

# "INSTANT MESSAGING DYNAMICS: UNRAVELING THE LINGUISTIC CHANGES IN JORDAN WITH WHATSAPP"

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## **Abstract**

This study explores the impact of WhatsApp on communication and language use among people in Jordan. Data was collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews conducted with educationalists and fathers from the local society. The study analyzed the nature and frequency of WhatsApp use and found that younger users were more likely to use the application, which could be due to their obsession with it. The popularity of WhatsApp was attributed to its low cost, practicality, and popularity among poor or rich Arabs. However, some users expressed concerns about its potential negative effects, such as reducing physical communication, causing human addiction, and facilitating cheating in educational tests. The study revealed that different people had varied perceptions of the application, depending on their purposes and usage. Overall, these findings suggest that while WhatsApp has benefits for communication and language use in Jordan, it also presents potential harm from its misuse. The study recommends further research and practical measures to prevent such harm.

**Keywords:** WhatsApp, communication, language use, Jordan, digital communication, applied linguistics

## **Introduction:**

Mobile devices and computers are widely used in the Middle East, with digital communication through English, Arabic, or both becoming a daily or even hourly activity. The smart mobile device with creative applications, such as WhatsApp, is the most common device among poor or rich Arabs in Jordan, with the number of mobile devices used by Jordanians exceeding 5,000,000, even among those with limited financial budgets. While WhatsApp has benefits for communication and language use in Jordan, it also presents potential harm from its misuse, such as reducing physical communication, causing human addiction, and facilitating cheating in educational tests. Despite its popularity in Jordan, there is currently a lack of scientific evidence on WhatsApp's effects, making this study significant. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of WhatsApp on students and people in Jordan, including its social and academic uses and effects. By collecting data from different sources, including 200 respondents through questionnaires, 10 semi-structured interviews with educationalists and fathers, and observations from various media sources, this study aims to provide a thorough understanding of the nature and impact of WhatsApp use. Through an analysis of the study's findings, this paper offers recommendations for how to mitigate potential harm from WhatsApp misuse in Jordan. Overall, this study contributes to a growing body of research on digital communication and applied linguistics, highlighting the need to better understand digital communication's effects on language use and communication in different cultural contexts.

## **Literature Remarks**

Modern digital and international technological information transfer has become a basic demand of life in both developed and developing countries and in all social, academic and non-academic

aspects of life: in schools, universities, markets, homes, companies, etc. Because of these new changes and circumstances people need to be digitally educated and qualified to cope with these fast conditions (Redwi 1999 and Bassnett 2004) in order to be empowered for proper and swift communication needed in this age of globalization.

Accordingly, communication has recently become based on digital technology like the WhatsApp applications rather than on human physical, verbal and non-verbal linguistic techniques.

The WhatsApp applications were started in 2009 by two ex-Yahoo staff, Jan Koum and Brian Acton, and presently handles more than 10bn message per day ( <http://www.whatsapp.com/about/> ) (Retrieved on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 11:50 a.m.)). **WhatsApp** is a pun on **What's Up**. And it is also one of the most popular paidfor apps on any platform. Why a paid app (you have to buy it on the iPhone; it is free for the first year on other platforms) rather than totally free? Koum and Acton recently posted on the company blog to explain: "These days companies know literally everything about you, your friends, your interests, and they use it all to sell ads" (ibid).

On top of the mobile, the WhatsApp has become the most popular **formal** and **informal** way of digital communication:

*WhatsApp was handling ten billion messages per day as of August 2012,[4] growing from two billion in April 2012[5] and one billion the previous October.[6] According to the Financial Times, WhatsApp "has done to SMS on mobile phones what Skype did to international calling on landlines.* (Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WhatsApp> ).

(Retrieved on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 11:58 a.m.)

The reasons behind the excessive use of the WhatsApp are of course its cheap cost, practicality and availability on most smart phones. The Guardian Newspaper reports that:

*Handling over 1 billion messages a day, the incredibly popular WhatsApp Messenger is a "cross-platform mobile messaging app" which allows registered users with just a single mobile phone number to "exchange messages without having to pay for SMS". Available for most smartphones – iPhone, BlackBerry, Windows, Android and Symbian – WhatsApp is a free, **fast and cheap** texting tool that's a notch above regular texting. As an alternative to SMS, WhatsApp is accessible via 3G or Wi-Fi, thus sends messages over the Internet. This lowers the cost of sending texts, unlimited ones.*

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/shortcuts/2012/dec/04/whatsappnew-text-messaging> (retrieved on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 11:59 a.m.).

Formally, it has been used by companies and businessmen for sending images of goods and commodities shapes and prices. Informally, it has been used socially and excessively by people, particularly students and youngsters, as a way of quick and cheap or even free communication so far. Obviously, in Jordan, it is used in all these communicative settings ranging from commercial to social and academic purposes.

Of course, studies published in international journals on the WhatsApp are frequent as the whole application is new as mentioned above. In mass media, we can easily find investigations on the advantages and disadvantages of the WhatsApp. For example, In an article entitled: „*New technology, new ways to cheat*“ in The Daily News, Egypt's Only Daily Independent Newspaper In English, Ramsis (2013: 1) states:

*Use of new mobile phone apps such as Rivet, in addition to old techniques such as writing on rulers, walls, uploading documents on calculators, or young girls placing such documents within their hijab, are some of the techniques that students have come to employ in order to help them engage in cheating on school exams. Some students spoke of using mobile phone apps such as WhatsApp and Viber, to move and transfer pictures and documents to one another via social media website.* <http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2013/06/12/new-technology-new-ways-to-cheat/AdityaMahajan> (retrieved on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 11:59 a.m.).

Finally, Avani and Aanal (2014: 32) states that the WhatsApp cut distances among people. They also add: Thanks to the technology that it helps to cut the distance between our relatives.

The arguments above show that the WhatsApp communicative applications and uses are worth investigating in Jordan to reveal their real and useful advantages and serious disadvantages. The present study is very significant on the ground that it could help Jordanian users to become aware of the danger of that application on top of observing and taking advantage of its academic and Applied Linguistic benefits. Moreover, no other studies published in local, regional or international journals have been conducted with scientific evidence on the WhatsApp at least in Jordan as the application is quite new.

### **Methodology**

The data collected for this research were taken from four major sources. Firstly, two hundreds-thirty questionnaires were distributed randomly on chosen from B.A., B.Sc. M.A. students studying in Jordan University of Science and Technology. From the 230 questionnaires we distributed, we used the fully completed 200 hundred questionnaires as some questionnaires were not completed properly. In other words, some questions were not answered. Secondly, ten semi-structured interviews were conducted with educationalists and fathers from the local society, aging 45-60 years to have wise viewpoints on top of the viewpoints of other university students mentioned above. For examining the quality of writing, dozens of WhatsApp texts were investigated. Finally, observations collected from public mass media published locally, regionally and internationally have been analyzed and incorporated into our corpus of data. The responses collected from the four sources of information were analyzed filtered out, tabulated, compared, contrasted and associated with each other to produce a complete and thorough pictures or impressions about the WhatsApp texts, use and effects.

### **Discussion**

As stated above, the purpose of our study was to investigate the effect of the WhatsApp on students and people using this application socially and academically. For the purpose of making our discussion and presentation clear, we will be guided by four tables representing the advantages, disadvantages, the nature of the users, whether single or married, age, gender, and the time spent while using that application. As mentioned above, our data were based on the responses of the completely filled in 200 questionnaires and 10 interviewees' viewpoints and WhatsApp texts.

To start with, the age factor reveals that the vast majority of respondent (174 out of 200: 87%) indicated that they use the WhatsApp daily. Table 1 below shows that they use it proportionally. For example, of the 174 respondent mentioned above, 105 (60.5%) aging 18-34 years stated that they check/use it at least 3-5 times per hour. Nevertheless, users ranging 35 years old and above seem to use it less frequently (66 above 35: 40%: 1-2 hours daily) out of the 174. It can be noticed that the younger the users, the more they are likely to use it. This could be due to the fact that young people

might be obsessed by the WhatsApp application more than those who are older; older people could be busier with enormous responsibilities than young ones. Another explanation might be that younger users use the application to serve their careers which might be business or academic related. Another interpretation for the less frequent use of older users is that this category of people be busy with other issues and obligations like raising up children and running businesses which do not require the WhatsApp use. Alternatively, most people above 35 years old are usually married and therefore they might not need it for social purposes (e.g., love affair purposes), for instance. However, Having more than 40% of people above 35 years using the WhatsApp means that digital communication seems gaining importance among busy people.

**Table 1: Frequency of WhatsApp Use in relation to the age Factor. Total No. 200**

Age	Frequency: Number and Percentages
All ages Responses: Daily Basis Use	174 : 87%
18-34 years Old Users : 3-5 hours daily	105 : 60.5%
35 + years old : 1-2 hours daily	66 : 40%

With reference to the marital status of the WhatsApp users, table 2 below shows that 151 out of 200 (75%) were married. However, what was noticed earlier about the frequent use of younger users which was more than that of older ones seems to be applicable also on the age of married users as single users stated that they use the WhatsApp 4-5 hours daily, as we see below. It appears that the younger the married participants are, the more they use the WhatsApp application. This could be due to the nature of new generations; that is to say, digital communication has been widely spread among young married couples. A plausible explanation for this digital phenomenon is that these generations have been raised up in digital environment and age which were not available or accessible to the generation of 40s and/or 50s. Accordingly, the exposure to digital communication has become greater than that of old generations, particularly because the WhatsApp application began in 2009 and prospered remarkably in the last 5 years. This could mean also that old generations are slow in digesting or coping with the idea of the WhatsApp in particular, and digital communication in general.

In other words, old users seem either slow or shy to accept the WhatsApp application as a practical digital means of communication since most Arab old people are more conservative in nature than those young ones.

**Table 2: Frequency of WhatsApp Use in relation to marital status. Total No. 200**

Age	Frequency: Number and Percentages
Married users : 3-5 hours daily	151 : 75.5%
Single users : 4-5 hours daily	49 : 24.5%

Back to relatively old married couples who are active users of the WhatsApp, it can be assumed that those people could have developed digital WhatsApp social ties and/or relationships with their wives before their marriage. Supporting this viewpoint is the structured interviews which revealed that 6 of the 10 interviewees confirmed that either they or their sons and/or daughters had developed digital communicative connection with their partners before they married. We believe that is true because Arab societies are conservative in nature and with different degrees. Considering

the conservative situation, we might predict that the WhatsApp application has been an important and good means of viewing, discussing, arguing, agreeing, disagreeing, negotiating marriage and evaluating physical appearance through the exchanged images and video clips among males and females. This becomes evident when we consider the fact that social interaction in public places among males and females is prohibited in Arab societies. One of the 10 interviewees (30 years old male married recently to 24 years old bride) stated that:

*I knew my wife first on the WhatsApp for 18 months before marriage.*

*It [the WhatsApp] was the only way or channel of communication between us. With it, we exchanged ideas, text and voice messages, pix [pictures], video clips and even university homework. In short, the WhatsApp served us in everything.*

Another interviewee (34 male married to 33 female) maintained that:

*I and my wife cannot abandon the WhatsApp application because we used For months... about year ... during which we understood each other.*

The above two quotations show that the WhatsApp was used for personal and social purposes. It solved the social problem of conservation which is a feature of most Arab societies as mentioned above. As we all know, socially speaking it is not accepted for a male to chat with a female in Islamic Arab societies in general, and in Jordanian society in particular. Before the age of digital communication including the WhatsApp, so many couples married without chatting with each other which resulted in a high divorce percentages. Due to the lack of knowing each other (familiarity), couples and/or recently married people used to encounter many social, psychological and moody problems which surprised them in the first year of their marriage when they started to live with each other. Most of the interviewees confirmed this point by indicating that marriage without previous digital communication including the WhatsApp might be a failure because couples need to have an idea about their partners in terms of their physical appearance, mentality, level of nervousness, shyness, education, etc. Not knowing these features before marriage could put the newly married people in a difficult situation as they might disagree about many life issues which in turn might lead to a high percentage of divorce in Jordan in particular, and in the 23 Arab Muslim countries in general (not to forget Arab Muslims who live or reside in Europe and/or USA).

In connection with the participants' viewpoint about the advantages of the WhatsApp application (table 3), the vast majority of them 168 out of 200 (84%) indicated that the WhatsApp is a quick and handy means of communication which spares time, effort and money by using text and audio-visual messages. On top of that, a large number of participants (151 (75.5%)) voiced their appreciation for the WhatsApp which helps in increasing the number of friends they have had.

**Table 3: The advantages of WhatsApp. Total No. 200**

Advantages	Frequency: Number and Percentages
A quick and handy means of communication	168 : 84%
Increases the number of real friends	151 : 75.5%
Increases the number of hypothetical friends	135 : 67.5%
Clarifies communication by attachments	138 : 69%

Supporting this view was an interviewee who stated that:



*Well... I think the WhatsApp advantages are more than its disadvantages... I like it is cheap and makes friends...and help you to maintain old and new friends...ah am..I mean you communicate with friends who Also reply to you and therefore friends keep themselves informed About any developments.*

Linked with this idea of making friends by the WhatsApp, the questionnaire respondents (135 out of 200: 67.5%) responded to the last open-ended question by indicating that it increases the number of hypothetical friends whom they never seen (table 3 above). They added that the issue of hypothetical friends is very healthy because the WhatsApp helps people to socialize with other friends. This helps lonely people to get rid of their isolation.

When the participants were asked about the quality of communication, they (138:69%) reckoned that their communication was clear; what was unclear was clarified and explained through attachments which made everything understood without any ambiguity. The final clarifying resort was the voices messages if written messages were not understood properly. This means that the cheap nature of the WhatsApp has helped people to communicate on a large scale using all the macro language skills (RWSP: reading, writing, speaking and listening) which might improve their linguistic competence. Surprisingly, the linguistic competence was touched by two of the interviewees who were interviewed separately. One of them stated that:

*...I can add that communication through the WhatsApp [has] helped me to be skillful in English spelling, grammar and making notes or shortening texts [summarizing] which is another lesson I learnt... .*

The other interviewee maintained that he focuses on what is important and ignores what is not whenever he texts in the WhatsApp. He also added that:

*It [the WhatsApp] developed my ability of typing quickly...I mean*

*I have become fast in typing many words per minute...because I memorized by heart the location of each letter on the switch board of my smart phone.*

The above two quotations reveal that the WhatsApp seems to be useful in many respects because we cannot separate it from verbal and non-verbal communication in particular, and from socialization in general since language is a human social behavior. It is worth mentioning that the interviewees' responses coincided with questionnaires' respondents who voiced that their linguistic competence was improved by the frequent use of the WhatsApp.

Like any other invention of digital communication, the WhatsApp disadvantages were also evident in the participants' responses, ranging from social negative effect to psychological or even educational effects. This is evident as the vast majority (161 participants out of the 200:80.5%) stated in response to the questionnaire that the overuse of the WhatsApp isolates family members from each other who could be sitting in the same room without any verbal communication as table 4 below reveals.

**Table 4: The disadvantages of WhatsApp. Total No. 200**

Disadvantages	Frequency: Number and Percentages	
WhatsApp causes isolation & reduces verbal & direct social communication	161 : 80%	
Wastage of time	135 : 67.5%	
WhatsApp takes away the users from their jobs	110 : 55%	

WhatsApp is used for exam cheating purposes	189 : 94.5 %
WhatsApp use has become a bad addiction habit	(187:93.5%)
WhatsApp harms frequent users health by causing overweight, and ophthalmic/eye /retinopathy, etc.	90 : 45%

In other words, it weakens the physical direct, linguistic and social communication within family situations. For example, though sitting in one limited place like living rooms, the family members might be communicating through the WhatsApp with other people who could be in other cities and/or countries or even continents. In short, the WhatsApp makes people sitting with each other physically, but mentally away from each other and no communicative interaction takes place.

Such behaviors will definitely result in three side effects or negative outcomes). To start with, the lack of respect to surrounding people was notably evident from the 10 interviewees. We strongly believe it is negative because the WhatsApp users would be busy in their private WhatsApp communication. People surrounding the users might feel ignored and consequently not respected. Secondly, it damages family intimate connections and ties by increasing digital WhatsApp communication and decreasing verbal and non-verbal (e.g., body language) communication which strengthens close relationships among family members. Verbal communication among family members which includes body language, smiles, jokes, feelings, sympathy etc. is extremely important in developing intimate and passionate ties. One of the interviewees indicated that:

*...I even feel as if I am a strange man in a strange land [his house] sitting with strange people though those people are my sons and daughters who are busy in writing, attaching, responding to their friends through the WhatsApp...you know...ah...sometimes we don't speak with each other except on food table... and believe me some of my teenage sons chew their food while typing and communicating through the WhatsApp. After several weeks of that hectic communication, you find your son a different person as he tells you about new stories and principles he acquires from other WhatsApp users or people.*

Thirdly, on top of the what was quoted from the interviewees above, the overwhelming majority of the questionnaire respondents (187:93.5%) reckoned that the WhatsApp use has become a bad addiction habit which is very difficult to be quitted by users who have been raised up while using it for different purposes. When the respondents were asked whether they can voluntarily spend one single day without the WhatsApp, they stated that they could not survive without it.

Back to the interviewees, one of them said:

*...addiction, addiction and addiction because my sons and daughters express their anger if the wireless internet coverage is not okay or not working well. They sometimes express and voice their anger if the net coverage is weak [bad signal] in certain rooms of the flat or house.*

The above responses, statistics and opinions confirm undoubtedly that an organic relationship has been established between the WhatsApp application and its users. That is to say, it seems that the parties (the WhatsApp and its users) have become socially inseparable. Nowadays, people consider the WhatsApp as an integral part of their personality and their daily necessities and wants. People find it difficult to leave their accommodation before having their mobiles with them which has become as important as their wallets, ID and/or money without which they cannot go out. In short, people seem to believe that they cannot survive without having an access on the WhatsApp application everywhere. What helps using the WhatsApp everywhere is that internet companies have

been continuously encouraging offers for users to subscribe and use the internet facilities (including the WhatsApp application) everywhere and anywhere at a cheap rate.

Another disadvantage is the wastage of time caused by the WhatsApp as confirmed by 135:67.5% who indicated that the WhatsApp wastes time and in an unnoticeable way. An interviewee stated that:

*The strange thing is that the WhatsApp steals our time...time passes quickly while we use it.*

The quotation reveals that people like and even love and enjoy using the WhatsApp because while they use it, they do not feel or notice time loss. We all know that time is relative and it is like money; the loss of time means loss of money and the time lost will never be regained.

Table 4 above shows that a considerable number of the questionnaire respondents (110:55%) indicated that the WhatsApp application takes the users away from their jobs. People are tempted to use the WhatsApp during their working hours. This finding comes in agreement with what was said by other 7 interviewees who confirmed beyond any doubt that the WhatsApp use caused them many occupational problems because it affected their productivity which resulted in complaints on behalf of employers.

The other disadvantage which was remarkably complained about was the use of the WhatsApp for exam cheating purposes in different academic institutions (e.g., schools, universities, etc. Nearly all the questionnaire respondents (189:94.5 %) indicated that the WhatsApp has certainly deteriorated the quality of education not only in Jordan, but also in most Arab countries, as they claimed. Openly speaking, we did not include any question in the questionnaire about the phenomenon of cheating. Nevertheless, in responding to the open-ended question where the respondents were supposed to add any issues other than those mentioned in the questionnaire, they unfortunately voiced their complaints and sadness about the extremely negative effect of the WhatsApp in exam halls. They stated that the WhatsApp cheaters in exams used to use calmly and secretly a wireless tiny speaker placed in their ears by which they receive answers for exam questions from their colleagues in/outside exam halls. Surprisingly, all the 10 interviewees with a bitterly manner confirmed this strange phenomenon of cheating which will harm our societies everywhere, as they voiced.

As we were shocked by the above negative educational outcome of cheating, we decided to shed some more light on this phenomenon. After a detailed discussion with the interviewees, we also decided to go an extra mile by interviewing two cheating practitioners who passed their GSCE (General Secondary Certificate Examination) recently and whom we promised not to reveal their names, as they requested. After we had investigated the circumstances, mechanism and the *know-how* of using the WhatsApp for cheating purposes in exams, we found that cheaters use highly sensitive *high-tech*. devices like an expensive tiny and highly sophisticated speakers placed deep in cheaters' ears by which the examinees receive answers from other excellent classmates available outside exam halls. When they were asked about the role of people who are outside schools, both respondents (the interviewees) indicated that:

*...people outside schools take an exam paper (questions) from those excellent students who finish their exam early like...um in the first hour you know the exam duration of the Tawjehi [GSCE] is two hours and students on the lead usually submit their exam papers in the first hour and then go out of the exam hall with questions where they can uncover these questions back to the people*



*outside the school, they start sending answers by the WhatsApp voice messages mathematical equations are usually sent by text messages.*

By the way, as indicated by two respondents, some female students can sometimes, not always, use their smart small mobiles to send and receive answers for difficult questions. Obviously, because physical touching of female students is prohibited in the Middle East for religious and social consideration, it would be easy to smuggle smart devices (e.g., tiny speakers, smart mobiles, etc.) into the exam halls, we believe. One of the interviewees (female) maintained that:

*Of course I can take with me any small device into the exam hall because you know as females no one can touch us*

When we asked them about the lack of wireless internet coverage, one of the interviewees maintained that:

*Well...we took that into consideration because we have people outside schools who have strong big routers attached near the school to guarantee an internet high signal.*

Hearing these news and views about cheating by means of the WhatsApp, we found it difficult to end up our discussion at this stage about this strange and negative phenomenon which might harm the quality of education everywhere. Consequently, we went another extra-mile to reveal whether this phenomenon is confined to Jordan or practiced in other countries of the Middle East. Surprisingly, we were shocked and confused when we found out that in Egypt, the biggest Arab country, the phenomenon is widely spread since the year 2009 where students have been updating their style of cheating regularly. Egyptians even have been discussing the issue of cheating on press levels. We also found many shocking titles worldwide pertinent to WhatsApp cheating. The following titles are a case in point :

*How to cheat on exam with the WhatsApp*

*Cheating watch for students*

*Never study again for another exam*

*New ways of cheating-Line & WhatsApp* (Cambodiadiscircle: August 6, 2012 12:37

( [www.cambodiadiscircle.com/articles/164/new-way-of-Cheating-line-and-w](http://www.cambodiadiscircle.com/articles/164/new-way-of-Cheating-line-and-w))). (retrieved on September 10<sup>th</sup> , 2014, 02:15 .m.).

According to Egypt Independent (Tuesday 18 February 2014) a highly read Egyptian newspaper, students cheat secretly and make underground gangsters or grouping before exams start. These groups have certain cheating responsibilities to ensure sharing the same answers and/or information smoothly and at one go. Under the title: 'Technological advances innovate cheating in Egyptian schools', the Egyptian Independent (ibid) states that:

*High school teaching in Egypt may be moribund and low tech, but students are harnessing the power of innovation and technology for teaching* ([www.Egyptindependent.com/news/technological-advances-innovative-cheating-egyptian-sc](http://www.Egyptindependent.com/news/technological-advances-innovative-cheating-egyptian-sc)).

Retrieved on September 20<sup>th</sup> 2014 02:58 p.m).

In short, our google investigation revealed that sadly the phenomenon of cheating is widely spread in all countries. Surprisingly, we found that the phenomenon of cheating with the WhatsApp seems to be highly spread even in first world countries. The following titles exemplifies this:

*WhatsApp fuels synchronized copying in exam-Bangalore Mirror*  
*technology in Japan*

*Exam cheating*

Back to the disadvantages, astonishingly, from the 200 respondents who filled in the questionnaires, 90:45% of them indicated that the frequent and/or excessive use of the WhatsApp results in health problems or disorders. Nevertheless, only 3 interviewees out of 10 confirmed this matter. One of the educationalists stated that:

*You know...the excessive use of the WhatsApp harms our health and increases our weight because the WhatsApp application is usually and in most cases carried out while we are sitting not walking...um...r...that means the lack of physical movement brings about overweight which might in turn cause cholesterol or triglyceride increase.*

Another Medical Ph.D holder who was a university professor confirmed the issue of health from another

angel by stating that:

*...another negative point is... the excessive use of the WhatsApp is bad...*

*As you know while we read and write texts of small characters because*

*We need to focus a lot in making our pupa smaller...and creating eye lines and other disorders ... we call these disorders as ophthalmic...eye... retinopathy, etc.*

### **Conclusion**

In this study, we have investigated the effect of the WhatsApp communication on university students' academic life and on people in general. Specifically, we discussed the advantages, disadvantages of the WhatsApp and why and how it has been used. In short, it seems that the WhatsApp application has three significant outcomes: it is not age-related, it is used positively and negatively; it is positive when it **facilitates the communication** and increases the channels of communication among its users to help in flowing information among people. It is also positive because it **develops users' receptive and expressive vocabulary** through received and produced texts. In addition, users develop their lexical ability by being exposed to various and varied vocabulary items, not to forget also the clear messages crystalized by attachments on top of becoming **skillful in making summaries** because users try always to shorten and condense their texts. Nevertheless, we all know that most advanced technological and internet applications and/or devices are really double-edged knives. Therefore, the WhatsApp application becomes negative when students and people in general become **addict** on and use it in **educational cheating** because this could have extremely negative and **diverse impact on the educational outcomes**, educationalists, students and the society as a whole since academic institutional outcomes become not indicative and not reliable.

As a result, students' grades or **attainment could be faked**. What is related to the educational issue is something surprising which we found in connection with grammar. It has been found that the WhatsApp might **damage** students' ability in **grammar and vocabulary** due to the new language which is neither pure Arabic nor pure English; they use a blend of both. Finally, as it was confirmed that the WhatsApp is a source of time loss, governmental and private sectors, departments, bodies, companies, or other employers are advised to disconnect their employees from the WhatsApp application on the level of 3G, 4G and Wi Fi. Besides, mass media in developing and developed countries need to raise WhatsApp users' awareness and knowledge about the negative medical effect on health, as mentioned above.

As the WhatsApp application is new and renewable (updated on daily or weekly basis), we can safely state that more research is needed on other hidden unpronounceable advantages and/or disadvantages of it. Other researchers might investigate other aspects not tackled in our study like using the WhatsApp for social linguistic corruption (i.e., exchanging pornography among teenagers, annoying other users, infringing and violating personal privacy by hackers, etc.).

**N.B.**

2. Our thanks are also due to the interviewees & the people who filled in the questionnaire.

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