

## Investigating the Use of Google Meet and Face-to-Face in Teaching Conversation

**Maysaa Rashid Abdul-Majeed**

*Dept. of English, College of Education for Women, University of Baghdad, Baghdad, Iraq*

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v4i2.903>

**APA Citation:** Abdul-Majeed, M. R.(2022). Investigating the Use of Google Meet and Face-to-Face in Teaching Conversation. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*. 4(3).67-76. <http://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v4i2.903>

**Received:**

04/04/2022

**Accepted:**

22/05/2022

**Keywords:**

Conversation,  
Technology, Google  
Meet, Teaching .

**Abstract**

Conversation is an oral skill in which two persons can exchange their ideas, thoughts and opinions to communicate with each other. Learners can work in pairs or groups to practice dialogues chosen by the teacher from their textbook materials or from additional resources. Nowadays, because of Corona virus infection, our college students are taught all the subjects including conversation course either via google classroom platform or any other platforms. Google meet is one of online meetings between the teacher and students, i.e., a video meet in which students and the teacher join the online meetings in a specified time to communicate, express their ideas, thoughts and feelings about what is mentioned above. In this study, the researcher has chosen (third stage level/college students during the academic year 2020/2021) and the data of the study was two dialogues chosen from "Chris Redston and Gillie Cunningham Face2face Intermediate Student's Book. Cambridge University Press (2013)" to study by google meet. Another two dialogues were chosen from their required textbook Real Listening and Speaking 4 with Answers. Miles Craven (2008). Cambridge University Press to study by face to face. One group of thirty-two students was chosen randomly to be the experimental group for the sample of the study to practice the dialogues via face- to- face and via google meet. This group post-tested by an observation checklist; results are calculated. At the end, the researcher concludes google meet has a great influence on students' learning in the post-test scores, the t-test value is found to be 20.320 which is more than the tabulated value 2.042. Then, recommendations and suggestions for further studies are put forward.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Conversation is a speech between two or more persons about a particular subject, situation, or to get information, which occurs in any place (at home, in street, at school, in the party, at work...etc.). Moreover, the conversation is the exchange between two or more interlocutors who have similar experiences due to the background knowledge of their society and culture, and what triggers their interaction is the aim of their communication (Urbanová,2003:20).

Also, it means a "joint activity" where two or more persons use verbal and non-verbal signals to communicate (Brennan, 2010:1) interactively.

In addition, Dubberly and Pangaro think that conversation is a means to propose concepts, test understanding, and confirm agreement. Participants agree on their understanding

of a concept when they share a similar model, and this agreement is the basis for the action (Brennan, 2010., p.126).

Furthermore, the conversation can be used to make friendships, talk about the weather or big game, chat about the party that is about to happen, and so on (Ford & Ford,2009 :3). Also, people can understand and have a chance to do actions to create an atmosphere of communication at work (ibid.)

The Coronavirus COVID-19 affects 218 countries and territories around the world. It has a dangerous effect on all walks of life and teaching. A total or semi-closure of schools and universities, and colleges are well done in an effect of the pandemic. Conversation as one language skill has its share in affecting this pandemic, too. With this pandemic, Iraqi educational institutions are shifted to distant learning electronically like all international institutions.

FEL conversation is exposed to these challenges, too. The university instructors, as well as students, have to impart and get knowledge, respectively electronically. Google meet is one of these technologies used by teachers to meet online to be in actual contact with students, just like in real classrooms.

There are two forms of interaction in conversation: face-to-face interaction or using technology (mobile, computer, tablet ...etc.). Through the interaction, the speaker can translate his/her feeling, thoughts, and messages (ibid, p.48).

In class, the instructor asks at least two students to make a conversation about a subject chosen by them or by the instructor to develop their English communicatively because all opinions are allowed.

### **1.1.The Statement of the Problem**

The challenges and problems that university students encounter and the already natural difficulties they face in normal situations are the same ones that prevent students from participating in the conversation in class. For example, Naser and Bin Hamzah (2018,90) mention that the mistakes students make in grammar and pronunciation and class environment are unhelpful in learning the proper pronunciation and grammar. There is no motivation to participate in the class; the teachers and their teaching methods play a negative role because they influence students. Moreover, Yagang (2019:online) says that sometimes when people speak in a conversation, they use ungrammatical utterances or sentences because of anxiety, and they would forget some essential words in sentences; thus, the listener will not understand the conversation.

In addition, in class, the situation is not far from that because students may also have anxiety and pressure when they are called to communicate in English (Oxford,2002 as cited in Akkakoson,2016:64-65). Mother tongue language may affect the pronunciation of the target language because students' speaking in the first language is better than speaking in the second or foreign language (Akram and Qureshi,2012 as cited in Marza,2014:263). Besides these difficulties above, the situation of COVID-19 adds a new challenge that needs the instructors to cope with these hurdles and find the best situations that help find the best ways to keep communication on the right track. One of these ways is google meet, where the teacher and the students are there, just like in the actual classroom. Hence the researcher chooses two groups, one of which is taught in a real classroom, i.e., face to face. In this research, thirty-two students are divided into six groups, and each group consists of 6 pairs who practice the dialogue via

google meet and face-to-face. In both ways, the teacher listens carefully to them. Later, the teacher will provide feedback using an adopted recommended checklist.

### **1.2.Aims of the Study**

This study aims at:

1. empirically investigating google meet usage in teaching conversation.
2. Noticing which category students are good at (content, organization, and delivery).

### **1.3.Hypotheses of the study**

It is hypothesized that “there is no significant difference between the mean scores achievements of the experimental group students who are taught by face to face and by google meet, in their learning of conversation.”

It is also hypothesized that all the students in both google meet and face-to-face are good in the three categories(content, organization, and delivery).

### **1.4.Limits of the Study**

This study is limited to “third-year students/ morning classes at the Department of English / College of Education for Women during the academic year (2020-2021)”.

### **1.5.Significance of the Study**

Google meet can be used at home to enable learners and teachers to meet and let the students learn the conversation better than learning via face-to-face. The lecture can be recorded and shared to get benefit from it. Learners can communicate using their facial expressions, body language, and intonation. Furthermore, this study is helpful to both university instructors and students to expand the scope of online learning and teaching in Iraq. Furthermore, this study may add information to the use of online learning and teaching.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### **2.1.Technology roles in Learning**

The word “technology” includes the use of “materials, tools, techniques, and sources of power to make life easier or more pleasant and to make it works more productive” (Ahmadi ,2018:117).

Technology required in the past “knowledge, skill, raw material, and energy to create products and services. People today use the same resources used in ancient days to develop new technology” (Concepts of Technology, 2019: 24). For example, history tells us that our ancestors used their hands and little knowledge to shape stones (raw material) as ancient Egypt’s civilization did (ibid, p. 24-25). So, all technologies in the past and the present were developed by people through using their imagination and creativity to find modern solutions to their problems (ibid).

Therefore, we live today in a world where technology is considered a big part, and many tasks and jobs that did not need the use of technology in the past need technology today (Costley,2014:2).

Further, technology positively affects students' learning. For instance, technology makes students more involved. Thus they will hold in mind more information because technology makes learning more enjoyable, exciting, and effective (ibid). In addition, the pandemic forces university students to use the platforms whether they like it or not. Google meet is one of these platforms used to teach conversation and enables both the teacher and students to be just like

in the natural class environment. They online meet in specific time hours fixed according to the schedule set in the department of English.

Furthermore, the teacher in face-to-face class stands in front of the students giving them lectures or lessons by using the board to explain the subject; but this method should be changed because of the development of technology (Ahmadi, 2018,119).

## **2.2.Mobile phone roles in Learning**

Mobile learning is “any sort of learning that happens when the learner is not fixed” (Guma et al., 2017, 70). Yet, it is said that students cannot use their mobile phones in face-to-face class because teachers think that using students’ mobiles in class will distract students’ attention from the lesson and as Godwin-Jones,(2018,p.2) explains below ;

1. A good number of students will likely continue to use their phones, possibly resulting in classroom conflict.
2. Prohibiting phones leads students to view what happens in their language classroom as separate from their real lives.
3. Students do not see their devices as a potential learning tool, particularly for language study.

In this context, the advantages of mobile learning as Hashemi et al. (2011:2480 ) mention below :

- a) Interaction: Students interact with instructors and among each other.
- b) Portability: **personal digital assistants** (PDAs) are “lighter than books and enable the student to take notes or input data directly into the device regardless of location either typed, handwritten or using voice”.
- c) Collaboration: enables several students “work together on assignments even while at distant locations.”
- d) Engaging learners: The new generation likes “mobile devices” such as PDAs “**personal digital assistants**, phones, and games devices” that can engage students in different activities.
- e) Increase motivation: “Ownership of the handheld devices seems to increase commitment to using and learning from it.”
- f) Bridging the digital divide: Since handhelds are “more affordable than larger systems, they are accessible to a larger percentage of the population.”
- g) Just-in-time learning: “Increases work/learning performance and relevance to the learner.”
- h) Assisting learners with “some disabilities.”

Moreover, one aim of using mobile phones is to prepare students for the future, so if students know how to use the mobile phone now, thus it will make them get close to the new technologies (Guma et al., 2017:72). In addition, people usually argue about the impact of technology in education and many situations. It can be seen that using technology makes teachers reconsider what they do (Motteram,2013:7). However, the most effective learning occurs when people converse to debrief and share their world descriptions (Sharples,2019; Zitouni et al., 2021). This can be done by downloading the “google meet” program on their mobiles. It would be beneficial to enter the meet in time, closing the mic if it is not used with the camera, whereas if the mic is used, it should be opened to communicate with each other. Hence, the college students were asked to use their smartphones in this study.

### **2.3. Google Meet roles in Learning**

Speaking skill is considered one of the difficult aspects of EFL learning because most EFL students have received the traditional formal teaching in which they do not have “enough opportunities to speak and use English in their classes.” For this, college students can be seen as “poor and hesitant ones when they speak and participate in conversation classes” (Al-Shimmary, 2003:2). Instructors adopting “new topics or changing the direction need the ability to turn-take in a conversation and make lengthy and complex contributions as appropriate. Thus, instructors must help their students to be confident enough to develop their grammar, vocabularies, functional language and communicative skills knowledge as well as fluency” (Scrivener, as cited in Hedge:2008,261). Google meet plays an essential role in improving the four language skills, especially speaking skill. It enables the teacher and students “meet” via laptop, mobile phones, and tablets. In this meeting, the instructor can have 100 students in the room; the lecture can be recorded quickly. Students can feel secure while communicating with each other and with the teacher. This meeting should be at a fixed specific time. It is very helpful to hold group discussions and enable students to see the faces of each other. It can be used from google classroom by generating a google meet link for the students. The teacher shared the material with students using pdf or PowerPoint documents. Students were divided into pairs to practice the dialogue; the teacher listened carefully without comment. Observing each pair of students according to the checklist and writing notes for each student was what the researcher did. The moment each pair finished their practice, feedback was given by the teacher eventually.

### **2.4.Face-to-Face roles in Learning**

In this type of learning, students meet with their teacher in a physical class environment (i.e., the traditional environment). Students worked in groups or pairs to practice conversation in the lecture presented in class. In all education colleges, students study a course of conversation during the four years of study. From the researchers’ own experience in teaching the course of conversation to third-year students, teachers have to stick to the Ministry of Higher Education syllabus that enables students to express themselves, feel somehow shy, and not be motivated in learning. Therefore, the researcher chose for her students additional tasks and activities related to their needs and interests, i.e., free topics to speak about specific topics such as shopping, fashion...etc. In this study, the researcher examined the experimental group practicing the two dialogues in class. Although students have studied this year online because of COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher asked those 32 students to come to college to complete her study. Therefore, students come every Monday and Wednesday for two weeks. The teacher listened carefully to their practice, and she evaluated them according to the same checklist to see whether there is a difference in responding to the conversation topics face to face and via google meet.

### **2.5.The Procedures**

#### **2.5.1. The Experimental Design**

To achieve the aim of the study, “one group posttest-only design” is used. The experimental group is post-tested. Students were observed by a checklist after they finished learning via google meet and face-to-face learning (See Table 1).



**Table 1 (The Experimental Design)**

Pair 1	Treatment	Post Test
Face- to- Face	X	O
Google- meet		

### 2.5.2. The Population

The population of this study comprises 175 Iraqi EFL third stage students from the Department of English /College of Education for Women/ University of Baghdad during the academic year (2020-2021).

### 2.5.3. The Sample

The sample of the students was 32, who were chosen randomly from the population mentioned above. It was named the experimental group; the group was taught via face-to-face and google meet. Then, the experimental group was post-tested by an observation checklist.

### 2.6.The Selection of the Material and Instruction

The material is selected from “Chris Redston and Gillie Cunningham **Face2face Intermediate Student’s Book** Cambridge University Press (2013)”. Two dialogues are chosen from this textbook, namely (R.6.1 P148 and R. 6.7 P.149) to be taught via google meet. The other two dialogues are chosen to be taught face-to-face from the required textbook **Real Listening and Speaking 4 with Answers**. Miles Craven (2008). Cambridge University Press as the Ministry of Higher Education prescribes it.

The researcher taught the study sample the two dialogues via Google Meet on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December 2020 and the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2021, respectively. They were taught conversation for two hours each week. The researcher uploaded a video on google classroom with her explanation of each dialogue before the lecture began with the attachment file of each dialogue. Then, when the lecture began, students work in pairs to practice the dialogue on google meet. Then, the teacher wrote down notes for each pair. Later, she provided each pair with feedback; before the end of the lecture, she asked them if they had any questions or not.

Furthermore, the researcher asked the same students to come to college and practice the material chosen from the required textbook “Miles Craven **Real Listening and Speaking 4 with answers** Cambridge University Press (2008) to practice face-to-face”. The material is (unit 3 and is entitled I need to see a doctor p.18 and unit 4 entitled what is the problem? P.20). This was done on 13<sup>th</sup>., 18<sup>th</sup>. and 20<sup>th</sup>. January 2021 respectively. Then, the experimental group was observed and evaluated.

### 2.7. The Main Instrument

A checklist is used for evaluating students practicing the two dialogues. Their practice was done by using an adopted checklist from <http://old.eahil.eu/conferences/2007Krakow/www.bm.cmuj.krakow.pl/eahil/oralPresentationEvaluationCriteria.pdf>. The researcher evaluated the thirty-two students according to this checklist. The researcher used to listen carefully to each

pair practicing the two dialogues following the points presented in the checklist criteria as the jury of experts recommended it.

**2.8. Description of the Checklist**

An adopted checklist used for evaluating students’ conversations is the checklist entitled (oral presentation evaluation criteria). Students’ presentations are evaluated using the following criteria: the content is given 10 points, organization 20 points, and **delivery** is given 25 points. The total score is 55. The content consists of two items, the organization consists of 4 items, and delivery includes 5 items. The total number of the whole items is 11 items. According to their presentation, students’ responses to each item ranged from 1-to 5.

For face validity, the jurors kindly read all the checklists presented by the researcher, and at the end, they gave their agreement upon this checklist to be used in evaluating the student’s presentation. The researcher also verified the reliability of the checklist by using Alpha-Cronbach’s formula, the reliability value of face-to-face meetings is found to be **0.801**. Whereas the reliability value of google meet is found to be **0.759**.

**3. RESULTS**

**3.1. Comparison of the posttests scores of the experimental group**

The mean score of the experimental group who taught face-to-face in the post-test is found to be 33.7813, whereas their mean scores when they learned by google meet are found to be 44.5938. The t-test is used to show if there is any significant difference between the scores in the post-tests. The t-test value is found to be 20.320 which is more than the tabulated value of **2.042**, this indicates that “there is a significant difference between the two mean scores because of the influence of google meet”. Thus, the null hypothesis that is presented earlier is rejected (see table 2).

**Table 2 t-Test Statistics of Posttest Scores of the Experimental Group**

Pair 1	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Computed Value	Tabulated Value	df
Face-to face meet	32	33.7813	2.94831	20.320	2.042	31
Google meet	32	44.5938	3.35876			

Based on the table above, it can be seen that “the results of the post-test showed that there was a significant increase in the mean score of google meet learning”. This can also be seen from the results of observations that “students looked so enthusiastic when google meet applied in teaching conversation”. Also, it can be seen that “students’ ability in speaking had improved when compared to the results of the face-to-face learning”. This certainly proved that the use of Google Meet greatly affects the level of achievement of students’ speaking skills.

**3.2. Comparison of the experimental group categories**

To verify the second hypothesis as well as to achieve the second aim of the study, face-to-face categories with google meet categories are compared. It is found that in face-to-face, students’ responses in content were (61.87%), in the organization were (67.78%) and in

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delivery were (56%). Whereas in google meet, students' responses in content were (90.625%), in the organization were (81.71%) and in delivery were (77.25) (see Table 3).

**Table 3 A Comparison of the Experimental Group Categories**

	<b>Content</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Delivery</b>
<b>Face-to – face</b>	61.87%	67.78%	56%
<b>Google meet</b>	90.625%	81.71%	77.25

Based on table 3 above, it is clearly noticed that there are differences in both face-to-face and google meet. Furthermore, within each kind, there are differences. As for face-to-face categories, the organization has got the highest percentage which is 67.78% then, for content and later delivery. Whereas the categories of google meet, it can be seen that content has got the highest percentage. Then, organization comes next and later delivery.

Students face-to-face follow three parts of oral presentation which are an introduction, middle, and conclusion. They provided a very good introduction to the dialogue then they gave an extra explanation for the middle and at the end, they provide a gist of the dialogue in their own words. Moreover, content has got 61.87%, but somehow less than the organization as students stuck to the point of the title and they seemed instructive and mind provoking. As for delivery, it has got a low percentage among them due to the weakness of the students in pronunciation in addition to the fact that they didn't have a clear speech rhythm. Furthermore, it seems they do not stick to the time of the lesson and they do not use their facial expressions (physical behavior) in the presentation.

In Google Meet, content has got the highest percentage which is 90.62% among organizations which has got 81.71% and delivery has got 77.25%. This indicates that students have knowledge about the dialogue and know what to say about it, they are being instructive and mind provoking. Furthermore, the students outline their presentation to clarify the key messages and attract the audience's attention through relevant humor and provocative statements.

In organization, students' oral presentation included the three parts: introduction, middle, and conclusion. In the introduction, the speaker motivates students to listen to the dialogue. In the middle, all the points should be covered. In conclusion, the speaker gives a clear summary of the dialogue. Also, here delivery has got a low percentage like in face to face, this is due to the same reasons mentioned above. Hence, the second hypothesis is rejected.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the results of the research above, it can be concluded the following:

1. "Google meet" has a great influence on students' learning, this is noticed by using the t-test formula to show if there is any significant difference between the scores in the post-tests. The t-test value is found to be 20.320 which is more than the tabulated value of **2.042**.
2. In face-to-face, students' organization has got the highest percentage than content and delivery, whereas students delivery seemed to be weak and got the less percentage. In google meet, students' content has got a high percentage than organization and delivery. whereas, delivery was weak and has got the less percentage.



### Recommendations

Based on the findings arrived at, the following recommendations can be stated:

1. Save recorded meetings directly to “Google Drive” and share them with students to help them stay up to date on lessons.
2. Get students participating in “virtual classes” with hand-raising.
3. Help students share their voices and opinions with real-time Q&A.

### Suggestions for Further Studies

In the light of the results obtained, the following suggestions for further studies can be put forward:

1. A similar study is needed to be carried out to “investigate the effect of using google meet in teaching other skills (listening, reading and writing)”.
2. Further study is needed to be carried out in teaching pronunciation.
3. Another study can be conducted on male and female students.

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