estudiantes y en la mejora del desempeño del lenguaje. Se espera que los hallazgos de este estudio inspiren a los responsables de la formulación de políticas, los formadores de docentes y los supervisores para facilitar la implementación de SCM en las clases de idiomas.

Introduction

Smart Classroom Management

Smart classroom management (SCM) is an approach that is concerned with students' feelings, abilities, and needs. It is different from other current approaches in that they focus just on teaching without any consideration of students' needs and feelings (Linsin, 2013). This aspect makes the approach engaging and interesting. Classroom management has always been challenging, especially for novice teachers who are not experienced enough in dealing with students and controlling the class. As a broad definition, a classroom is a place where students feel safe, respected, favored, and secured. A teachers' job is to create occasions to cooperate, discipline, and responsibility both for themselves and for their students (Riaz, 2009). Adeyemo (2012) claimed that classroom management is a complicated communicative behavior that the teacher uses to establish conditions to achieve educational aims. Also, classroom management is an issue through which the teacher tries to produce a useful and positive learning environment and control everything in it (Evertson

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& Weinstein, 2006). Berliner (1988) expressed that classroom management embraces all essential activities to generate an environment with a positive environment for learning. Besides, Martin and Sass (2010) described classroom management as an umbrella term for teachers' activities that enable them to handle the class, students' behaviors, and their learning.

It is important to point out that classroom management has numerous objectives, including promoting effectiveness, establishing self-management, and developing students' behaviors, which are precisely related to teacher efficacy (Froyen & Iverson, 1999). In recent years, many studies have been conducted to study the concept that useful classroom management is an essential requirement for having a real learning environment (e.g., Ahmadi et al., 2019; Ghanizadeh & Royaei, 2018; Golestani, 2017). An investigation regarding educational research presented by Wang et al. (1994) suggested that effective classroom management enhances student engagement, reduces disruptive behaviors, and improves the use of teaching time.

Based on Wolfgang and Glickman's (1980, 1986) contention, there are three methods of classroom management, non-interventionist, interventionist, and interactionist. Non-interventionist classroom management is the least directive and controlling, and interventionist is most controlling and highlights more behaviors. The interactionist model takes the middle ground between the two. Furthermore, there is another categorization related to teachers' classroom management method: assertive and non-assertive. Shaver (2006) classifies the teachers who use a collection of classroom management strategies like organizing teaching management, teacher-student rapport, and teacher punishment–rewards as assertive teachers. Ahmadi et al (2019) maintains that more assertive teachers seem to promote more favorable perceptions of classroom activities and contribute to effective learning substantially.

SCM can be an efficient tool to help teachers in their classes if they want to have an active class with a satisfactory level of involvement that can lead to a more interesting class. Teachers can apply SCM strategies in class and hopefully get students' attention making them more involved in different class activities for better learning. SCM also focuses on students' psychological behaviors to develop their engagement and learning achievement (Golestani, 2017). According to Linsin (2013), in SCM, a teacher employs a classroom management plan and creates an environment that students are comfortable being a part of (Golestani, 2017). Issues in a classroom that should be managed smartly by a teacher can include the following points: (1) coping with individual disparities and mixed-ability classes; (2) establishing classwork, contacts with parents, deficient and/or inadequate teaching materials, and high population classrooms; and (3) seating, grouping, noise, and social and cultural activities (Sarıçoban, 2010; Veenman, 1984).

It has been suggested that there is a strong relationship between classroom management and students' achievement, and the most important elements, which affect students' learning, are classroom management (Wang et al., 1994) and teacher behaviors (Wright et al., 1997). According to Brophy (1996), classroom managers focus on generating a positive learning environment by preparing and teaching appealing lessons and monitoring students as they work. Moreover, it is mentioned that good classroom managers select techniques that fit with their teaching goals, classroom activities, and students' traits (Emmer & Stough, 2001).

Many novice teachers consider teaching as giving information directly to passive learners (Torff, 2003). Most often, these teachers do not understand the significance of classroom management strategies and their impact on students' social and educational behavior. Classroom management strategies are created to establish encouraging learning situations by constructing positive support that avoids challenging classroom behaviors (Golestani, 2017). For this reason, teachers and those who were concerned with improving teaching standards, began to use the phrase *creating constructive learning environments* rather than *classroom management*. So, teachers should work on generating positive learning situations, recognize classroom conditions, and make the classroom a place for students to appropriate behaviors happen there (Hardman & Smith, 1999). Regarding the effectiveness of strategies in classroom management, it has been suggested that utilizing strategies reduces unacceptable student behavior efficiently, fosters learning, and enhances educational achievements (Uysal et al., 2014). Harmer (2007) argues that drawing effective lesson plans, selecting the appropriate materials for teaching that fit with the learners' abilities and level, creating a friendly learning environment, and using desirable teaching styles make the teacher's profession less demanding. Danielson (2009) also refers to four elements regarding effective classroom management: planning and preparation, classroom atmosphere, teaching, and professional duties. McCormack (2001) and

Bromfield (2006) suggest that learning and applying classroom management strategies are necessary for teachers. Considering all the points stated earlier about the role of teachers and the classroom environment in student achievements, it seems critical for educational systems to find and implement more influential ways and methods to enhance students' learning and make them more interested in participating in class activities. Paying attention to new methods around the world and trying to get students accustomed to our culture and context would be useful. In this case, SCM with its practical strategies could be a potential technique for teachers to use in order to enhance different aspects of students' functioning and attitudes. Despite this significance, it seems there is a dearth of experimental research aimed at implementing SCM techniques in a language classroom. In the following, the four dimensions of SCM are briefly explained.

Planning

Planning is the first necessary task for teachers. A good classroom teaching plan helps teachers to have effective classroom management. Planning is related to the objectives of teaching. In the word of (Robins & Cenzo, 1998), managers must plan for four vital reasons:

- Determining the structure of class activities;*
- Decreasing the impact of change;*
- Reducing time-consuming and additional tasks;*
- Setting standards for easy control; and*
- Drawing a well-organized lesson plan.*

Ingersoll and Smith (2003) recommend six strategies, including: (a) paying attention to students' development needs; (b) generating a helpful physical environment and forming a cooperative learning situation; (c) explaining rules; (d) designing classroom activities; (e) encouraging a feeling of collaboration among students; and (f) applying an appropriate classroom management style.

Organization

The classroom is where learning happens, so, in such a learning environment, a classroom needs organization and instruction. For learning to happen, students need to know how to behave (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Gallagher (1998) expresses that rules help to generate a productive learning environment. Clarifying expected behavior help teachers to organize the class better. According to Ediger (2013), even experienced teachers y permit behavior problems to interfere in teaching and student accomplishments if they cannot handle their classrooms. In the words of Marzano and Marzano (2003), teachers need to make clear their expectations regarding students' behavior and punishments for unacceptable actions. Furthermore, since the management of the physical environment, which includes the arrangement of desks, supplies, and teaching equipment, is the teacher's responsibility, Jones (2000) proposed that the physical arrangements of the classroom should mirror teachers' instructional goals and syllabus.

Leadership

A more challenging job for EFL teachers is to increase rapport with the learners (Wright, 2005). Teachers need to have a good relationship with students, so that they feel more comfortable. Establishing a friendly relationship with students raises the chance of generating a safe environment for the students. Teachers who have the qualities of a leader not only are capable of acting as mentors for students, but also can help students to make progress at schools (Abdullah Sani et al., 2007). Furthermore, Bulger et al. (2002) believe that "teachers can begin to establish a positive learning environment by showing their passion for the subject, using student names, reinforcing student participation during the class, and being active in moving among the students." (p. 3)

Control

Another outstanding strategy in SCM is control which can be defined as a review of activities to make sure that they are holding out according to the aims (Robins & Cenzo, 1998). The control process contains three different phases: (1) Determining the real performance realized through personal observation; (2) numerical reports and verbal reports; and (3) transcribed reports. In SCM, control is shared between the teacher and students, through which students' participation is encouraged while classroom rules are taken into account

Anxiety

In general, anxiety is defined as an emotion that refers to the feeling of being worried and feeling tension, and is associated with fear and psychological signals (Horwitz et al., 1986). There are three types of anxiety (Eysenck, 1979): trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situational anxiety. Some scholars considered trait anxiety as a personality feature (Eysenck). Trait anxiety makes students feel nervous and increases the working of the autonomic anxious system; besides, it is considered to be a stable personality feature (Spielberger, 1972). State anxiety is another type of anxiety that refers to a feeling of nervousness at a specific moment in time. State anxiety appears in a given context in reply to a particular situation (Spielberger et al., 2017). Finally, situational anxiety can be defined as a feeling of apprehension experienced in an unfamiliar situation (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a). When it comes to learning a new language, teachers should also take Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) or Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) into account. Foreign Language Anxiety is defined as an affective element in foreign language learning and generally overrides other individual learners' differences in language learning (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992, 1993). FLA, therefore, is a situation-based form of anxiety, prevalent in EFL contexts (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a, 1991b, 1994). When learners have a high level of anxiety, they cannot focus on learning; as a result, they might fail in performing a task (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009).

Engagement

Engagement is one of the crucial factors in learning, which cannot be neglected in the classroom. Engagement is a critical means through which students develop their feelings about their classmates, instructors, and institutions, which gives them a sense of being connected, and belonging, while offering opportunities for learning progressing (Axelson & Flick, 2011). According to Furrer and Skinner (2003), engagement refers to being active, flexible, persistent, and concentrated on interactions with social and physical environments. Also, engagement is labeled as "energy in action, the connection between person and activity" (Russell et al. 2005, p.1). Fredricks et al. (2004) consider engagement as a meta-construct that includes three dimensions: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive.

Behavioral engagement

According to Finn (1989) behavioral engagement can be defined as positive behavior, such as following the rules and classroom norms, as well as avoiding disruptive behaviors, such as skipping school and getting into trouble. The second definition is related to involvement in learning and academic tasks and includes behaviors, such as attempts, persistence, focus, attention, asking questions, and participating in the class conversation. A third entails taking part in school-related activities such as athletics or school governance.

Emotional engagement

Emotional engagement focuses on encouraging positive and depressing negative responses to teachers, peers, or school, and is assumed to generate a connection to the institution and influence in willingness to do the job (Connell, 1990; Finn, 1989). Emotional engagement also is related to students' emotional responses in the classroom, including interest, boredom, joy, sadness, and anxiety (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Others conceptualize emotional engagement in terms of belonging, or the sensation of being important to the school, or having gratitude for achievement in school-associated results (Finn, 1989; Voelkl, 1997).

Cognitive engagement

The cognitive dimension of engagement is related to students' psychological participation in learning, such as the willingness to participate in difficult learning and activity-oriented goals, and the use of self-regulation strategies such as memorization, task planning, and management (Ablard & Lipschultz, 1998). Some of the definitions emphasize psychological investment in learning, a wish to go beyond the necessities, and a priority for the challenge (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Also, cognitive engagement is a concept of students' willingness, as it is related to students' feelings about themselves and their studies, their skills, and the strategies they apply to become skillful in their work (Metallidou & Viachou, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

Although the importance of classroom management strategies and the role of teachers in learners' achievement are frequently expressed in different theoretical research, there is a paucity of empirical

research exploring possible contributions it might offer language teachers. As mentioned earlier, the nature and significance of SCM strategies that can engage students in the class is not quite clear for teachers and policymakers. Moreover, instructors should be aware that they can take advantage of getting students more involved for better learning by using SCM strategies. Instructing and managing classroom smartly and ways of utilizing and the benefits of applying it in class is unknown for most of the policymakers, schools, and teachers in the ELT domain. As already stated, it appears that there is a dearth of experimental research aiming at implementing SCM techniques in a language classroom. To address this gap, the following research questions were posed to attain the objectives of the study that was introducing SCM as an effective tool for engaging students. As the study was conducted in a mixed-methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative research questions were posed:

Quantitative RQs:

1. Does EFL teacher's SCM play any significant role in students' L2 anxiety?
2. Does EFL teacher's SCM play any significant role in students' engagement?
 - a. Does EFL teacher's SCM play any significant role in students' cognitive engagement?
 - b. Does EFL teacher's SCM play any significant role in students' behavioral engagement?
 - c. Does EFL teacher's SCM play any significant role in students' emotional engagement?
3. Does EFL teacher's SCM play any significant role in students' language achievement?

Qualitative RQs:

4. How does EFL teacher's SCM influence students' L2 anxiety?
5. How does EFL teacher's SCM influence students' L2 engagement?
6. How does EFL teacher's SCM influence students' L2 language achievement?

Methodology

Participants

This research was carried out for a semester at a semi-private institute called Jahad-E- Daneshgahi in Mashhad, a megacity in northeast of Iran in 2019. It was mixed-methods research that was conducted both quantitatively and qualitatively. In the quantitative phase, 31 intermediate learners from Jahad-E- Daneshgahi school took part; their ages ranged from 12-18 years with at least one year of experience in learning English. All of the participants were male learners and were divided into two groups: experimental (N=15) and control (N=16) classes. Both of them were taught by the same teacher.

After the treatment finished and in the qualitative phase, four students from the experimental group volunteered for the interviews. A brief explanation of classroom activities was given to the participants. Then, the purpose of the interview was explained, and the participants were assured that their views would be confidential. In the interview, their opinions about different parts of the treatment were asked. Given that the study was conducted in one of the researchers' classes, no formal consent was obtained; the students were orally informed of the purpose of the study at the beginning of the term. Only after they stated their interest in taking part in the study, they were included in this research.

Instruments

The Babel English Language Placement Test

To assess participants' language learning, a standardized tool called the Babel English Language Placement Test was employed. It is derived from the Nelson Quick placement tests. The reliability and validity of the Babel test have been demonstrated in various studies, such as Al-Anladuz, (2006). It includes four subtests of equal difficulty. Each subsection contains 25 reading, grammatical, and lexical items. The allotted time for taking the test is 20 minutes.

School Engagement Scale

This SES was developed to measure the school's behavioral, emotional, and cognitive aspects (Fredricks et al., 2005). It has four items for behavioral engagement, six for emotional engagement, and five for cognitive engagement. This assessment takes about ten minutes. It can determine the degree to which students are

interested in making progress and how much they feel that schools and teachers are important for them. It has demonstrated acceptable validity and reliability in various studies (Fredricks et al.).

The anxiety questionnaire

To measure students' L2 anxiety an questionnaire, translated to Persian, was used. Six items from Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (2005) constituted this questionnaire and it was validated ($\alpha = 0.74$) in the Iranian context by Taguchi et al. (2009). The Cronbach's alpha for these items computed in the Iranian context is 0.74. In this study, reliability was 0.69.

Procedure

The study was conducted at the above-mentioned language institute in Mashhad. It started on July 9th and finished on September 24th, 2019. It consisted of two phases: the quantitative phase, which was in the form of quasi-experimental research, and the qualitative phase, which included the triangulation of interview, observation, and diary. For the quantitative phase, the assessments described above were given to the participants of both the control and experimental group at the beginning and at the end of the treatment. In the qualitative phase, the data from the interview with the four students who volunteered, were transcribed, coded, and analyzed to determine the impact of the SCM treatment on the learners in the experimental class.

SCM treatment

SCM and four strategies were utilized as a treatment for the experimental group. For each strategy, some activities were provided based on students' interests, which were determined using a needs analysis based on asking students to answer some questions about their needs and interests. These needs were eventually discerned: English conversations. These conversations were done in the class as a way to give students a chance to practice more speaking English in the class time to have more interactions with their peers and become more fluent in speaking. It was kind of exposing them in an English context.

- short movies
- games
- group work
- short quiz

Planning (Strategy One)

All needs were considered by preparing some extra activities using different strategies. A rich lesson plan was designed to cover these needs. To improve conversation (Strategy 1) students were asked to do the following:

Speak English in class

As it was an English class, to create a real environment as much as possible and to raise their confidence, as well as decreasing their anxiety of speaking in public that they were supposed to ask their questions in English and answer the teacher's questions in English even if they could use just a few words.

Talk about English news every session in class.

They were asked to search the internet, watch Press TV, read newspapers to find out some news, and share it in English in class.

Give a presentation in English to the class.

Students were asked to present a report in the class. They were free to choose a topic, based on their English level and interests and collect the materials that they needed, such as pictures or short videos.

Talk to a native speaker via a video call.

This activity was done to expose students to a real-world context and gave them a chance to evaluate their speaking. It was designed to raise students' confidence and reduce their anxiety.

Show short movies.

Students were all male and typically interested in sports, so some short videos were chosen about famous people like Messi and Ronaldo from sports and Bill Gates from Technology. A short discussion after the videos gave the students a chance to share their understanding.

Group work

Teamwork helps students learn better by getting help from their peers and developing different class skills. It was applied as a technique in the experimental class for a variety of the activities. Later feedback of students showed positive results.

Roleplaying

Role-playing is an important activity in learning English because students put themselves in an imaginary situation. Students were asked to role-play in class and be creative to change all things. It was a very good collaboration activity among students to put their ideas together, create a situation, and act it out.

Games

Playing different games in class was a necessary activity that helped to change the atmosphere and keep students interested.

Organization: Setting the rules

Rules were designed by students and teachers and both agreed to respect the rules. Also, possible consequences for misbehaving were considered. Instructions, the amount of their authority, and the teacher's expectations were made clear.

Leadership (Strategy Two)

To create a friendly atmosphere, leadership as a strategy of SCM was applied in the class to develop a friendly relationship with students. The following activities were carried out by the teacher for this purpose:

Calling them by their first names;

Caring about their feelings;

Trying to solve their problems;

Showing the importance of being present in the class by questioning the reasons for being absent;

Appreciating students and respecting their rights in class and letting them express their ideas freely.

Control (Strategy Three)

Regular exams

Outcomes are always important; therefore, regular exams were designed to evaluate students' progress monthly and reporting results to the parents to get their help were tactics applied by the teacher.

Taking short quizzes

Short quizzes were designed to evaluate student's learning every session and to help them correct their errors immediately with the teacher's encouragement.

Controlling behaviors (Strategy Four)

In SCM the teacher tends to ignore unimportant negative behaviors so that the interactions between the teacher and students remain friendly. Because of SCM treatment, they both were trying to respect the rules that were set for the class by both students and the teacher at the first of the semester. This mutual understanding during the term did not let serious problems occur in the class. Also, they were fully engaged by doing different activities that occupied their time almost fully, so there were not any serious behavioral problems.

Results

Quantitative phase

The results of pretest on language proficiency, engagement, and L2 anxiety

We compared the differences of the proficiency, school engagement, and L2 anxiety tests between the control and experimental groups. To examine whether the two groups were homogenous, regarding the variables in question before conducting the study, independent samples *t*-tests and MANOVA were conducted. The results indicated that there were no significant differences in these variables, and the two groups were homogenous in these assessments: proficiency level ($t= 0.05, p=.96$); engagement (behaviors, cognitive, and emotional) ($F=1.10, p= .36, Wilks' Lambda=.89$); and L2 anxiety ($t= -0.96, p=-.34$). The responses to anxiety scale, as well as the results of proficiency test administration were employed for the statistical analysis and the performance of the participants in the control and experimental groups were comparable.

The results of posttest on language achievement

Q1: Does EFL teacher's SCM play any significant role in students' language achievement?

To examine whether there was any significant difference in level between the control and experimental groups regarding their language achievement, an independent samples *t*-test was run. These data were collected from a standardized tool, the Babel English Language Placement Test. It was derived from the Nelson Quick placement tests, which are valid and reliable placement tests (Al-Anladuz, 2006). It included four sub-tests of equal difficulty; each subsection containinf four 25 reading, grammatical, and lexical items. Table 1 below summarizes the descriptive results of the English proficiency level in two groups. As it shows, the language achievement means among participants in the two groups are different: control ($M=12.50, SD= 1.93$) and experimental ($M=14.13, SD= 1.59$).

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Bable post	1.00	16	12.50	1.93	.48
	2.00	15	14.13	1.59	.41

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of language achievement across control and experimental groups

To examine the significance of the observed differences, we used an independent samples *t*-test. As Table 2 reveals, the Levene's test for equality of variances clearly verified that a normal distribution requirement is held ($F= .91, p= .34$). The results demonstrated a remarkable disparity between two groups (experimental and control) in terms of the level of language achievement ($t= -2.55, p=.01$). In other words, the treatment implemented in the experimental group (SCM) was influential in EFL students' language achievement.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
Babel post	Equal variances assumed	.91	.34	-2.55	29	.01	-1.63	.63	-2.94	-.32
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.57	28.57	.01	-1.63	.63	-2.93	-.33

Table 2: Independent samples t-test showing the results of posttest on language achievement

The results of the posttest on engagement

Q2: Does EFL teacher's SCM play any significant role in student engagement?

To investigate the effect of SCM on student engagement (behavioral, cognitive, and emotional), the differences between the two groups on the engagement scale were calculated in the posttest using School Engagement Scale, which assesses three dimensions of engagement.

The means of both groups in the posttest were found to be different. As can be seen in Table 3, the mean of the experimental group in all three engagements was higher than that of the control group.

	Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Behavioral engagement	1.00	12.56	1.75	16
	2.00	15.00	1.19	15
	Total	13.74	1.93	31
Emotional engagement	1.00	19.18	3.14	16
	2.00	22.06	2.46	15
	Total	20.58	3.14	31
Cognitive engagement	1.00	15.18	2.94	16
	2.00	18.33	4.06	15
	Total	16.70	3.82	31

Table 3: Descriptive statistics showing the results of posttest on engagement

To find out if the disparities between engagement subskills were numerically accountable, a one-way MANOVA among two groups was run. The preliminary assumption testing verified the proposed model containing one independent variable (SCM) and the three related dependent variables (the three dimensions of engagement). The findings (Table 4) showed that a strong difference existed between the two groups in the posttest on the total dependent variables (the three dimensions of engagement): ($F=7.55$, $p= .001$, Wilks' Lambda=.54). Then, the effect size was calculated; the partial eta squared was .46. Given that partial eta squared can be considered as the percentage of the influence, it can imply that SCM could enhance students' academic engagement up to 46 percent.

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Square	
Level	Wilks' Lambda	.54	7.55	3.00	27.00	.001	.46

Table 4: MANOVA table displaying the results of engagement across control and experimental groups

The follow-up analysis is shown in Table 5. It was conducted to see whether the difference held true across the three engagements and, if so, which engagement was more affected by SCM.

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Groups	Behavioral engagement	45.99	1	45.99	20.23	.000	.41
	Emotional engagement	64.17	1	64.17	7.97	.008	.21
	Cognitive engagement	76.61	1	76.61	6.14	.019	.17

Table 5: MANOVA table displaying the results of three types of engagements across control and experimental groups

As Table 5 demonstrated that this difference holds true across all three engagements: behavioral ($F=20.23$, $p= .000$, partial eta squared = .41), emotional ($F=7.97$, $p= .008$, partial eta squared = .21), and cognitive ($F=6.14$, $p= .019$, partial eta squared = .17). As can be seen, the highest difference is observed in behavioral engagement. It appears that SCM improved enhancement in behavioral engagement up to 41%. For emotional engagement, the improvement was 21%, and, for cognitive engagement, 17%.

The results of the posttest on L2 anxiety

Q3: Does an EFL teacher's SCM play any significant role in students' L2 anxiety?

An independent samples t-test was run to determine if a difference can be found among learners regarding the degree of anxiety, as measured by the relevant questionnaire. As can be seen in Table 6, the means of FLA in both experimental and control were not the same: control ($M=17.37$, $SD=3.68$) and experimental ($M=13.40$, $SD=3.81$).

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Anxiety	1.00	16	17.37	3.68	.92
	2.00	15	13.40	3.81	.98

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of L2 anxiety across control and experimental groups

Table 7 shows the statistical findings of t-test, which was run on L2 anxiety. The Levene's test for equality of variances demonstrated that there was a normal distribution requirement ($F = .14, p = .70$). The results revealed that the difference of anxiety level was significant between the two groups ($t = 2.95, p = .00$). In other words, the treatment implemented in the experimental group (SCM) was influential in reducing EFL students' L2 anxiety.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Babel post	Equal variances assumed	.14	.70	2.95	29	.00	3.97	1.34	1.22	6.72
	Equal variances not assumed			2.948	28.708	.006	3.975	1.34851	1.21577	6.73423

Table 7: Independent samples t-test showing the results of posttest on L2 anxiety

Qualitative Phase

This section offers the interview protocols extracted from the questions presented to students to find out their opinions about applying SCM strategies in the class during the term. In order to examine the qualitative data in the study, the data gathered by interviews were carefully studied by the researchers so that the codes emerged. The emerged codes for each engagement were grouped into a number of categories and subcategories. These emerged codes and sub-codes were examined two or three times by the researchers to substantiate the final model. Table 8 presents the extracted points mentioned by interviewees. These are students' answers to the researcher's questions in the interview phase that are transcribed.

Dimensions of engagement	Interview extracts
Speaking English in class	<i>It was difficult for me, but, after some sessions, I became interested and try to speak English more</i> <i>It was a good chance for me to practice speaking English with my teacher or my classmates.</i>
Report in class	<i>English newspapers were always scary for me, but, after dealing with them, I found them enjoyable</i> <i>it was a good activity that raised our confidence and decreased our stress.</i>
Speaking with a native in class via video call	<i>It was an excellent chance to use my knowledge in a real situation I was surprised that I could do it very well</i> <i>After speaking, I was proud of myself, which I could talk well</i>
Short quiz	<i>It was an excellent activity for learning my lessons step by step, so preparing for the final exam was easier</i> <i>It was a good way to make myself ready every session and the end of the term Just by a quick review, I was ready for the final exam</i>
Short movies	<i>It was fantastic because movies were understandable and selected from famous people</i> <i>It helped me to learn new vocabulary and improve my comprehension</i>
Group work	<i>In a group, we could divide activities into different parts, so it was easier than working alone I learned more about smarter students</i> <i>It had positive effects on my learning and made the class cooler</i>
Rules	<i>It was surprising when the teacher asked us to write the rules that we liked to have in the class And we agreed to follow them</i> <i>In my opinion, rules always are helpful Establishing the rules with students was a great idea</i>
Games	<i>I loved playing the game because they were enjoyable</i> <i>Playing the game in class was entertaining</i>
A good relationship with the teacher	<i>The relationship between teacher and students was great, so I was not afraid of making mistakes It decreased my stress</i> <i>Teacher was concerned about our feelings and learning a lot She designed some activities to have fun in class and do not feel bored</i>
Contact with parents.	<i>Having contact between my parents and my teacher showed her concerns about me and motivated me to work harder</i> <i>I did not like this connection, but my teacher made me sure it was for getting help of my parents for the final exam.</i>
Students needs and characteristics.	<i>In the first session, the teacher asked us about activities we liked to have in the class and considered them in her planning</i> <i>I liked to have short movies, and she prepared them</i>

Table 8. Interview protocols extracted from the interview questions

Discussion

A great concern for teachers is how to attract students' attention and improve their learning. To reach these goals, teachers are suggested to take their learners' needs, interests, and traits into account (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2017). One of the most effective ways to help teachers in these regards is applying Smart Classroom Management (SCM) and its strategies in their classes (Ahmadi et al., 2019). SCM is based on a humanistic approach and directs teachers to pay attention to individual and psychological differences among students, as well as their desires and talents (Linsin, 2013). Having this information helps teacher to plan better, organize the class perfectly, build a trustful relationship with their learners, and control students effectively (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012; Lewis et al., 2016; Mitchell et al., 2017; Mucherah & Frazier, 2013; Oliver et al., 2011). Overall, the results of the qualitative and quantitative phases of the current research demonstrated that using SCM strategies reduced anxiety, improved engagement in its three subscales, and had good effects on language achievement.

The first research question asked whether SCM plays a role in learners' anxiety. The results of the research confirmed efficiency of the approach in diminishing anxiety. Language anxiety can cause many problems in learning. Generally, when learners have a high level of anxiety, they cannot focus on learning, and, as a result, they might fail in performing a task in the classroom (Horwitz et al., 1986). It appears plausible that SCM, revolving around humanistic approaches and attending to individual differences, can aid teachers in reducing situational anxiety in EFL classes. As stated earlier, SCM facilitate creating a non-threatening environment (Ghanizadeh & Golestani, in press). A non-threatening learning environment, in turn, develops a sense of belonging among students (Doyle, 2006; Freeman et al., 2007; Oliver et al., 2011), and makes less anxious and self-confident (Ahmadi et al., 2019).

The second research question probed the impact of SCM on three dimensions of engagement (behavioral, cognitive, and emotional). The results of this study confirmed this impact. Concerning behavioral engagement, the results suggested that SCM predicts enhancement in behavioral engagement up to 41%. Behavioral engagement is based on the learners' participation (e.g., taking part in educational, social, or extra activities), and it is necessary for achieving positive academic results and avoiding dropping out Finn, 1989). All these characteristics are in congruence with the principles of SCM conceptualized earlier. Viewing from another perspective, behavioral engagement concerns student conformity to classroom and school rules (Fredricks et al., 2005). An ultimate level of humanistic classroom discipline should be applied by teachers in order to bring about a facilitative learning context, in which students' misconduct is at minimum (Lewis et al., 2016; Linsin, 2013).

Emotional engagement includes both positive and negative responses to teachers, classmates, academics, or school, and is assumed to generate a connection to the institution and influence in willingness to do the job. It also encompasses learners' emotional responses, such as anxiety, enjoyment, and exhaustion (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). The results of the present study indicated that SCM strategies used by the teacher can enhance students' emotional engagement up to 21%. This success refers to the spirit of SCM, which is based on the humanistic approach and pays attention to disparities among students physically and psychologically.

As stated earlier, one of the SCM strategies is organization. In this part, teachers follow their responsibilities, organize tasks into different parts, give authority, and arrange resources (Ghanizadeh & Golestani, in press). Teachers' effort in organization step is to recognize the spirits and personality of students, and also create a sense of trust, acceptance, patience and cooperate that leads to increase the students' self-confidence, motivation, self-esteem, and ultimately emotional engagement.

The present study also showed that EFL teacher's SCM played a significant role in student's cognitive engagement. According to previous studies, the cognitive dimension concerns student psychological involvement in learning (e.g., perceptions of competency, willingness to engage in effortful learning, and task-oriented goals) and use of self-regulation strategies (Fredricks et al., 2005). Previous research demonstrated that teacher management styles could maximize students' academic performance to keep them on task, and engage them cognitively (Ahmadi et al., 2019). In this cycle, the more care and attention students receive from their teachers, the more cognitive and emotional participation will occur (Ghanizadeh & Royaei, 2018).

The third research question examined the efficiency of SCM in student's language achievement. The results suggested that the treatment implemented in the experimental group (SCM) was influential in EFL students'

language achievement. As previous studies have indicated, teachers' mastery in classroom management can have remarkable impact on learner achievement (e.g., Ahmadi et al., 2017; Golestani, 2017). The findings of the present study also corroborate those of Klem & Connell (2004), which showed that there is robust support for the relationship between students' educational achievement and teachers' managing skills. Furthermore, Linsin (2013) maintained classroom management encompasses all circumstances and activities, which are conducive to effective learning and emotional attachment.

Although studies have shown numerous advantages for applying smart classroom management, it is unknown to most of the teachers and even policymakers who are involved in planning educational programs. If this approach could be generalized, the language achievement could be increased faster. Convincing policymakers as the heads of the educational system and teachers as the administrators are crucial steps that should be considered. It is undeniable that policymakers' awareness of SCM and its benefits for the future could help to get governmental support for this approach.

Persuading teachers about the advantages of using SCM in class could accelerate the speed of development. The presentation of SCM strategies can be done by experts in the educational system who could work to find innovative methods and new information about the most efficient ways of teaching. No doubt that adding SCM to the curricula as a new approach of teaching is a longitudinal strategy and requires special preparation to adapt it to our culture and educational systems. The following steps are suggested to expand this approach:

- Considering SCM as a special course at universities as it is the main place for educating future teachers;
- Considering a specific annual budget for development ;
- Reforming the traditional teaching guidelines and step-by-step upgrading training strategies with SCM strategies;
- Training volunteer teachers as the first move;
- Training all teachers in the next steps; and
- Running special programs for novice teachers to observe sample classes, in which SCM is the base of the teaching.

To make teachers interested in applying SCM, the following supportive policies are recommended:

- Paying attention to teachers' problems as much as possible;
- Constructing a trustful relationship between teachers and the educational system;
- Monitoring teachers' progress regularly to evaluate the process of using SCM;
- Raising teachers' motivations by checking the reports, appreciating, and promoting the ones who use SCM in their classes efficiently;
- Supporting teachers regarding producing educational materials, such as monthly exams and providing necessary equipment;
- Getting feedback from teachers frequently about the benefits or deficits of using SCM to solve their problems; and
- Giving rewards like more days off or extra perks to encourage teachers to utilize SCM.

Finally, all these attempts would be possible if the powers-that-be decided operate and support developing it financially. It would be more efficient if teachers considered their faithful commitment in doing their job despite all difficulties.

This inquiry was limited in two ways. Firstly, the participants were chosen according to convenience sampling and the research that was conducted among the EFL students in just one language institute. Second, in this research, all participants were male and teenagers, so the generalizability to other students should be made with cautious. In addition, some considerations delimited this study. For instance, in this investigation, teacher characteristics, such as age, gender, mastery experience, and education level were not taken into account.

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