

التأثيرات الأكاديمية و الاجتماعية لاستخدام الواتس أب على تحسين مهارات الاستماع والفهم لطلاب قسم اللغة الانكليزية في جامعة

قاسيون في سوريا

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المخلص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية لعرض تقارير نتائج دراسة تجريبية على فعالية استخدام برنامج (WhatsApp) لتكنولوجيا الهاتف المحمول في التعليم لتحسين مهارات الاستماع والتحدث في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لطلاب قسم اللغة الإنجليزية وزيادة دوافعهم للتعلم. إن المشاركين في الدراسة (32) هم طلاب السنة الأولى المسجلين في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة قاسيون الخاصة في سورية. استخدمت الدراسة استبياناً ورقياً يهدف إلى الحصول على آراء الطلاب قيد الدراسة بشأن ميولهم وتطورهم الأكاديمي والاجتماعي بعد دمج برنامج WhatsApp في تدريسهم ومن ثم تم إجراء مقابلات معهم لتبين أسباب اختيارهم لأمر ما دون آخر. ومن ثم تم استخدام اختبارات إحصائية وصفية لمعالجة الأسئلة التي أثرت في الدراسة. أشارت النتائج إلى أن استخدام وساطة ال WhatsApp ساعد الطلاب على تحسين مهاراتهم في الاستماع والتحدث والنقد وفي زيادة دوافعهم للتعلم.

الكلمات المفتاحية : برنامج الواتساب¹

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Academic and Social Effects of Using WhatsApp on Improving Listening and Speaking Proficiency and Perception of English Language Students at Qasyoun University in Syria

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Abstract

This article reports the results of an experimental study on the effectiveness of integrating mobile technology (WhatsApp) in improving the listening and speaking skills of English as a Foreign Language for English Language Department students and increasing their motivations for learning. The participants (n = 32) are first year students enrolled at the English Department at Qasyoun University. The study employs a paper-based questionnaire that attempts to get the feedback of students under study regarding their academic and social reflections after the integration of WhatsApp. A follow-up interview is carried out to discern students' preferences for one choice over another. Descriptive statistics are used to address the questions raised in the study and analyse students' choices. Results indicate that the use of the WhatsApp mediation helps students to improve their critique, listening and speaking proficiency and to increase their motivations for learning.

Keywords: WhatsApp¹.

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¹ : A mobile program, English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

1- Introduction

Nowadays, mobile phone tools and programs play a vital role in improving social and educational interaction¹. These educational programs renders learners with enormous capacities to interact and exchange knowledge and information². The main property of these programs is that they are easily installed and used by users³. In the educational field, such programs raise the awareness of students about their central role in the educational process since it allows them to frame their access of the knowledge to meet their academic needs⁴.

The current research attempts to study English language students' attitudes after conducting an experiment that involves integrating WhatsApp in their listening and speaking course. It studies their academic and social attitudes in addition to their relationships with their peers and instructor.

2- Research Questions

- 1- What are students' academic perspectives regarding the integration of WhatsApp in the listening and speaking course?
- 2- What are students' social perspectives regarding the integration of WhatsApp in the listening and speaking course?

3- Literature Review

The educational integration between learners and mobile programs makes the learning process an interesting and a pleasant one. WhatsApp is one of these mobile programs that are widely used at a global level. The only requirement that you need to have is to have a smart phone with internet connection to provide participants with the

¹ BARHOUMI, C., & ROSSI, G., 2013- **The Effectiveness of the Instruction Oriented Hypertext Systems Compared to Direct Instruction in E-learning Environment.** *Contemporary Educational Technology*, **4**, 281–308.

² NELSON, J., CHRISTOPHER, A., & MIMS, C. 2009- **Transformation of Teaching and Learning.** *TechTrends*, **53**, 80–85. doi:10.1007/s11528-009-0329-z.

³ PENCE, H. E., 2007 - **Preparing for the Real Web Generation.** *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, **35**, 347–356. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2190/7116-G776-7P42-V110>.

⁴ SHARPLES, M., LONSDALE, P., MEEK, J., RUDMAN, P., & VAVOULA, G. N., 2007- **An Evaluation of MyArtSpace: A Mobile Learning Service for School Museum Trips.** In A. Norman, & J. Pearce, (Eds.), *Proceedings of 6th Annual Conference on Mobile Learning, mLearn 2007* (pp. 238–244). Melbourne: University of Melbourne.

access to interact and communicate effectively ¹. This technology enables users to send and receive instant messages, images, videos, voice message, and documents. It also enables them to make phone and video calls for zero cost except for internet charging. In the field of English learning, learners can express themselves freely and get instant feedback from their teachers and peers away from the boundaries of the classroom ².

Originally, the main purpose of WhatsApp is instant text messaging and video and voice recording exchange. ³ found out that text and instant messaging were convenient techniques that provide English learners' with better communication with their teachers and peers especially in higher education. ⁴ found out that WhatsApp had improved students' writing skills and vocabulary choice when they got engaged with technology especially on mobile phones in comparison to other students who were exposed to regular English instructions.

Integrating WhatsApp in the learning process provides learners with the freedom of time and location ⁵. Moreover, ⁶viewed the use of WhatsApp in learning as a method to enhance learners' multifaceted environment.

¹ BAFFOUR, E., 2015- **Institutional Case-Based Study on the Effect of Research Methods on Project Work in the Curriculum of Mechanical Engineering Programmes in Ghanaian Polytechnics.** *Journal of Education and Practice*, **6**, 20–32.

² RAMBE, P., & CHIPUNZA, C., 2013- **Using Mobile Devices to Leverage Student Access to Collaboratively-Generated Resources: A Case of WhatsApp Instant Messaging at a South African University.** *Paper presented at the International Conference on Advanced Information and Communication Technology for Education*, ICAICTE 2013, Hainan, China.

³ AMRY, A. B., 2014- **The Impact of WhatsApp Mobile Social Learning on the Achievement and Attitudes of Female Students Compared with Face to Face Learning in the Classroom.** *European Scientific Journal*. **10(22)**, 116-136.

⁴ MARIA, J., 2016- **Use of WhatsApp to Enhance Reading and Writing Skills at Undergraduate College Level.** *Language in India*, **16 (11)**.

⁵ CRESCENTE, M. L., & LEE, D., 2011- **Critical Issues of M-Learning: Design Models, Adoption Processes, and Future Trends.** *Journal of the Chinese Institute of Industrial Engineers*, **28 (2)**, 111–123.

⁶BAFFOUR, E., 2015- **Institutional Case-Based Study on the Effect of Research Methods on Project Work in the Curriculum of Mechanical Engineering Programmes in Ghanaian Polytechnics.** *Journal of Education and Practice*, **6**, 20–32.

Additionally, ¹ found out that using WhatsApp involved pleasant teaching aids that assisted students to improve a lot while learning. Moreover, ² concluded that integrating mobile programs in learning made it a pleasant and successful experience.

³ found out that students' overall oral development was positively influenced with the use of WhatsApp. They concluded that learning and communication via the mobile phone provided learners with an environment that liberated them from the boundaries and pressures of the classroom. They could think about their performance and try to shape it before they sent their oral presentations via WhatsApp.

⁴ concluded that learners' motivation and overall critique writing proficiency improved by the integration of WhatsApp in comparison to regular instruction. ⁵'s findings showed that students' scores in their academic vocabulary improvement improved by the usage of WhatsApp. It also revealed students' praise for the use of WhatsApp because it raised their awareness of academic words.

⁶ conducted a research to study the potential effect of using WhatsApp in improving communication among high school students. They found out the positive effect of using WhatsApp in improving communication and interaction among students and their instructors. It also showed that it helped in enhancing the social atmosphere,

¹ RAMBE, P., & CHIPUNZA, C., 2013- **Using Mobile Devices to Leverage Student Access to Collaboratively-Generated Resources: A Case of WhatsApp Instant Messaging at a South African University.** Paper presented at the International Conference on Advanced Information and Communication Technology for Education, ICAICTE 2013, Hainan, China.

² MOTIWALLA, L. F., 2007- **Mobile Learning: A Framework and Evaluation.** *Computers & Education*, 4, 581- 596.

³ ANDÚJAR-VACA, A., & CRUZ-MARTÍNEZ, M. S., 2017- **Mobile Instant Messaging: WhatsApp and its Potential to Develop Oral Skills.** *Media Education Research Journal*, 25(50), 43-52. <https://doi.org/10.3916/C50-2017-04>

⁴ AWADA. G. & WANG. S., 2016- **Effect of WhatsApp on Critique Writing Proficiency and Perceptions toward Learning.** *Cogent Education*, 3(1), 1264173.

⁵ MAN, C., 2014- **Word's Up with WhatsApp: The Use of Instant Messaging in Consciousness raising of Academic Vocabulary.** 23rd MELTA and 12th Asia TEFL International Conference 28-30 August 2014, at Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching.

⁶ BOUHNİK, D., & DESHEN, M., 2014- **WhatsApp Goes to School: Mobile Instant Messaging between Teachers and Students.** *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research*, 13, 217–231.

improved dialogue among users and generated a lovely atmosphere and assistance among them. They noticed various advantages of WhatsApp for students' general improvements. These advantages could be summarized as the feeling of students that their teacher was available for them at any time they needed, the better peer-work assistance, better knowledge of students' personal and academic levels. Also, students were enthusiastic about the implementation of WhatsApp in their educational process.

4- Methodology

4-1 Context and Participants of the Present Study

This study takes place in the English Department context at Qasyoun Private University in Syria. Students are native speakers of Arabic who have spent around 10-15 years learning English since their childhood at elementary, preparatory and secondary schools. They are first year students who are enrolled and registered at the English Department of Qasyoun University. The main purpose of the English Department program is to provide students with sufficient knowledge in English language and translation in addition to some background knowledge of English literature. Students must have at least 18 hours of exposure to various English language courses per week. It is important to note that students enrolling at this university do not need to pass through a predesigned English language test to measure their English language proficiency to be accepted. This indicates that students' English language levels are variable.

The researcher teaches Listening and Speaking Course at the university. The size of population is 32 students: 24 female and 8 male students as shown in Table (1).

Table (1) Students' Gender

	Frequency	Per cent
Male	8	25
female	24	75
Total	32	100

The researcher followed the following steps with students to develop their listening and speaking skills via WhatsApp. First, he exchanged with students their phone numbers that had WhatsApp application installed in. Second, every three nights, instructions were sent to them to follow via WhatsApp. These instructions included texting and voice messages. Third, various

topics were developed for discussions with the students via WhatsApp which were derived from their lessons. Although he met them once a week in the classroom, he kept sending and receiving WhatsApp messages with them during the whole week. He informed them that they had to deliver the assignment after one day of his request to do so, so he could provide them with instant feedback.

Recording steps could be summarized as follows: The researcher started by recording a passage and asking students to scrutinize and write all the vocabulary that they heard. The student, who sent the largest number of vocabulary within the time span, was granted an extra mark in the general participation marks. After the end of the deadline for sending their answers via WhatsApp, students were sent the passage to learn from their mistakes and fill the gaps in their vocabulary lists. Then, he asked them to give their general understanding of another recording. Later, they were asked to send recordings about their favourite movie, their weekend activities, their relatives' relationships, a modification to a stereo-typical famous story, their best methods for raising children... etc.

At a later stage of the research, students were sent their peers' recording to evaluate it and send their feedback about it. Students felt that it was very beneficial and enthusiastic for them to act as the teacher and evaluate others' recordings. The more students recorded themselves, the more confident they appeared when they were asked to go on stage the following week during the lecture to inform their peers about the content of their recording. It is worth noting that students sent their questions and inquiries during the whole day. However, the instructor told them at the beginning of the research experiment that he would devote two hours daily from 9 p.m.-11:00 p.m. to respond to their questions and inquiries.

4-2 Student Experience and Attitude Questionnaire

Student questionnaire was designed to infer students' perception and expectation regarding their experience of using WhatsApp as a supplementary method. It consisted of fourteen questions. The questions of the questionnaire ranged from studying the personal integration of these students in WhatsApp' technology in their social life to the academic advancement. They were asked whether they felt that WhatsApp had played

any vital role in accelerating their learning process in an attempt to compare these new techniques with the more traditional or normal methods.

The questionnaire was roughly based upon many surveys used by many researchers such as ¹; ²; and ³. Students' questionnaire was distributed to 32 students at the end of the first semester of the Academic year 2018-2019. The choice of this particular time was to ensure that students progressed in their new learning technique using WhatsApp as a supportive method to enhance students' listening awareness. The researcher explained each item of the questionnaire to the students in order to avoid any misunderstanding on their part. Some students asked some questions, so the researcher explained and clarified the unclear points. The time allocated to finish answering the questionnaire was intended to be 5 minutes, which was extended to 7 minutes after answering students' questions.

4-3 Follow-up Interviews

After answering the questionnaire questions, students were interviewed to discern their preferences, perceptions and future comprehension behind their choice of the selected items of the questionnaire. This methods assists in further understanding the process of using the WhatsApp and assists the researcher to double check the accuracy of students' choice and their full understanding of the questionnaire questions.

4-4 Validity and Reliability of Student Questionnaire

To find the validity of the students' questionnaire, the following formula was applied after finding reliability results using Cronbach's Alpha: Validity= 0.831 which was a high degree that reflected that students' questionnaire validity which indicated that the questionnaire was suitable to be used for the study.

¹ HAMAD, M., 2007 - Using WhatsApp to Enhance Students' Learning of English Language "Experience to Share". *Higher Education Studies*, 7(4), 74-87.

²NAWAILA, M., 2018 - WhatsApp as a Tool for Distance Learning. *PONTE International Scientific Researches Journal*, 74(10), 21506.

³ AL-MASHAQBEH, I., & AL-MASHAQBEH, A., 2018- Learning Dialogue through WhatsApp Messenger: Students' Experience and Attitude. *International J. Soc. Sci. & Education* 8(2), ISSN: 2223-4934 E and 2227-393X

Table (2) Reliability and Validity Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.831	.818	14

Three referees were asked to judge the validity of this test. They were three applied linguistics professors. They asked for the modifications of some items of the content of the questionnaire in order to meet the purposes of the research.

To enhance the reliability of the questionnaires, all the subjects were given the same amount of time to finish the questionnaire. Also, for the collection and analysis of the data, a Ph. D. holder of Statistics was asked to double check data insertion and analysis.

4-5 Data Analysis

The data were collected and processed by the researcher himself, and cross-checked for accuracy by a professor of statistics to double check data insertion and analysis. SPSS Statistics Version 25 was the program by which descriptive statistics were used in presenting the results of the surveys.

The two questions of the research will be discussed and evaluated directly after presenting the statistics of the data and their implications. Later, findings will be presented and implications will be drawn in relation to WhatsApp effective usage. Conclusion will be made in addition to the recommendations for future research.

5- Results and Discussion

RQ 1: What are students' academic perspectives regarding the integration of WhatsApp in the listening and speaking course?

Students were surprised when the researcher raised the issue of integrating WhatsApp in their listening and speaking course. However, they were not sure where it would lead. At the end of the course, they were asked to answer the Student Experience and Attitude Questionnaire that contained various questions about their reaction after the end of the experiment.

According to the data presented below in Table (3), 81% of the students stated that they 'agreed' that "using WhatsApp application increased their productivity in listening assignment", whereas 18.8% stated that they 'strongly agreed'. Thus, it is comprehended that all students agreed that WhatsApp had played a major role in increasing their listening productivity.

Table (3) Using WhatsApp increases my productivity in listening assignment

	Frequency	Per cent
Agree	26	81.2
Strongly Agree	6	18.8
Total	32	100.0

In order to further comprehend the reasons behind the choice of students, the researcher interviewed those who claimed that this method motivated them to record themselves on a daily basis and speak more with their colleagues to send the best version to their instructor. Also, listening to their peers' recordings provided them with the sufficient courage to play the role of the judge by correcting their errors. Finally, their instructors' feedback contributed to the correction and adjustment of their recordings.

Students' total response about WhatsApp's efficiency in their listening comprehension was not in match with their assessment of the application of that technology and its role in their English learning as shown in Table (4).

Table (4) Using WhatsApp application improves my English learning

	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	10	31.2
Agree	14	43.8
Strongly Agree	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0

In table (4), students ranged their preferences about "Using WhatsApp application improved their English learning" as 25% strongly agreed, 43.8% agreed and 31.2% disagreed. Although the majority of students 68.8% agreed about its role, 31.2% disagreed. When students who had disagreed were interviewed why they did not notice improvement in their English learning, they stated that they did not realize the existence of such improvement in other language skills such as writing and reading. This matter is comprehended on the ground that the main focus of the study was listening and speaking.

Table (5) shows that all students 100% agreed that "using WhatsApp helped them to get immediate feedback from their instructor".

Table (5) Using WhatsApp helped me to get immediate feedback from my instructor

	Frequency	Per cent
Agree	24	75

Strongly Agree	8	25
Total	32	100

One of the main functions of WhatsApp is getting instant messages from those with whom people interact with around the world. Integrating this technology in this research could help in solving one of the main challenges that currently and historically faced students, i.e. the lack of teacher's sufficient time to respond to all students' questions. When students were interviewed about the reasons of their choices, they claimed that WhatsApp assisted them to overcome the sense of the fear or shyness to ask questions that could be comprehended as unintelligent by their peers which could lead them to make fun of them. They added that sometimes they needed to have a quick response to their inquiries or questions. When they did not get such an answer, they might forget it, so this misunderstanding could hinder their learning process afterwards. The implementation of one of the main features of WhatsApp in this process assisted students to send their questions and receive immediate response from their instructor.

Table (6) attempted to infer students' future plans of learning. It sought to fully comprehend the assessment of students towards the usage of WhatsApp in their learning. It is found out that 81.3% of students agreed/strongly agreed with the usage of WhatsApp in their learning in general, whereas 18.7% disagreed/strongly disagreed to use it. When students who agreed were asked about their choice, they stated that it assisted them to approach various facets of the English language using their favourite mobile program. The possibility to send the recording to their peers and instructor and get feedback saved their time and increased their learning outcome productivity. However, when students who disagreed were asked about their choice, some of them claimed that they preferred the tradition learning strategies whereas others claimed that they did not fully comprehend the various utilities that could be accessed or used via WhatsApp that would facilitate their learning.

Table (6) I intend to use WhatsApp application to facilitate my learning

	Frequency	Per cent
Strongly Disagree	2	6.2
Disagree	4	12.5
Agree	18	56.3
Strongly Agree	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0

Moreover, most students 81.2% agreed that using WhatsApp helped them to enrich their vocabulary, whereas 18.8% did not agree. When students who agreed were asked about their choice, they stated that when they were asked to send their assignments, they practiced uttering them by looking up a lot of vocabulary to build their sentences. Also, when their instructor contacted them regarding the instructions, he utilized a variety of vocabulary that they could easily look them up in case that they did not recognize. Thus, their vocabulary inventory was enriched by that process.

Table (7) Using WhatsApp helped me enrich my vocabulary

	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	6	18.8
Agree	16	50
Strongly Agree	10	31.2
Total	32	100

When students were asked about their opinions whether they preferred their university to adopt the WhatsApp technology, most of the students 77% inclined to adopt this technology and integrate it in their learning methods. This matter shows how new technology could be positively utilized and positively directed to enhance students' awareness of learning and integrating them to be the major participant in the learning process. This was clarified in Table (8) as follows:

Table (8) I like my university to use WhatsApp as a teaching method

	Frequency	Per cent
Strongly Disagree	2	6.2
Disagree	6	18.8
Agree	22	68.8
Strongly Agree	2	6.2
Total	32	100

Q2: What are students' social perspectives regarding the integration of WhatsApp in the listening and speaking course?

One of the main purposes of using WhatsApp in this research is to attempt to bridge the gap between English students, their English learning environment in addition to their instructor. The following questions endeavoured to scrutinize whether this so-called 'social' program had played any significant role in breaking the surrounding boundaries that were historically reported between students and their instructors. For instance, table (9) showed that all students 100% felt happy when they had received their teachers' feedback. This is totally

comprehended on the ground that students had full confidence that their instructors were the ones who were eligible to provide feedback about their errors as found in ¹. When students who agreed were asked about their choice, they stated that when they received immediate feedback via WhatsApp from their instructor, they were having a cherishing feeling about their importance because their instructor responded individually to their requests. They felt that they instructor is closer to them than in the class which broke the traditional image of the instructor who always rebuked them when they committed errors. This feeling could provide students the required motivation to move forward in the learning process without any feeling of fear or shyness.

Table (9) I felt happy when I received my teacher's feedback via WhatsApp

	Frequency	Per cent
Agree	10	31.2
Strongly Agree	22	68.8
Total	32	100.0

The following tables (10) and (11) showed that most of the students 87.5% felt that Using WhatsApp application made it easier for them to do their course assignments and that 93.8% of them agreed that the WhatsApp application environment enabled them to fully interact with others. This agreement could be comprehended due to the fact that when they were interviewed, students informed their instructor that they used to send their voice assignment to each other before sending it to him to double check its accuracy and pronunciation, thus new friendship was established among students when they assisted each other in their course assignment. They stated that they felt that they were one big family in which its members virtually assisted each other via WhatsApp.

Table (10) Using WhatsApp application makes it easier to do my course assignment

	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree.	4	12.5
Agree	16	50.0
Strongly Agree	12	37.5
Total	32	100.0

¹ AZZOUZ, A. (2018). English Language Teachers' and Students' Insights and Practices towards Students' Written Errors at Qasyoun Private University in Syria. *Research Journal of Aleppo University*, 118, ISSN: 2227-7498.

Table (11) The WhatsApp application environment enables me to fully interact with others

	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	2	6.2
Agree	22	68.8
Strongly Agree	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0

One of the main goals of this research is to measure the amount of development that students could achieve after integrating WhatsApp in their listening and speaking learning. One of the methods that the researcher had followed was to forward the voice recording of some of the students to their colleagues and ask them to correct their errors and judge their accuracy regarding pronunciation, grammatical mistakes, and word choice. Students were very critical to their colleagues' voice recordings and they sent the researcher their feedback via WhatsApp about the recordings. Table (12) shows the positive reaction of students towards their colleagues' errors. All of them 100% agreed that they learned from their colleagues' errors. It is worth noting that after the end of the deadline of the submission of their feedback, their instructor sent them the correction transcription of their colleagues' voice recording with reference to the type of the error.

Table (12) Using WhatsApp helped me to learn from my colleague mistakes

	Frequency	Per cent
Agree	24	75
Strongly Agree	8	25
Total	32	100.0

It is self-evident that students were not present in the classroom environment when they interacted with their instructor via WhatsApp. Table (13) shows that most of the students 87.4% agreed that they were encouraged and supported from their instructor and peers. Students stated that potential instant feedback from the instructor and also peers could alleviate the supposedly loneliness nature of WhatsApp environment. This is manifested in Table (14) which shows that in resemblance to the traditional classroom environment in which students freely interacted with their instructor and peers, the WhatsApp learning environment could be manipulated in a way that permitted students to express themselves freely and receive encouragement and feedback in a way similar to the normal classroom. Most of the students 75% agreed that they did not feel lonely in the WhatsApp

application environment.

Table (13) In the WhatsApp environment, I obtain encouragement and support from my instructor and peers

	Frequency	Per cent
Strongly Disagree	2	6.2
Disagree	2	6.2
Agree	10	31.2
Strongly Agree	18	56.2
Total	32	100.0

Table (14) I do not feel lonely in the WhatsApp application environment

	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	8	25.0
Agree	18	56.3
Strongly Agree	6	18.7
Total	32	100.0

The learning environment plays a vital role in accelerating or reducing the learning process. The less threatening the environment is, the better the outcome learning is. Since the WhatsApp environment is considered a safe and comfortable one that does not include the presence of the instructor or the colleagues, most students 93.8% agreed that learning through WhatsApp was fun (Table 15). Students claimed that this new technology opened a wide gate for them to interact freely with their instructor and to ask him to help them in various topics not only the course in question. Thus, it assisted them to overcome their fear in using the English language as 93.8% agreed on that statement (Table 16). After sending their voice recording concerning the required assignment, their instructor asked them to prepare that recording as a presentation to be orally given before their peers in the classroom. Students were more confident when they made that presentation due to the fact that they had already practiced that at home in their preparation for sending it via WhatsApp.

Table (15) Learning through WhatsApp is fun

	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	2	6.2
Agree	22	68.8
Strongly Agree	8	25.0
Total	32	100.0

Table (16) Using WhatsApp helped me to overcome my fear to use English language

	Frequency	Per cent
Disagree	2	6.2
Agree	16	50.0
Strongly Agree	14	43.8
Total	32	100.0

6- Conclusion

6-1 Summary

This study has focused on the perception of English Literature students at Qasyoun University in Syria in integrating WhatsApp in their listening and speaking course. With regard to the questions of this study, the findings underscored that using the WhatsApp mediation was more effective than regular instruction in enhancing the listening and speaking proficiency of English language learners. Similarly, this research manifested that the use of the WhatsApp program increased the participants' levels of motivation for English language learning. This study found out the greater development of students in their overall oral production and listening comprehension. Students claimed that they endeavoured to crystallize their output by attempting to record themselves more than once in order to send their best performance. They sent it to each other which helped their peers to discover their oral errors and notify them about them, so they send the best version to their instructor.

These findings validate those of various researchers such as ¹, ², ³ and ⁴ who attempted to study the usefulness of utilizing various Instant Messaging (IM) services. Furthermore, the findings advocate

¹ BOUHNİK, D., & DESHEN, M., 2014- **WhatsApp Goes to School: Mobile Instant Messaging between Teachers and Students**. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research*, **13**, 217–231.

² LU, J., & CHURCHILL, D., 2014- **The Effect of Social Interaction On Learning Engagement in a Social Networking Environment**. *Interactive Learning Environments*, **22**, 401–417.

³ YU, A. Y, TIAN, S. W., VOGEL, D., & KWOK, R. C. W., 2010- **Can Learning be Virtually Boosted? An Investigation of Online Social Networking Impacts**. *Computers & Education*, **55**, 1494–1503.

⁴ CALVO, R., ARBIOL, A., & IGLESIAS, A, 2014- **Are All Chats Suitable for Learning Purposes? A Study of the Required Characteristics**. *Procedia Computer Science*, **27**, 251–260. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2014.02.028>

those of ¹, ², and ³ as has been reviewed in the Literature Review Section.

There are many interpretations behind the positive attitude of learners towards the use of WhatsApp in their learning process. First, learners can easily measure their improvement by comparing their recordings at the beginning of the experiment and at the end of that since WhatsApp has the feature of keeping a record of all texting, video and sound recording exchange among participants. Second, students can easily feel that they belong to the community of English language students of WhatsApp and exchange ideas and problems within this WhatsApp environment as has been manifested in this research and can benefit from their peers' errors. Third, students do not have the social and learning burdens that hinder them from moving forward in the learning continuum since they exchange their recording, statements, mistakes, and personal problems with their instructor in a student-teacher environment. Thus, students' relations with their instructor is enhanced with trust, security, and family-like atmosphere with no feeling of shyness due to the absence of their peers' negative comments on such errors. Fourth, it has been found out that when students encounter teachers who utilize and integrate modern technology into their teaching techniques, they are more inclined to these teachers than towards traditional teachers with traditional teaching techniques. They feel that their teacher is up-to-date with an open mind to all potential teaching methods and that they can make use of his/her knowledge in the technology and teaching fields.

6-2 Recommendations

It is recommended that universities should carry out similar studies at various levels of language learning and other branches of knowledge and specialities to enhance learning process via modern smart phones programs such as WhatsApp, facebook and other social

¹ BAFFOUR-AWUAH, E., 2015- **Institutional Case-Based Study on the Effect of Research Methods on Project Work in the Curriculum of Mechanical Engineering Programmes in Ghanaian Polytechnics.** *Journal of Education and Practice*, **6**, 20–32.

² RIYANTO, A., 2013- **English Language Learning Using WhatsApp Application.** *AkhmadRianto, Love for All, Hatred for None.* WordPress, the Splendid Theme.

³ LAURICELLA, S., & KAY, R. (2013). **Exploring the Use of Text and Instant Messaging in Higher Education Classrooms.** *Research in Learning Technology*, **21**.

communication programs. Also, teachers should be encouraged to implement this technology by holding workshops that explain this method of teaching and at the same time allocate a sufficient financial budget to compensate those teachers for their extra time devoted to respond to students instant messages outside their classroom hours.

Finally, suggestions could be made for further research. Future research could include comparative studies between classes that have traditional educational system and those that adhere to the new WhatsApp integration in language learning. In addition, interviews with teachers should be carried out to understand their perspectives towards this new method and present their views of the problems that would face them and any possible solutions for such problems.

Also, it is recommended to conduct similar studies upon other language skills such as reading and writing in order to have a better vision and find out if similar results could be obtained from such studies. More studies upon comprehending students' feedback on the integration of such technologies in their learning process should be carried out based upon semi-structured interviews to express themselves freely and not purely pre-organized questionnaires to scrutinize their actual needs and any problems that could face them such as lack of internet connection, smart phones, or free time.

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