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Nataliia CHAPLINSKA,

orcid.org/0000-0001-6478-8560

*Lecturer at the Foreign Languages and Methodology Department
Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University
(Kyiv, Ukraine) n.chaplinska@kubg.edu.ua*

ORGANIZATION OF COMMUNICATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES USING BREAKOUT ROOMS IN GOOGLE MEET

In the technology-driven world, where technology is becoming an integral part of the educational process, the use of video conferencing tools is becoming increasingly important to improve the quality and efficiency of learning. This is especially relevant for foreign language classes, where the development of communication skills is a key element of language acquisition. In this context, the use of the Google Meet platform and its functionality, breakout rooms, is defined as a potentially effective means of improving students' communication skills while learning foreign languages. Google Meet and its functionality, can be productive in language learning through a language environment that allows students to communicate with each other in small groups, which creates a favorable atmosphere for real speaking practice. In such mini groups, students can use the language in special situations and improve their pronunciation and communication skills. Interaction and cooperation among students contribute to the development of communication skills by exchanging ideas, engaging in debates, or collaboratively solving tasks, thus helping in enhancing understanding and proficiency in language usage. In terms of options for teachers/lecturers, it allows teachers to create individual or group creative assignments that meet the needs and interests of specific students or groups. This may include tasks aimed at improving pronunciation, comprehension or use of language in specific situations. Engagement of small groups in work can help students better remember the material and absorb it in a deep level of understanding. During the discussion, other students can help to uncover different aspects of the material, which promotes deeper understanding and awareness for the whole group.

Regarding the general use of technology in education, Google Meet and breakout rooms are part of a broader up-to-date trend of using video conferencing tools in educational institutions. These tools enable remote learning, providing access to learning for students from different locations and different time zones. They also promote active interaction and cooperation between students and teachers, who are in line with modern approaches to learning that emphasize the importance of active participation and cooperation in the learning process.

The main part of the article is aimed at studying the possibilities of optimizing the learning process using subgroup sessions in Google Meet on the example of foreign language classes, some examples of tasks with determining their impact and effectiveness on the development of communicative competences of participants in the educational process.

In the practical part, the article researches the effectiveness of the use of the technical option, the subgroup session usage, and presents the results of investigation, while learning a foreign language, because the main objective is the development of foreign language communicative competence, which includes language, speech, socio-cultural, country studies and linguistic studies competences and can be perfectly implemented thanks to technologies during distance learning.

Key words: Google Meet, breakout rooms, subgroup division, educational platform, interaction.

Наталія ЧАПЛІНСЬКА,

orcid.org/0000-0001-6478-8560

*викладач кафедри іноземних мов та методик їх навчання
Київського столичного університету імені Бориса Грінченка
(Київ, Україна) n.chaplinska@kubg.edu.ua*

ОРГАНІЗАЦІЯ СПІЛКУВАННЯ НА ЗАНЯТТЯХ З ІНОЗЕМНИМНОЮ МОВИ ІЗ ВИКОРИСТАННЯМ СЕАНСІВ ПІДГРУП В GOOGLE MEET

У світі, де технології відіграють значну роль, і стають невід'ємною складовою освітнього процесу, використання засобів відеоконференцій стає все важливішим для підвищення якості та ефективності навчання. Це особливо актуально для занять з іноземних мов, де розвиток комунікативних навичок є ключовим елементом засвоєння мови. У цьому контексті використання платформи Google Meet та її функціоналу, сеансу підгруп, визначається як потенційно ефективний засіб покращення комунікативних навичок студентів під час вивчення іноземних мов. Google Meet та його функціонал можуть бути продуктивними в процесі вивчення мов завдяки мовному середовищу, яке дозволяє студентам спілкуватися один з одним у невеличких групах, створюючи сприятливу атмосферу для практики мовлення в реальних умовах. У таких малих групах студенти можуть використовувати мову в особливих ситуаціях та покращувати свою вимову та комунікативні навички. Взаємодія та співпраця між студентами сприяють розвитку комунікативних навичок за рахунок обміну ідеями, учас-

ті в дебатах або спільного розв'язання завдань, що допомагає поліпшенню розуміння та майстерності використання мови. Щодо можливостей для вчителів/лекторів, це дозволяє створювати індивідуальні або групові творчі завдання, які відповідають потребам та інтересам конкретних студентів або груп. Це може включати завдання, спрямовані на покращення вимови, розуміння або використання мови в конкретних ситуаціях. Залучення малих груп до роботи може допомогти студентам краще запам'ятовувати матеріал та розуміти його на глибокому рівні. Під час обговорення інші студенти можуть допомогти розкрити різні аспекти матеріалу, що сприяє глибшому розумінню та свідомості для всієї групи.

Щодо загального використання технологій у освіті, Google Meet та сеанси підгруп є частиною більш широкої тенденції використання відеоконференційних засобів у навчальних закладах. Ці інструменти дозволяють дистанційне навчання, забезпечуючи доступ до навчання для студентів з різних місць та різних часових поясів. Вони також сприяють активній взаємодії та співпраці між студентами та вчителями, що відповідає сучасним підходам до навчання, які акцентують значення активної участі та співпраці у навчальному процесі.

Основна частина статті спрямована на вивчення можливостей оптимізації навчального процесу за допомогою сесій в підгрупах в Google Meet на прикладі занять з іноземних мов, де розглядаються приклади завдань та визначається їх вплив та ефективність на розвиток комунікативних компетенцій учасників освітнього процесу.

У практичній частині статті досліджується ефективність використання технічної опції, використання сесій в підгрупах, і представляються результати дослідження, під час навчання іноземної мови, оскільки головною метою є розвиток комунікативної компетентності у навчальному процесі, яка включає мовну, мовленнєву, соціокультурну, країнознавчу та лінгвокраїнознавчу компетенції і може бути чудово реалізована завдяки технологіям під час дистанційного навчання.

***Ключові слова:** Google Meet, сеанси підгруп, поділ на підгрупи, освітня платформа, взаємодія.*

Defining the problem and argumentation of the topicality of its consideration. The great wave of digitalization of the educational process began with the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020 and has been further enhanced by the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine (a lot of educational institutions have returned to full-time face-to-face studying, but a large number of reoccupied educational institutions continue to function in a distance learning format). Due to the global challenges and threats, the Ukrainian education system has undergone a significant digital transformation across all levels, incorporating both distance and blended learning. These events have disturbed all traditional forms of teaching, including language teaching. The communication problem at online English lessons arises from the limited ability of students to interact and collaborate effectively with the teacher and groupmates through remote technologies, which may impact the quality of language skills acquisition and the development of speaking proficiency.

As a result, without typical contact between the teacher and the students, and between the students themselves, many of them become discouraged and even dissatisfied. The absence of socialization has an impact on students' socio-emotional balance, particularly in students with current issues of this type (Mirzoyeva, 2022: 95).

The main objective – is to explore and advocate for the efficient organization of communication in foreign language classes through the implementation of breakout rooms in Google Meet. The focus is on outlining the strategies and benefits of employing this approach to enhance the overall learning experience and language proficiency of students in a virtual learning environment.

English as a foreign language is quite difficult to learn and master, especially in distance learning format, as it requires constant practice and seriousness in learning. Therefore, it is necessary to develop different media, techniques, methods and strategies so that the process of learning English become more effective. Effective communication relies on speaking skills, which empower individuals to convey messages with passion, thoughtfulness, and persuasiveness. The mastery of these skills ensures clarity and minimizes the risk of being misunderstood by the audience. Proficiency in English-speaking skills not only supports various language-related activities but also plays a crucial role in mastering and applying the subject matter presented by the teacher, whether through direct interactions or virtual media (Boklan, Pozniak, 2023: 8).

Research analysis. Among the programs that ensure the synchronous work of teachers and students in Ukraine in foreign language classes, Zoom and Google Meet can be identified as the most popular (Owayid, Uden, 2014). Some scientists were engaged in the study of the Google Meet platform for effective work in foreign language classes: Zadorozna T. investigated the possibilities and prospects of using Google (Zadorozna, 2023), Boklan M., Pozniak A., Vynar O., Markova S. were interested in organization itself (Boklan, Pozniak, Vynar, Markova, 2023), Kosharna N., Petryk, L., Hapon, L. researched the use of Google services specifying in primary school (Kosharna, Petryk, Hapon, 2022), Mirzoyeva, L. highlighted advantages and disadvantages (Mirzoyeva, 2022), Helmi M. (Helmi, 2020), Chandler K. (Chandler, 2016), Owayid A. and Uden, L. (Owayid, Uden, 2014) put emphasis on Google Meet as a media tool for improving language.

Presenting main material. Google Meet platform has a large number of advantages and in the future can completely replace most services for video communication and conducting online classes (Helmi, 2020). The main advantages of using the Google Meet service are, firstly, the possibility of continuous communication for 300 minutes, compared to Zoom, where there is a limit to the conference – up to 40 minutes. Also, on other platforms, there are often restrictions on the maximum number of connected people – 100. Google Meet, in turn, allows you to connect 150 people at the same time. This is both an opportunity to hold lectures on courses with more than 100 students, as well as conducting additional conferences, interuniversity and even international meetings. Another problem of many other platforms used in online education is the necessity to download a special application on any device for establishing a connection. This service allows communicate without special applications, simply through any browser under your account. This relieves both teachers and students from downloading and installing additional applications on smartphones, laptops or PCs (Zadorozna, 2023: 352). Meeting recording is very useful function. You can record meetings and even create text versions of them.

Google Meet has all the common features: showing the device screen as a separate, specific tab, as well as the entire device and all actions performed on the device, creating separate rooms with groups of students for more organized or individual classes. The latter is very important precisely in the context of teaching a foreign language that does not require large classrooms in classes, and vice versa – creates the need to reduce the group of performers of a certain task or work on a certain project. In such groups, students interact more, actively using the acquired knowledge in practice and enriching their vocabulary. The second aspect that creates efficiency in this approach is the possibility of individual adaptation of the material and tasks for each group. Different groups can work on tasks that match their skill level and needs, allowing for better discovery and consolidation of the knowledge gained. Third, the creation of separate groups promotes the development of communication skills. In small groups, students need to actively communicate and discuss certain topics, which contributes to the development of the ability to express their thoughts and listen to others.

The creation of breakout rooms in Google Meet is random, the computer automatically divides students. But, the owner of the meeting has the opportunity to rearrange the participants, if you did it in a different way (e.g. wheel of fortune). The ideal division is stronger students with weaker ones. The main thing is to discuss

with your students the optimal time for completing the task. A tutor has the ability to establish as many breakout rooms as necessary. Within each designated breakout room, only the participants in that room have access to the discussion and can view text chat messages. This provides a more private environment for students to engage in conversation and fosters independent work. Students can feel at ease, knowing that their contributions to the discussion are confined to the small group of peers present in the room, and the conversation remains confidential without the option for recording. The tutor has the capability to send messages into the room, oversee the whiteboard remotely, and retrieve any completed whiteboards for further discussion in the main room. Additionally, the tutor can enter the breakout room if students require assistance or clarification on a task (Chandler, 2016: 16).

Opening breakout rooms in a foreign language can be effective at different parts of the lesson, depending on the goals and objectives you are trying to achieve. If you wish at the beginning of the lesson (warming-up activity), you may activate the previous knowledge of the students or discuss the previous material. If you want to practice acquired skills, divide the students into subgroups for practicing tasks or exercises aimed at developing specific language skills, such as learning new vocabulary or improving grammar skills. If you have a group project or assignment, start it in subgroups where students can work together and share ideas. And of course, use subgroups for more in-depth discussion of a specific topic or aspect of language learning. Each subgroup can explore the issues and offer their own perspectives. This gives everyone the opportunity to participate with tasks that require collective work in small groups to solve problems or overcome challenges given by a teacher.

Let's give specific examples for working in breakout rooms at English classes. For example, you can divide the students into two subgroups and ask them to discuss pros and cons of life in the city and in the countryside, using active vocabulary to support their opinions. If we are working with the role-playing game «In a restaurant», students may work in subgroups, each of which plays the role of either a waiter or a customer. They must take orders, communicate about menu items, and resolve any potential misunderstandings or problems. If we want to work with dialogues or trilogies, we can give each pair a set of situations, for example, «At the currency exchange office», «Talk about shopping», «At the airport». Students must work together to create dialogues for these situations using language constructions they have already learned. A good idea is an interview with the latest news, because everyone has access to news in their Telegram channels (Brovko, 2022) after which goes group discussions in mini chats. A teacher can prepare a

list of news topics and each group should choose a topic and prepare an interview. As journalists and experts, students must use language to discuss current events. These assignments stimulate active participation and use of language in various situations, contributing to the development of communication skills.

Google Meet integrates with other Google Workspace services: you can collaborate directly with Google Word Documents, Excel and Presentations. Google Jamboard is an effective integration to Google Meet. Google Jamboard allows several users to work together on the same board at the same time, which facilitates collective work and the exchange of ideas. Adding various objects, such as images, texts, stickers, allows you to create interactive and interesting materials for learning and collaboration. Information is stored in the cloud, making access to materials possible from any device with an Internet connection. Google Jamboard tools can be used for post-collaboration in breakout sessions, allowing teachers and students to work together even if they are in different locations (Holovatenko, 2022: 20).

In order to conduct a successful, engaging, and effective English language lesson, the teacher needs to establish specific pedagogical scenarios. The prospective teacher must be prepared to address various pedagogical challenges and select the suitable Google service to enhance the effectiveness of the learning process (Kosharna, Petryk, Hapon, 2022: 63).

Research. In this study, let's investigate the effectiveness of learning English in breakout rooms. For this purpose, we will divide the students of the Faculty of Pedagogical Education, majoring in Primary Education into 2 groups – experimental (9 students) and control (9 students).

During the class on the subject “Practical English of Oral and Written Speech,” students were divided into two groups – one utilized breakout rooms for collaborative work, while the other remained in the general session. After the class, students were given Google Forms survey (an example with questions is below). First, the experimental group was interviewed.

Analysis of the test on the Effectiveness of Using Breakout Rooms in Google Meet.

1. How do you determine the effectiveness of using Breakout Rooms for learning new material?
9 відповідей

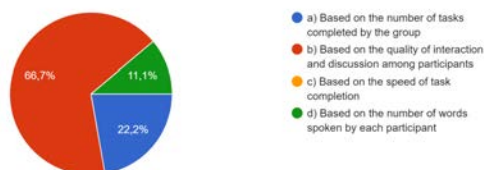


chart 1

The first chart presents the results of a survey on the question of determining the effectiveness of using breakout rooms for learning new material. Most respondents believe that the quality of interaction and discussion among participants is a key factor in determining effectiveness. Some respondents believe that speed of tasks is an important factor, but less important than the quality of the interaction. Only a small part of the respondents believe that the number of completed tasks is an effective measure. This data helps to understand what factors are considered important in determining the effectiveness of using breakout rooms to learn new material. The answer “by the number of words spoken by each participant” was not chosen by any of the respondents.

2. How do you assess student communication in Breakout Rooms?
9 відповідей

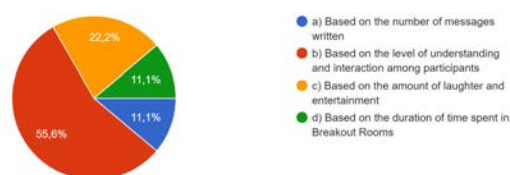


chart 2

The majority of respondents believe that the level of understanding and interaction among participants is a key factor for evaluation. A significant part of the respondents evaluate communication based on the number of laughs and fun. Some respondents believe that the number of messages written is an important factor. The same number of respondents rate communication based on length of stay in breakout rooms.

3. If you could choose a format for foreign language classes, which one would you prefer?
9 відповідей

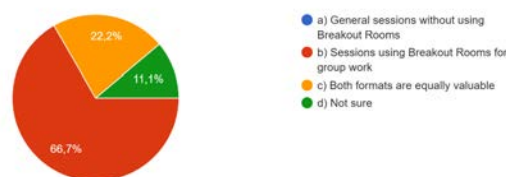


chart 3

Classes with breakout rooms for group work was preferable. But some participants think that both formats are important. Only few respondents remained undecided.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the quality of interaction and understanding among the participants demonstrate key aspects of the effectiveness of the use of extended breakout rooms for learning new material, and that many interviewers prefer group work.

Now let's analyze the charts of the control group.

chart 4

The largest number of respondents defines efficiency based on the number of tasks completed by the group. The second most popular criterion is the quality of interaction and discussion between participants. The speed of the tasks and the number of words spoken by each participant received the same number of votes.

2. How do you assess student communication in Breakout Rooms?
9 відповідей

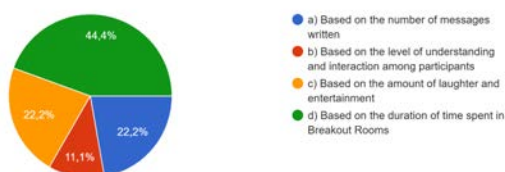


chart 5

The amount of time of staying in breakout rooms is the most common factor used by respondents to measure student communication. Options «based on the number of messages written» and «based on the number of laughs and entertainment» gained equal votes. The lowest number of participants evaluate communication based on the level of understanding and engagement between participants, which means they have not practiced such work previously.

3. If you could choose a format for foreign language classes, which one would you prefer?
9 відповідей

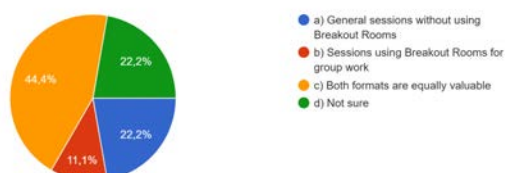


chart 6

Due to chart 6, great part of students believes that both types of lessons are equally useful for learning a foreign language. This means they don't often work in breakout rooms, but most want to. A comparable

percent of respondents is unsure if format is better or prefer regular classes without breakout rooms (both options received 22.2% of replies). Only a small percentage (11.1%) support classes that use breakout rooms for group projects, as they presented them in front of the audience.

Having analyzed the research in the control group, the following conclusions can be drawn. It is necessary to develop tasks that will stimulate the active participation of the group and contribute to its successful implementation, ensuring high-quality interaction by creating tasks that promote open discussion and active cooperation. Taking into account the fact that some students find both types of classes useful, regular classes should be combined with work in breakout rooms. Because time spent in breakout rooms is important for measuring communication, ensure sufficient time is allocated for students to effectively discuss tasks and interact by creating tasks that allow students to express their thoughts through written messages as well as verbally. Given that most students want to work in breakout rooms, consider integrating this format into classes, but also consider the opinions of those who are still hesitant or prefer regular classes.

Conclusions. The study's findings indicate a generally positive reception of the application of breakout rooms, with students directing their attention towards the opportunities for interaction within such settings. From our perspective, employing options like breakout sessions or rooms can assist language educators in stimulating students' interest. A diverse range of exercises and various grouping methods were implemented in breakout rooms, utilizing these techniques to bridge the divide between online and traditional classroom environments. Despite the inability to replicate real communication and interaction among students in the context of war, the usage of breakout rooms emerges as a suitable tool to inspire and engage students in a variety of activities within a virtual environment.

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