WHATSAPP USAGE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract. Recently there has been a significant shift in the process of formation of a new education system that transforms pedagogical theory and practice of the educational process. The availability of modern technologies makes it possible to improve the process of learning languages, to make it more efficient and productive. The goal of the study is to investigate language progress in grammar skills with WhatsApp support. Commonly, WhatsApp is used as a tool for communicating. In our case we targeted at using this messenger for drilling of grammar exercises and sharing knowledge. In addition, students benefit from analysing peer mistakes because all the messages are available in the group chats. 24 students participated in doing grammar exercises sent via WhatsApp messenger. Due to the wide range in student performance levels, two groups were selected to examine the grammar knowledge of the English language. The second group exhibits greater fluency of A2, while the first group has a low pre-intermediate level. There are 13 students in the fluent group and 11 in the low-level group. The dynamics of the development of grammar skills was calculated by the formula of the mean value and standard deviation. The educator explained the grammar material and sent grammar tasks to students who got the immediate feedback on their answers. The analysis of grammar mistakes showed the students' performance on the use of infinitive and gerund after verbs, conditionals and time clauses. Findings show that language growth of two groups of students was developing satisfactorily. A set of grammar exercises were given with a month interval so the final statistics embraces three tasks. The research design might be used both for online learning and traditional classroom. The future research might include using WhatsApp messenger for teaching speaking, reading and listening.

Key words: WhatsApp, online learning, grammar skills, traditional classroom, language learning, mobile apps, E-learning, digital media

Basic provisions

Currently, information technologies influence all spheres of our life including education. Mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones have gained immense popularity due to their versatility and multifunctionality and are naturally used in the daily life of any person. These devices have many advantages: portability, versatility, adaptability and ability to meet different individual needs. In the context of the educational and cognitive process devices tend to overcome the temporal and physical boundaries of the classroom.

The epidemic of COVID-19 has prompted the educational institutions to cancel face-to-face classes in favor of online teaching and learning. WhatsApp inclusion into online teaching and learning practices is beneficial not only because it is simple

to use but also because it allows teachers and students to communicate and interact with one another.

It should be noted that mobile apps completely modify the learning environment by changing the forms of input and output presentation. Mobile learning acts as an effective tool for mastering the input that have been studied in the classroom or online class. Mobile learning does not replace traditional learning. However, it can be used as an additional support to the educational process or as a component of blended learning. Using mobile applications actively expands and complements educational environment with interesting and relevant methods that are becoming more sufficient and accessible to students.

In our research WhatsApp is used as a supplementary support for teaching English grammar through a set of grammar exercises and drills. To this end, the paper will try to answer the following questions:

What are the strategies of WhatsApp inclusion into the language learning class? What is the criterion for measuring grammar skills growth development? What are the contributions of WhatsApp to the academic progress of students?

Introduction

Integration of technology in our daily life has traced in investigation on digital texts that people create using social media. Koch et al. analysed language variations in instant messages with relation to individual differences in age and gender [1].

Regarding the technology acceptance model and learning connectedness, the research by Mulyono et al. suggests that the majority of students encouraged the use of social media to promote learning and felt connected to the learning. The term learners' connectedness means students' attitude to technology, and shows how they are motivated and engaged in the learning process. The research also found a number of factors that contributed to students' high degree of engagement and connectedness to learning, including perceived usefulness, convenience of learning support, motivation and social connections [2].

Manan (2017) states that Whatsapp mobile tool might be used both for enhancing students' speaking skills and motivation in studying English. His method employs the one group pre-test – post-test experiment and a questionnaire which is used to analyse the students' attitude to learning English with Whatsapp. The experiment design demonstrates the one group that was given a treatment after the pretest. It aims to assess how students' English language skills have changed, particularly their speaking abilities, as well as their enthusiasm to learn English, after employing WhatsApp as a teaching and learning tool. There are 120 students of the second grade who study English at Teacher Training and Education Higher School. The test results showed that the application involvement in the teaching and learning process had a beneficial impact on students' speaking abilities [3].

Nuraeni & Nurmalia (2020) examined the use of WhatsApp in helping language learning activities. According to the quantitative findings of the study, WhatsApp allowed professors and students to communicate more easily and quickly for academic objectives. It enabled students to share and exchange information using

WhatsApp's features, such as pictures, audios, and videos. Another advantage of using WA is that it assisted students in actively identifying e-learning opportunities [4].

One more support for the value of WA is found in the analysis of WA messages by a group of EFL learners with their teacher who was constantly sharing tasks. 764 messages were produced by the learners over the course of a five-week period, which were investigated in this study through a qualitative analysis, with a focus on variations in participation over time. Even while student participation began to decline over time, the majority of the messages in the WhatsApp group were created by students in the context of teacher-initiated assignments, and they provided students with opportunities to practice the language as well as engage in real communication [5].

Some practical implication on using WhatsApp are posting objects/pictures related to different topics, translation (the teacher sends words, phrases, sentences for students to translate into the mother tongue and students post the translation back), posting jumbled letters/words, spelling and punctuations (the teacher sends commonly misspelled words and students decide whether they are correct or not) [6].

Given the context described above, the present study aims to examine the impact of modern digital applications on language learning processes. Using only limited software is not a cutting-edge technique, for the synergy of different applications and gadgets can give the desirable effects in learning and teaching. In our research we focus on using WhatsApp messenger as a sharing information tool for giving and assessing grammar exercises combined with Zoom video conferencing.

The current paper attempts to fulfil both qualitative and quantitative research that embraces the description and analysis of the data of grammar activities given via WhatsApp and the statistics and concrete figures on the development of students' grammar skills. The paper supports the characteristics of quantitative and qualitative research presented by Merriam [7].

Materials and methods
The research uses the design of a set of grammar exercises within the period of three months with the students of pre-intermediate level. The performance level of students is diverse so two groups were chosen for analysing the English language grammar skills. The first group is of low pre-intermediate level and the second one is characterized by more fluency. There are 11 students in a low-level group and 13 students in a more fluent group.

The method aims to measure trajectory of the students' grammar skills changes with WhatsApp messages since the mobile app was used for online lessons via Zoom, and the app was used as a platform for exchanging and assessing learning material in the written form. While the lesson was going on, the teacher sent messages with the task to students, then there was a break for the tasks to be completed and sent back to the teacher in the group chat of the messenger. Besides, WhatsApp was used for exchanging grammar activities when the students started

traditional classroom lessons because the messenger positioned itself as an indispensable tool for sharing and evaluating.

The grammar exercises comprised the following themes: verbs followed by gerund or infinitive, first and second conditionals, time clauses. In the task with the choice of gerund or infinitive the students were given only the beginning of a sentence and their task was to make semantically and grammatically correct sentences. For the first and second conditionals the tasks targeted at putting the correct tense in the if-clause and the main clause. The same task was proposed in the activities with time clauses. In addition, students used their own verbs for making sentences.

Table 1 - Task design of two groups

Low-level group	More fluent group
Student 1 answers	Student 1 answers
Happiness is spend time with loved ones	Happiness is going dinner with family
I don't mind go to the library	I don't mind supporting your choice
I tried find a way out of here	I tried to find my keys
I spend much time thinking about the future	I spend much time making cakes
I need to know everything about you	I need to learn more languages
It is important to know	It is important to plan ahead
I would like to stay home	I would like to see it with my own eyes
I forgot about meeting	I forgot to take your ttrahings
Be ready to go to the beach	Be ready to start the game
It'll be nice if you stay here	It'll be nice to adjust the regime
I am tired of work	I am tired of to spend time at phone
I need time to complete this task	I need time to sleep
I went to the library to take that book	I went to the library to take books for exams
I'll clean my room when my mom came.	If he can get tickets for the concert, I will go with him.
If I have enough money, I will go to NY	I feel relaxed when I sleep
When I old I will be a very wise old man	When I have lots of work to do, I will do it on the same day
if the weather improves, we go for a picnic	He can save time in the morning if we don't have a breakfast.
Send me text when I'm at work	When I see a sad story on the news I want to cry.
I could live anywhere in the world, if I have a stable salary	If I could live anywhere in the world, I would choose Europe
	I would learn English faster if I were not lazy
I would learn English more quickly if I learned five words a day	If I won a lot of money in the lottery, I would try to open my own business

If I won a lot of money in the lottery, I will play on to a billion	

The presented grammar activities were taken with a month interval, then the mistakes were found and the average score of the correct answers was calculated for each group.

Results and Discussion

The language growth of the students' performance of grammar skills showed the positive dynamics with a mean of 80 and SD 4,796 for the low-level group and with a mean of 97,4 and SD 1,549 for more advanced group.

Table 2 - Analysis statistics

Number of students	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
11 low-level	80	4,796	68,5	87,9
13 more fluent	97,4	1,549	95,4	97

There was considerable progress development in the low-level group since the minimum score of the correct answers was 68,5 which increased to 87,9. More fluent group showed the progress stability with some insignificant fluctuations ranging from 95,4 to 97.

The findings revealed that WhatsApp inclusion both in the virtual and traditional classroom makes the progress develop satisfactorily. Participants of low-level group enhanced grammar skills during the English course, while the students of more fluent group mastered knowledge using more sophisticated words.

The analysis supports the research claims that WhatsApp has become an efficient tool in L2 learning for enhancing language skills and encouraging students to take part in language classes (Tragant et al., Handayani & Aminatun, Norazlan et al., Alghamdy).

According to Tragant et al. WhatsApp function to foster interaction between students and teachers as well as among students makes it an effective tool for L2 learning. Additionally, it has been demonstrated to support online learning. This study documents the use of instant messaging using WhatsApp by a group of EFL students (n=23) who were regularly provided optional language-learning activities by their teacher during an intensive summer course in an effort to expand language learning outside of the classroom. 764 messages had been created by the end of a five-week period, which were examined through a qualitative analysis in the study with special focus on changes in participation over time. Even while student engagement tended to decline over time, the majority of the messages in the WhatsApp group were created by the students within the context of the teacher-initiated assignments, giving them the chance to practice the language as well as engage in genuine dialogue [5].

WhatsApp is one of the tools that teachers can use to instruct and encourage student participation in English language learning. This software is mostly preferred by students as a mobile learning tool for instruction, particularly as a tool for teaching writing to learners. In addition to being simple to use, many pupils are already familiar with it. This study sought to see how students felt about using WhatsApp groups to help them write better. 37 students from the English Education study program participated in this descriptive qualitative study. Questionnaires and interviews served as the data collection tools in this study. The results demonstrate that using a WhatsApp group to teach writing can have advantageous effects on both teaching and learning. In addition, it can help students improve their writing skills. The viewpoints of the students, who believe that there have been more positive than negative reactions to this media, support this outcome. Moreover, the outcome demonstrates that one of the suitable learning platforms for Indonesian education is the WhatsApp group [8].

The results of the current study are in line with the research by Norazlan et al. that focuses on developing grammar skills with primary pupils using WhatsApp stickers. They are presented as an incentive for learning English grammar. Pre- and post-tests, student documents and quizzes were the types of research designs used in this study. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and student performance. Results indicate that the intervention raises students' achievement, inspires them to learn, and exhibits a favorable attitude toward grammar instruction. The study benefits students' use of digital media for communication as well as the grammar-teaching process [9].

This study adds weight to the research by Alghamdy that is seeking to determine the effect of mobile language learning (WhatsApp) on the accomplishments of EFL learners at Al-Baha University in Saudi Arabia. This study looks at how mobile language learning affects EFL students' capacity to learn English in a foreign language environment. The study specifically aims to look at the effects of mobile language learning (WhatsApp) in comparison to traditional learning on the academic performance of EFL learners. 48 male students from Al-Baha University's preparatory year, ages 18 to 22, participated in the study. The findings showed that there were substantial differences between the post-test mean scores of EFL learners who had received instruction in the language via WhatsApp and those who had received instruction in the language via traditional learning (the control group). This distinction was in the experimental group's favor. However, the results showed that there were no statistically remarkable differences in the pre-test English achievement test scores between the EFL learners in the experimental classes and the students in the control groups [10].

The results of our research might seem natural and predictable since the explanation of grammar rules and drilling might occur in any learning environment, and the language growth happens not only with the help of the mobile messenger. However, online meetings conferences lack the use of traditional means of learning and teaching. For this reason, educators were made to find sources of sharing learning materials and getting immediate feedback. Besides, mobile messengers are

used as a handy, available and easy to use 'traditional classroom blackboard' with the functions of peer interaction and teacher support.

Conclusion

The research aimed at identifying the dynamics of language progress, particularly in grammar, over a three-month period through WhatsApp messenger. Students were given messages with grammar tasks and then immediate teacher's feedback was provided. Two groups were chosen with different level of fluency within pre-intermediate level. The analysis of students' responses showed that the progress had a significant upward trend in the group with low-level progress, while the more fluent group showed some stable results.

To sum up, the research clearly illustrates positive effects of learning grammar via WhatsApp both in online and offline environments. The study shows how the messenger contributes to language learning and makes the learning process more dynamic and flexible since it has different functions of sharing information and in some ways is similar to social networking tools. Further research might be conducted for teaching speaking, listening and reading skills.

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АҒЫЛШЫН ТІЛІН ОҚЫТУДА WHATSAPP МЕССЕНДЖЕРІН ПАЙДАЛАНУ

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Андатпа. Қазіргі кезеңде білім берудің жаңа жүйесін қалыптастыру педагогикалық теория мен оқу-тәрбие процесінің тәжірибесінде елеулі өзгерістермен ұштасып жатыр. Мобильді технологиялардың жетілдірілуі мен қолжетімділігі оқу процесін өнімді және тиімді етеді. Зерттеудің мақсаты – WhatsApp мессенджер қосымшасының көмегімен грамматикалық дағдылардың даму серпінін зерттеу. Біздің зерттеуімізде грамматикалық білімді қалыптастыру үшін WhatsApp пайдаланылды. Сонымен қатар, барлық хабарламалар топтық чаттарда қолжетімді болғандықтан, оқушыларға бір-бірінің қателерін талдауға мүмкіндік берілді. WhatsApp мессенджері арқылы жіберілген грамматикалық жаттығуларды 24 оқушы орындады. Оқушылардың шет тілін меңгеру деңгейі әртүрлі, сондықтан ағылшын тілі грамматикасы бойынша білімдерін талдау үшін екі топ таңдалды. Бірінші топтың pre-intermediate деңгейі төмен болса, ал екінші топ ағылшын тілі грамматикасын A2 деңгейінде меңгерудің жоғары деңгейімен сипатталады. Грамматикалық деңгейі төмен топта 11 оқушы, ал деңгейі жоғары топта 13 оқушы бар. Орташа шамамен грамматиканың тілдік дағдысының даму серпіні стандартты ауытқу формуласы бойынша есептелді. Мұғалім грамматикалық материалды түсіндіріп, тапсырмалары бойынша бірден кері байланыс алған оқушыларға грамматикалық тапсырмаларды жіберді. Грамматикалық қателерді талдау тыңдаушылардың етістіктен кейін инфинитив пен герундты, сонымен қатар шақ пен бағыныңқы шарт сөйлемдерін қолдану дағдыларын меңгергенін көрсетті. Алынған нәтижелер екі топ оқушыларының тілдік үлгерімінің дамуындағы оң динамикасын көрсетеді. Зерттеу әдістемесі ай сайынғы аралықпен үш грамматикалық тапсырманың сандық есебін ұсынады. Қолданбаны пайдалану әдісі онлайн оқытуға да, дәстүрлі формаға да қолайлы. Келешекте оқытуды мүмкіндігінше нәтижелі етуде - сөйлеу, оқу және тыңдауды үйрету үшін WhatsApp қолданбасын пайдалану.

Тірек сөздер: Whatsapp, онлайн оқыту, грамматикалық дағдылар, дәстүрлі сынып, тіл үйрену, мобильді қосымшалар, электрондық оқыту, цифрлық орта

ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ МЕССЕНДЖЕРА WHATSAPP В ОБУЧЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ

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Аннотация. На современном этапе формирование новой системы образования сопровождается существенными изменениями в педагогической теории и практике учебно-воспитательного процесса. Совершенствование и доступность мобильных технологий позволяет сделать процесс обучения более продуктивным и эффективным. Цель исследования — изучить динамику развития грамматических навыков, используя приложение-мессенджер WhatsApp. В нашем исследовании WhatsApp использовался для формирования знаний по грамматике. Кроме того, ученикам предоставлялась возможность анализировать ошибки друг друга, поскольку все сообщения доступны в групповых чатах. 24 учащихся выполняли грамматические упражнения, отправленные через мессенджер WhatsApp. Уровень владения иностранным языком у обучающихся разный, поэтому для

анализа владения грамматикой английского языка были выбраны две группы. Первая группа имеет более низкий уровень pre-intermediate, вторая характеризуется более высокой степенью владения грамматикой в рамках уровня А2. В группе с более низким уровнем владения грамматикой 11 учащихся, а в группе с более продвинутым навыком 13 учащихся. Динамика развития грамматических навыков вычислена по формуле среднего значения и стандартного отклонения. Преподаватель объяснял материал по грамматике и отправлял грамматические задания ученикам, которые немедленно получали обратную связь по выполнению своих заданий. Анализ грамматических ошибок показал, что обучаемые овладели навыками использования инфинитива и герундия после глаголов, а также придаточных предложений времени и условия. Полученные результаты показывают положительную динамику развития языкового прогресса двух групп учащихся. В методике исследования представлена статистика трех грамматических заданий с месячным интервалом. Методика использования приложения подходит как для онлайн обучения, так и для традиционной формы. Перспектива дальнейшего изучения заключается в использовании приложения WhatsApp для обучения говорению, чтению и аудированию.