Google Meet and Foreign Language Teaching: Anxious Already?

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Received: September 23, 2022 Accepted: October 24, 2022 Online Published: October 25, 2022

doi:10.5430/wjel.v12n8p334 URL: https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n8p334

Abstract

The present study is quantitative research that attempts to scrutinize the drawbacks and acceptable ways of using a prominent online meeting platform, Google Meet, while determining its role in view of students' perceptions as far as foreign language teaching and anxiety is concerned. Using online meeting programs can be considered to be an amusing and a versatile solution at first step. Yet, during the COVID-19 pandemic such platforms despite being a great remedy for the continuation of education on the one hand, were tested whether they would manage to substitute face-to-face education environment at the required level. While the previous studies prior to the pandemic could provide only limited and regional case studies carried out around the globe, those which are implemented in the wake of it will constitute a determining pattern regarding its use for utmost benefits or harm. Therefore, the real contribution or negative effects of such platforms will emerge depending on the further studies similar to the current one. Hence, in conformity with the purpose of the study, first a case specific Likert type scale was constructed utilizing inferential statistics to provide a better projection. Then, the scale was applied to 130 university students attending the English Language Literature Department of a state university to find out solutions for two fundamental research questions. As the results were analyzed through descriptive statistics, the findings of the study denoted different perspectives of students which would provide beneficial results for the upcoming interests of foreign language teaching field.

Keywords: online meeting platforms, online foreign language teaching, anxiety

1. Introduction

In the past two decades, online teaching has gained importance due to the rapid innovations in the computer technologies (Thomas & Graham, 2019; Boettcher & Conrad, 2010; Croft, Dalton, & Grant, 2010). Consistent with this phenomenon language teaching has also turned its face towards these technological innovations to keep abreast of the changing teaching environment (Ashwell & Elam, 2017; Enkin & Mejías-Bikandi, 2017; Li, Cummins, & Deng, 2017; Ahn & Lee, 2016; Chun et al., 2016; Blyth, 2014; Ya Ni, 2013; Hegelheimer & Fisher, 2006; Handley & Hamel, 2005; Hampel & Hauck, 2004; Collentine, 2000).

Nevertheless, there has been a serious gap between computer assisted language learning (CALL) and language teaching environments despite a growing body of literature that draws attention to the importance of CALL (Thomas & Graham, 2019; Hanna & de Nooy, 2009; Connolly et al., 2005; Jacobs & McFarlane, 2005). In this context, COVID-19 pandemic has been a catalyzer in accelerating the use and adaptation of technological innovations for language teaching (Wu et al., 2021; Pineda et al., 2021; Ding, 2020). As the outbreaks of disease surged, the new predicament required drastic solutions opening space for emerging distance learning technologies and CALL (Pérez-Marín et al., 2022; Philippe et al., 2020; Rof et al., 2022; Sun et al., 2022; Yong et al., 2022; Affouneh et al., 2020; Altavilla, 2020). More specifically, distance education embarked on a new journey towards an evolution embracing discrete kinds of teaching models such as online education, hybrid education and blended learning (Lin et al., 2022; Carlton, 2021; Hani & Saleh, 2020; Bernard et al., 2014; Mansour & Mupinga, 2007). Hence, this recent situation necessitates to incorporate CALL into the process of teaching more than ever in its history while consolidating it firmly with aforementioned teaching models. In this sense, the new generation online meeting platforms such as Google Meet, Microsoft Team, Skype, Zoom, etc. are gaining importance on a rapid scale day by day.

This study, accordingly, aims to find out a solution for two research questions that particularly focus on drawbacks and acceptable ways of using a prominent one of these platforms, Google Meet, while determining its role in terms of students' views as far as foreign language teaching and anxiety is concerned. As such, the following two questions were investigated throughout this study:

> Research Question 1. What are the drawbacks of using Google Meet for online foreign language teaching that cause students anxiety most?
>
> Research Question 2. What are the acceptable ways of using Google Meet for online foreign language teaching that does not cause students anxiety?

2. Literature Review

The relationship between language teaching and CALL has long been on the agenda (Collett, 1980; Garrett, 1987; Batson, 1988; Chen,

1988; Bell, 1989; Nash, Hsieh, & Chen, 1989; Chen, 1991; Chun, 1994; Kern, 1995; 1998; Derwing et al., 2000; Pierson, 2001; Neri, et al., 2003; Tozcu & Coady, 2004; Debski, 2006; Teo et al., 2007; Cononelos & Maurizio, 2008; Teo, 2009; Sun, 2010; Marzban, 2011; Freeman, 2012; McNeil, 2013; Golonka et al., 2014: Chao, 2015; Yaghoobi & Razmjoo, 2016; Rassaei, 2017; Tseng & Yeh, 2019; Luan et al., 2020; Hung & Huang, 2021; C. Lin et al., 2022). The history of CALL, on the other hand, could be traced back to earlier, when compared to online teaching that came forth at the very beginning of this millennium; albeit being already present since the end of the pervious era (Ridley, et al., 1997; Richards & Ridley, 1997; Ridley & Husband, 1998; Zhang, 1998; Bielman et al., 2000; Phipps & Merisotis, 2000; Winograd, 2000; Vallejo, 2001; Shiratuddin, 2001; Neuhauser, 2002; Pethokoukis, 2002; Buckley, 2003; Dahl, 2003; Jennings & Bayless, 2003; Bata-Jones & Avery, 2004; Bocchi, 2004; Davies & Graff, 2005; Carnevale, 2006; Valadéz, & Durán, 2007; Allen & Seaman, 2007; Baron, 2008; Chun, 2011; Ginn & Hammond, 2012; Blake, 2013; Lin & Yang, 2013; Kern, 2014; Stickler & Shi, 2015; Guàrdia et al., 2016; Jandrić, 2017; Ching et al., 2018; Fawns, 2019; Jokisch et al., 2020; Wu & Nian, 2021). In line with online teaching, the trend for online language teaching has witnessed a sharp increase starting from the early years of this millennium in accordance with the increasing internet speed and streaming quality, finally reaching its ultimate point both during and in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic (Kern & Warschauer, 2000; Cavanaugh, 2001; Cooper, 2001; Young, 2002; Wang & Newlin, 2002; Chenoweth & Murday, 2003; Lorenzetti, 2004; O'Rourke, 2005; Ushida, 2005; Freiermuth & Jarrell, 2006; Lee, 2007; Lamy & Hampel, 2007; Blake et al., 2008; Cononelos & Oliva, 2008; Goodfellow, & Lamy, 2009; Meskill & Anthony, 2010; Kim, 2011; Liang, 2012; Canto et al., 2013; Blyth, 2014; Guichon & Wigham, 2016; Satar, 2016; Tseng & Yeh, 2018; Fawns, 2019; Yeh et al., 2019; Hartshorn & McMurry, 2020; Guillén et al., 2020; Lenkaitis, 2020; Nurieva & Garaeva, 2020; Pu, 2020; Rahayu, 2020; Balbay & Erkan, 2021; Carlton, 2021; Cavus & Sekyere-Asiedu, 2021; Hung & Huang, 2021; Nuryanto, 2021; Zaiarna, 2021; Aldukhayel, 2022; W. Lin et al., 2022).

3. Materials and Methods

This study consists of some quantitative research that aims to explore the role of using Google Meet for online foreign language teaching in the anxiety levels of the students at a foreign language department. To do this, the students attending the English Language and Literature Department of a state university was selected as a model. Thus, after a 14-week course period, 130 students were handed in a questionnaire consisting of a Likert scale designed to scrutinize the role of using Google Meet for online foreign language learning in the anxiety levels of the students. The students' attitudes towards using Google Meet during online teaching were examined through statistical procedures to detect the aspects in which students were affected most and least regarding anxiety. Finally, all the aspects that affect the students most or least submitted in tables consisting of their frequency distributions and percentages.

3.1 Participants of the Study

The present study was realized at the English Language and Literature Department of a state university. The participants of the study comprised 130 students.

As the majority of the English Language and Literature Department students usually consist of female students, most of the participants were females. The students of the program are welcome to the department following an additional English proficiency test. Those who are not found to be proficient, attend a preparatory program of one year. Therefore, the participants of the present study are all accepted to be proficient in English albeit their label of non-native speakers.

Accordingly, all the participants were acknowledged to be almost at the same proficiency level.

3.2 Data Collection

Providing information to the participants concerning the purpose and progress of the research, voluntary participation, written informed consent, respect for confidentiality and the freedom to drop out whenever desired were fundamentally ensured premises before and throughout the current study. Therefore, following the data collection procedures of Selcuk University, the data of the present study were gathered using Likert-type scales (1 = Strongly Agree; 6 = Strongly Disagree) that consist of 35 questions. Quantitative analyses were realized to find answers for the research questions. During the preparation of the scale the opinions of the experts in the same field were considered. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used during the measurement of the results obtained from the questionnaires.

3.3 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire constructed for the present study consisted of 35 questions each of which was responded to as *1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Not Decided 4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree* consistent with their purpose to evaluate the role of using Google Meet in the anxiety levels of the students as far as foreign language teaching is concerned. All question items of the scale were constructed by the researcher.

3.4 Procedure

Having provided a 14 week-course to the students of the English Language and Literature Department of a state university and following the permission procedure in Fall term of 2021-2022, the researcher distributed 130 copies of a three-page questionnaire to the students. The entire questionnaires were answered by the students, and they were all returned to the researcher without any loss. All the same, there were some missing answers for the items of the scale which were later transformed into new data via statistical procedures.

3.5 Data Analysis

The questionnaire constructed for the current study comprised 35 items and none of the items were discarded from the questionnaire.

Then, the scale items were submitted to the evaluation of other experts in the field to provide additional consultancy. The data obtained through the scale were refined for frequency analysis through consolidating the answers in two main groups agreed or disagreed while particularly focusing on the scale items which were 60% and above to reach more meaningful results.

The data analysis of the current study was realized using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0. Both the reliability and the validity of the scale used for the study were measured through statistical procedures separately.

The results monitoring the relation between the responses given to the 35 questionnaire items are all submitted with the abbreviations: Principal Component Analysis with (PCA), Analysis of Variance with ANOVA, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin with (KMO), p value of significance with (p), frequency with (f), percentage (%).

3.5.1 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha Analysis was chosen to test the internal consistency level which measures the homogeneity or coherence of the scale, and the result was .95 reliable. Item statistics denoted that the scale items possessed close mean and standard deviation values. Next, they were exposed to ANOVA with Tukey's Test for Nonadditivity, and the results signified that the items possessed additivity ($p<0.001$). Also, Hotelling's T-Squared Test validated that the scale items possessed homogeneity. Finally, Intraclass Correlation Coefficient criterion was tested and both the internal consistency for items ($p<0.001$) and the average measure ($p<0.001$) revealed reliable results for the scale of the present study.

3.5.2 Validity Analysis

Construct validity of the scale was determined through exploratory factor analysis utilizing Principal Component Analysis (PCA). Before implementing a PCA, the factorability of the scale was measured through the tests; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity respectively. The KMO result was 0.89, which denoted an adequate data structure for carrying out a factor analysis. The Bartlett's test of Sphericity had a significant test value ($p<0.01$), which necessitated an explanatory factor analysis. Then a factor analysis through PCA was realized to measure the construct validity of the scale. 6 factors with eigen values greater than 1 were detected. The factors accounted for the total variance with a value of 66,2% cumulatively. Each factor accounted for the total variance with the percentages of 41.8 %, 7.2%, 6.2%, 3.9%, 3.8%, 3.1% respectively. Still, the Scree Plot singled out the first factor from the others with a sharp decline in the plot. Thus, the scale turned out to have a one-factor pattern, which enabled the study to disregard factor rotation process. Instead, the factor analysis was repeated with the fixed number of factor extraction. As a result of the repeated factor analysis all the factors taking part in the Component Matrix were over .32 and the explained percentage of variance was 41.89. This was clearly over the minimum acceptability criterion 30%, which is accepted as a good value. Ultimately, the validity of the scale was determined to be sound.

4. Results

Research Question 1. What are the drawbacks of using Google Meet for online foreign language teaching that cause students anxiety most?

The results submitted in Table 1. designate that the majority of the students with a percentage of 74.6% agree they become anxious when the camera is on (f=97) while using Google Meet during an online course (item 28). The second highest percentage (69.3%) with a frequency of (90) draws attention to their anxiety when the microphone is on while they use Google Meet during an online course (item 12). As for the third highest percentage (63.9%) with a frequency of (f=83), students point out that they feel anxious when they feel they may miss the deadline for an assignment on an online application such as Google Meet (item 19). Finally, the last highest percentage (53.8) with a frequency of (f=70) refers to their anxiety while using Google Meet as they are visible online (item 10).

Table 1. The agreed drawbacks of using Google Meet for online foreign language teaching that cause students anxiety most.

Categories	f	%
28. I become anxious when the camera is on during an online course when I use Google Meet.	97	74.6
12. I become anxious when the microphone is on when I use Google Meet.	90	69.3
19. I become anxious when I feel I may miss the deadline for an assignment on an online app like Google Meet.	83	63.9
10. I become anxious when I am visible online on Google Meet.	79	53.8

Research Question 2**.** What are the acceptable ways of using Google Meet for online foreign language teaching that does not cause students anxiety?

The results given in Table 2. reveal that at least 5 different items regarding using Google Meet does not create anxiety on students, and therefore they find it acceptable to use it. As is seen clearly in Table 2, item 13 indicates that the majority of the students (83.8%) disagree they become anxious when the microphone is off during Google Meet sessions (f=109). By the same token, the second highest percentage (80.7%) with item 8 shows that the students appear to disagree they become anxious when they meet their friends online with Google Meet (f=105). The third highest percentage (75.4) with a frequency of (f=98) denotes that students do not agree they become anxious when they are not visible online during Google Meet sessions (item11). As for the fourth highest percentage (72.3) it shows with a frequency of (f=94) that students disagree they become anxious when the camera is off during an online course on Google Meet (item29). As the final percentage above 66%, item 26 with a percentage of (68.5) and a frequency of (f=89) reveals that students disagree they become anxious when they think that using keyboard for online courses would harm their hands and nerves due to Google Meet sessions.

Table 2. The disagreed drawbacks of using Google Meet for online foreign language teaching that cause students anxiety most

Categories	f	%
13. I become anxious when the microphone is off during Google Meet sessions.	109	83.8
8. I become anxious when I meet my friends online using Google Meet.	105	80.7
11. I become anxious when I am not visible online during Google Meet sessions.	98	75.4
29. I become anxious when the camera is off during an online course on Google Meet.	94	72.3
26. I become anxious when I think that using keyboard for online courses would harm my hand and nerves due to Google Meet sessions.	89	68.5

5. Discussion

The findings of the present study revealed that as we take the results of the research question one into consideration, of the majority of the most effective factors that cause anxiety associated with Google Meet sessions sharing the percentages (74.6%, 69.3%, 63.9%, 53.8%) with the frequencies (f=97, f=90, f=83, f=79) respectively, the highest two striking ones (item 28 and item 12) stick out to be resting on the situations of both camera and microphone, peculiarly when they are on. As a cross-check, the results of the second research question of the study also turned out to be validating this finding since the most dramatical items again focus on these factors with the percentages (83.8%, 80.7%) and frequencies (f=109, f=105) respectively. In addition, item 10 with the fourth highest percentage (53.8%) and frequency (f=79) points to the same aspect with item 28 focusing on visibility concern which has much to do with the situation when the camera is on. However, when we peruse the literature, research (Çağatay, 2015; Suleimenova, 2013; Mahmoodzadeh, 2012; Bozavlı & Gülmez, 2012; Sioson, 2011; Balemir, 2009; Woodrow, 2006; Wilson, 2006; Huang, 2004; Zhanibek, 2001; Philips, 1992; Young, 1991) indicates that similar results are accessible in foreign language speaking anxiety reports. Therefore, it is hardly possible to determine whether the factors that lead students to anxiety are directly induced by using Google Meet as an online teaching platform or students' speaking activity. Nevertheless, this does not make any difference in reality because whether it is speaking anxiety or online visibility, Google Meet does not seem to convey a resolution to the problem of anxiety. Thus, Google Meet as one of the most reliable online solutions for foreign language teaching throughout the pandemic, does not seem to provide the ultimate solution for dealing with anxiety as far as language teaching is concerned.

6. Limitations and Conclusions

This study is limited on two fundamental grounds:

Preliminarily, the present study is limited only to university level students which would not be an indication for college or primary level students.

Then, in the second place, despite its virtual trait, the environment in which the participants of the current study take part is EFL context, which means the results may show diversity in ESL context. As such, the factors that play the major role on students' anxiety levels would probably designate discrete results in such an environment depending on the students' self- confidence irrespective of the chosen technological platform.

Ultimately, the current study within its limitations may provide new contributions to the literature with regard to the whereabouts of using online meeting platforms such as Google Meet in the field of foreign language teaching. In view of the findings pertaining to the current study, it is conspicuous that using Google Meet involves negative aspects that directly flourish anxiety or at least one may definitely conclude that using Google Meet does not tackle the anxiety problem of the students even in a virtual environment such as online education.

As an implication for further studies a similar investigation may be recommended to be implemented focusing on different levels of education such as primary or high school courses.

Disclosure Statement

The author reports there are no competing interests to declare.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Age: Gender: Female / Male

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.

Thank you for your kind cooperation in advance.

ONLINE TEACHING ANXIETY SCALE FOR ELL COURSES USING GOOGLE MEET	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Not Decided**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
1. I become anxious when I think of going online for a course using Google Meet.					
2. I become anxious when I deal with online meeting programs such as Google Meet.					
3. I become anxious when I learn online meeting programs such as Google Meet.					
4. I become anxious when I use online meeting programs such as Google Meet.					
5. I become anxious when I try to connect to the internet for an online course using Google Meet.					
6. I become anxious when I attempt to find an access point to the internet for an online course to use Google Meet.					

7. I become anxious when I meet my instructor online via Google Meet.					
8. I become anxious when I meet my friends online using Google Meet.					
9. I become anxious when I participate in a course online via Google Meet.					
10. I become anxious when I am visible online on Google Meet.					
11. I become anxious when I am not visible online during Google Meet sessions.					
12. I become anxious when the microphone is on when I use Google Meet.					
13. I become anxious when the microphone is off during Google Meet sessions.					
14. I become anxious when I do not think that the instructor would see the individual needs of his/her students while using Google Meet.					
15. I become anxious because online courses lack in peer-to-peer learning using Google Meet.					
16. I become anxious because I feel isolated during an online course using Google Meet.					
17. I become anxious when the course materials are delivered online using Google Meet.					
18. I become anxious because I do not adapt to the apps of the online course using Google Meet.					
19. I become anxious when I feel I may miss the deadline for an assignment on an online app. like Google Meet.					
20. I become anxious during online courses using Google Meet when compared to face to face courses.					
21. I become anxious waiting for other students' responses during an online course using Google Meet.					
22. I become anxious when I discern that other students only seem to be online when using Google Meet.					
23. I become anxious even before an online class starts because of the technical issues that I must deal with during the course on Google Meet.					
24. I become anxious when I think that the radiation from my computer will harm my eyes during Google Meet sessions.					
25. I become anxious when I think that I will lose my writing skill because of online courses on Google Meet.					
26. I become anxious when I think that using keyboard for online courses would harm my hand nerves due to Google Meet sessions.					
27. I become anxious when I do not participate in a physical environment by myself instead of using Google Meet.					
28. I become anxious when the camera is on during an online course on Google Meet.					
29. I become anxious when the camera is off during an online course on Google Meet.					
30. I worry that my instructor only sees me as a name during online courses on Google Meet.					
31. I would speak much better if course were face to face instead of online on Google Meet.					
32. I do not think that interactive environment really enacts in an online course using Google Meet.					
33. I do not think that online courses are suitable for comprehensive discussions using Google Meet.					
34. I do not think that online courses are efficient because there are lots of technical setbacks during Google Meet sessions.					
35. I do not feel that I belong to a learning community in an online course using Google Meet.					

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