Effects of WhatsApp in Learning English Language Evaluative Listening Skills among Students of Tertiary Institutions in Sokoto State, Nigeria

By

Rabi Abdullahi Danjimma and Aminu Wadata.
Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto, Nigeria.

Abstract

This study investigated the effects of WhatsApp on learning English language evaluative listening skills among students of tertiary institutions in Sokoto State, Nigeria. It was motivated by the retrograding states of listening skills that hampers students' ability to critically evaluate spoken utterance in communication process. This is quasi-experimental research conducted on 58,038 tertiary education students out of which 80 were sampled. The sample was distributed into experimental and control groups. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The instrument used is a self-developed test tagged "Evaluative Listening Skills Performance Test (ELSPT)". It is a twenty-item multiple-choice question that tested students' evaluative listening skills. The instrument was validated by experts in Language Education from the Department of Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. The reliability of instrument was measured by pilot testing through pretest-posttest analysis. The reliability was measured using Kuder Richardson's R and an r = 0.83 was recorded. This ensures the researcher that the instrument is reliable. All hypotheses were tested at a p = 0.05 level of significance. After the analysis, all the two null hypotheses were rejected. The study found that WhatsApp is effective in evaluative listening skills. The paper recommended that WhatsApp should be included as a medium in the teaching of English language listening skills in tertiary institutions in Sokoto State.

Keywords: Evaluation, Listening, WhatsApp, Second Language, Social Network, Media

Introduction

There are four skills of language. These are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Out of these language skills, listening is perhaps the most important being the foundation skill that a child acquires immediately after birth. However, in learning a Second Language (L2), the role of listening should not be undervalued. Hence, a Nigerian child, learning English as an L2, is expected to start by listening before imitating the sounds. To achieve the desired objectives, English language teachers continuously employ different media like deck radio and magnetic tape to aid their listening lessons. Modern innovation led to the application of modern technology in education. The computer hardware and software are being applied in language lessons. The computer hardware and software are responsible for the processing, storing, retrieving, and performing specific operations in the hardware components. Thus, language learning programs such as Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), and several others emerged. There was also the emergence of Social Network Sites (SNS) such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc. these are social network sites that the youth subscribe to be used day and night for social interaction for its flexibility in sharing audio, visual, text, and other graphical information. This application can be handy in learning different language skills.

Statement of the Problem

The teaching of listening skills is an activity that requires the application of audio media without which the teaching would be less effective. Aktar (2006) lamented that the English language teachers in Nigeria use foreign materials in their listening lessons. This created a gap between the curriculum content of the students and the materials that the teacher used in the lesson. Thus, this paper was motivated by the use of WhatsApp in learning the English language listening skills.

Objectives of the Study

The paper is designed to achieve the following objectives:

     i.   To find out the effect of WhatsApp in learning evaluative skills of extracting argumentative points from the words of the speaker among students of tertiary institutions in Sokoto State, Nigeria.

     ii.   To assess the effect of WhatsApp in learning listening skills of identifying logical presentation of points by the speaker among students of tertiary institutions in Sokoto State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

To achieve the stated objectives, the following research questions were raised:

     i.   What is the effect is WhatsApp in learning listening skills of extracting argumentative points from the words of the speaker?

     ii.   What is the effect of WhatsApp in learning listening skills of identifying logical presentation of points by the speaker?

Hypotheses

To answer the above research questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

Ho1: There is no significant effect between the experimental and control groups in learning evaluative listening skills of identifying argumentative points from the words of the speaker.

Ho2: There is no significant effect between the experimental and control groups in learning evaluative listening skills of identifying logical presentation of points by the speaker.

Significance of the Study

     The study is significant to many stakeholders. It is significant to the students as it introduces them to the listening skills of extracting facts and opinion from the words used by speaker to persuade listeners in an argument. This is derived through the use of evaluative listening considering the linguistics and discourse competence in argumentation. It is significant to the teachers that modern media that became part of daily life can be utilized as a medium for teaching listening skills because of its flexibility to accommodate multimedia.

Review of Related Literature

The literature review deals with the concept of evaluative listening, WhatsApp, and the theoretical frameworks that informed this study.

Evaluative Listening

     Purdy (2019) evaluative listening is the intelligent response to persuasive or propagandistic messages. It is critical as it assumes comprehensive, discriminative and judgmental processing of the message. In life, people critically evaluate intentions and distinguish the sales pitch from the word of the true believer. Evaluative listening deals with the influence of a speaker's packaged image, demonstration of the ability to detect whether a proposition is logical and supported with reasonable arguments, and be able to assess when psychological needs or weaknesses are being unfairly played upon (Purdy, 2019). According to Rajagukguk and Sirait (2019), evaluative listening is a type of listening that the message conveyed by the communicator is assessed in accordance with the facts that occur in the field. To do this, there are several things to consider. Rajagukguk and Sirait (2019) stated that for one to better understand the speaker's point of view, one shall first, try to oppose one's evaluation and provide an evaluation of the message conveyed by the speaker, second, assume that the speaker is a person of good intentions so that what is delivered will be beneficial to the listener, third, distinguished between the speaker facts and opinions, one fourth identify the attitude of the speaker who has a tendency to one of the things.

WhatsApp

     WhatsApp Inc was founded in 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koun, both former employees of Yahoo! After Koun and Acton left Yahoo! in September 2007, the duo travelled to South America as a break from work (Parmy, 2014). It is the most recent and popular social media platform for instant messaging. The users can share text messages, images, videos, and audio files (Abdul, 2015). It is an application that allows its users to use their internet connections and send messages to each other on android phones, windows, IOS, and computers. Recently, smart phones are becoming increasingly popular and WhatsApp is available for almost all internet-enabled smart phones. WhatsApp is a free third-party application, which allows you to communicate with your friends and family, and share images, videos, and links using network access.

     WhatsApp is a free third-party application that allows one to communicate with friends and family, and share images, videos, and links using network access. However, Riyanto (2013) stated that WhatsApp can be used not only to socialize with friends but also to study and even learn a new language. It is a platform where users can learn the language faster, and better, and have more fun with fellow students and teachers. Thus, the teacher can use multimedia to present, post assignments, and ask students to carry out the activities and reply in form of audio, video, or audio-visual forms. Thus, WhatsApp provides an authentic learning environment, because the learner can interact with others across the world, which indeed, motivates many language learners. Confronting such

challengeable situations is the touchstone for using the language skills in authenticity not artificially. WhatsApp as a tool for learning is very motivational, attractive, and accessible.

Theoretical Framework

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is another theory that connects listening instruction to modern technology. It was developed to explain computer usage behaviour in instructional practices by Davis in 1989. It is important in showing users how to accept and use a computer-based technology. The model suggested that when users are presented with a new software package, several factors influence their decision about how and when they will use it (Masrum & Hussein, 2008). Though other models can equally be used to predict and explain why users accept or reject an information system, this model includes the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003) and Concern Based Adoption Model (Deng & Yuen, 2009) as well as the Social Influence Theory (Gao, 2005). Therefore, this model explains students' attitudes to Social Networking using the WhatsApp application in testing their listening performance.
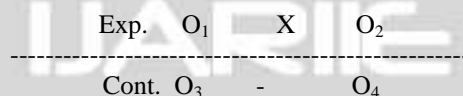
Review of Related Studies

Adebiyi (2015) investigated the use of WhatsApp in the teaching and learning of English among the students of the University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Nigeria (FUNAAB). The researcher used focus group discussion and structured and unstructured interviews. Four hundred and Fifteen 100 Level students were randomly selected to participate in the study. The study found that 87.5% (majority) of the respondents agreed with the fact that WhatsApp should be used to teach English; 2 to 5 (minority) disagreed and 10% were undecided. In this case, they were saying that WhatsApp should be used to teach the English language. 93.75% agreed with the statement that WhatsApp is best used for English grammar while 1.25% disagreed and 5% were undecided. From this fact, it can be deduced that WhatsApp is a good tool for learning. The study differs from the current one because the current study was on the effects of WhatsApp on Learning Listening skills while the previous one was on the use of WhatsApp in teaching and learning English as a whole.

Said (2015) conducted a study and examined the effects of using WhatsApp Messenger to develop writing skills among the students of the School of Administrative and Human Science, Qassim Private Colleges, Saudi Arabia. The researcher used 200 Level students in carrying out his research with 30 participants from each department. The study used 30 students- 15 as experimental and the other 15 as a control group. Quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design was used. The result showed that 90% of the students had smartphones, 82% chatted via mobile computers, 47% used mobile phones as a dictionary, 78% of used mobile phones to send and receive the message and 95% accepted to take part in this program. The study differs from the present study in the sense that, it was on WhatsApp messenger as one of the Mobile learning techniques to develop writing skills.

Methodology

This study employed a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design. It is a two-factor design diagrammatically presented below:

Fig. 1: Research Design

$$\text{Exp.} \quad O_1 \quad X \quad O_2$$

$$\text{Cont.} \quad O_3 \quad - \quad O_4$$

Where; (Exp.) represents the experimental group, (Cont.) represents the control group, (O_1) Pre-test forthe experimental group, (O_2) post-test for the experimental group, (O_3) pre-test for the control group, (O_4) post-test for the control group, (X) is the treatment package, and (----) is the absence of randomization.

Population of the Study

The population of this research comprised all public tertiary institutions in Sokoto State. There are ten (10) public tertiary institutions with a total population of 58,038 students (Ministry for high education Sokoto State 2017).

Table 1: List of Tertiary Institutions in Sokoto State with their students' population

S/N	Name of Institutions	Population of the Students
1.	Sokoto State University, Sokoto	2752
2.	Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto	19,176
3.	Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto	11,000
4.	College of Nursing Sokoto	322
5.	Sultan Abdurahman School of Health Technology, Gwadabawa	3,125
6.	College of Agriculture, Wurno	115
7.	School of Legal Studies, Sokoto	525
8.	School of Nursing, UDUTH	175

9.	Health Information Management, UDUTH	383
10.	Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto	20,640
	TOTAL	58,038

Source: (Ministry for High Education Sokoto State 2017)

Sample and Sampling Technique

Multistage sampling techniques were used in the study. Two tertiary institutions with a total population of 381 UG I and HND I students was purposively selected for the availability of android phones the schools have an English department where listening skills are taught. A total of Eighty (80) students- forty (40) for the control and forty (40) for the experimental group were sampled. To select the sample of participants from each Department, proportionate sampling was employed. This is done by dividing the number of the population of the department by the total number of students and multiplying by the sample size. Then, a simple random sampling technique was employed in the selection of the participants from each department during treatment. The procedure was conducted using the dip-hat method where responses comprising "YES" and "NO" were wrapped in paper for the required sample size for each department.

Table 2: Samples in the Study

S/N	Institution	Department	Level	Population	Sample Size	Group
1	Sokoto State University	Economics	100	80	19	Control
		Geography	100	30	07	Control
		Nigerian language	100	20	05	Control
		English/ linguistics	100	40	09	Control
2	Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto	Electrical Engineering	100	6	01	Experimental
		Mass Communication	100	4	01	Experimental
		NDPA I	100	120	23	Experimental
		HNDCS I	100	81	15	Experimental
		TOTAL		381	80	

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for this study was a tagged "Evaluative Listening Performance Test (ILSPT)" to measure their performance in different evaluative listening activities.

Description of the Instrument

The instrument titled "Evaluative Listening Performance Test (ELPT)" is a researcher-developed instrument with the view of measuring students' performance in evaluative listening activities through WhatsApp. The instrument contains two parts- Part I is ten-question multiple-choice question that students' listening skills of extracting points raised by the speaker to support his proposition and Part II is also 10 questions multiple choice that tests students' listening skills of identifying the logical presentation of points in an utterance. One mark was allocated to each correctly answered question and zero for the wrong attempt.

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Curriculum Studies and Educational Technology at Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. After their scrutiny, some observations were made for the researcher and the corrections were made which included putting multiple-choice questions in the aspect of evaluative and evaluative listening skills while options should not be used in informative listening skills. The instrument was taken to them for final validation. They finally recommended that it had content and construct validity and was thus capable of measuring what it was designed to measure.

Reliability of the Instrument

To ascertain the reliability of the ELSLPT, the researcher conducted a pilot study at Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto. A sample of 30 UG I students from Economics Department was used. Fifteen (15) students served as the control group and the other fifteen (15) as the experimental group. The researcher administered a pre-test to both groups intending to obtain baseline data. Similarly, a treatment (Teaching of Listening Skills) was given to the experimental group for them to know the skills. However, another test (Post-test) was administered after two

weeks. The two tests were compared using the Kuder Richardson (KR21) statistical tool and a reliability index of 0.83 was obtained, which was reliable and satisfactory.

Experimental Treatment

The researcher administered pretest to both experimental and control groups to measure their homogeneity. Then introduced the lesson by explaining what the listening and evaluative listening skills are. Then, explained to the class different types of evaluative listening skills that would be treated in the course of study through WhatsApp. The WhatsApp group was created and the student's mobile phone numbers were registered by the researcher who served as "group admin" for the lesson on evaluative listening. In the group, the research would be shared lessons and students performed the activities and respond through chats- audio, video, and multimedia. In the next lesson, the researcher sent students passages in which all the experimental groups hook up and listened to the audio. A Series of evaluative listening activities were carried out on the passage in two hours lecture. The final week was the week of the posttest. The students took the posttest and their scores were recorded.

Method of Data Analysis

The data were analysed using descriptive statistics to analyse the data of the pretest and post-test of participants as well as answering research questions. Mean score and t-test statistics were used in testing the null hypotheses.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the effect is WhatsApp in learning evaluative listening skills of extracting points raised by the speaker?

Table 3: Mean difference in the performance of students learning listening skills of extracting points raised by the speaker by the speaker between the WhatsApp Method and lecture method

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mdf
Experimental Group	40	8.43	1.22	2.93
Control Group	40	7.91	1.39	

Source: Researcher's Field Work, 2018.

Table 1 presents the result of the difference in students' performance in evaluative listening skills of extracting points raised by the speaker between those taught using the WhatsApp method and those taught using the lecture method. Results showed that those taught using WhatsApp performed better, as indicated by a mean of 8.43 (SD = 1.22) over those taught using the lecture method with a mean of 7.91 (SD = 1.39). This adequately answered research question one and it is concluded that there is a difference in the performance of students taught evaluative listening skills of extracting points raised by the speaker using WhatsApp social media from those taught the same using the lecture method.

Research Question Two: What is the effect of WhatsApp in learning evaluative listening of identifying logical presentation of the speaker?

Table 4: Differences in performances of students in learning evaluative listening skills of identifying logical presentations of the speaker between the WhatsApp Method and lecture method

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	MD
Experimental Group	40	8.04	1.27	1.26
Control Group	40	6.78	1.40	

Source: Researcher's Field Work, 2018.

Table 4 presents the result of the difference in students' performance learning evaluative listening skills of identifying logical presentation of the speaker between those taught using the WhatsApp method and those taught using the lecture method. Results showed that those taught using WhatsApp performed better, as indicated by a mean of 8.04 (SD=1.27) over those taught using the lecture method with a mean of 6.78 (SD =1.40). This showed that there is a difference in the performance of students taught evaluative listening skills using WhatsApp from those taught the same using the lecture method.

Null Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant effect between the experimental and control groups in learning evaluative listening skills of extracting points raised by the speaker of the speaker.

This hypothesis was tested by subjecting the performance scores of students in the WhatsApp social media group and those in the conventional approach group to a t-test analysis and the result is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Performance Difference in learning listening skills of extracting of points raised by the speaker between Students in the WhatsApp Group and those in the Lecture method Group

Variables	N	Df	MEAN	SD	*t*-Cal	*p*-Value	Decision
Experimental Group	40		8.43	1.22			
Control Group	40	78	7.91	1.39	13.94	.001	H_01 Rejected

Table 5 shows that there exists a significant difference in learning evaluative listening skills of extracting points raised by the speaker of students taught using the WhatsApp and those taught using the lecture method because of the calculated t-value of 13.94 and a *p*-value of .001, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, $H0_1$ which states that there is no significant difference in the performance of students taught evaluative listening skills using WhatsApp from those taught the same using the lecture method is rejected.

Ho2: There is no significant effect between the experimental and control groups in learning evaluative listening skills of extracting opinion.

This hypothesis was tested by subjecting the performance scores of the WhatsApp group and those in the lecture method group to a t-test analysis and the result is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Performance Difference in the Evaluative Listening Skills between Students in the WhatsApp Group and those in the Lecture method Group

Variables	N	Df	MEAN	SD	*t*-Cal	*p*-Value	Decision
Experimental Group	40		8.04	1.27			
Control Group	40	78	6.78	1.40	18.81	.001	H_02 Rejected

Table 6 shows that there exists a significant difference in evaluative listening skills in the performance of students taught using WhatsApp and those taught using the lecture method because of the calculated t-value of 18.81 and a *p*-value of .001, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, $H0_2$ which states that there is no significant difference in the performance of students taught evaluative listening skills using WhatsApp from those taught the same using the lecture method is rejected.

Summary of Findings

The following are the major findings of the study:

i. WhatsApp is effective in learning evaluative listening skills of extracting points raised by the speaker among students of tertiary institutions in Sokoto State, Nigeria.

ii. WhatsApp is effective in learning evaluative listening skills of identifying logical presentation of the speaker among students of tertiary institutions in Sokoto State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that WhatsApp is effective in learning evaluative listening skills of extracting points raised by the speaker among students of tertiary institutions in Sokoto State, Nigeria. This can be caused by the ability of the media to complement the spoken text with the visual and auditory channels for the students. This finding is in line with the finding of Adebiyi (2015) that that 87.5% (majority) of the respondents agreed that WhatsApp should be used to teach English because it is a good media for learning.

The study also found that WhatsApp is effective in learning evaluative listening skills of logical presentation of the points of the speaker among students of tertiary institutions in Sokoto State, Nigeria. The clues of the speaker can easily be determined through the gestures, mannerisms, of cohesive devices. This finding complements the finding of Said (2015) that WhatsApp is a useful application in language teaching as 90% of the students in his study area had smartphones, 82% chatted via mobile computers, 47% used mobile phones as a dictionary, 78% of used mobile phones to send and receive the message and 95% accepted to take part in this program.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the paper strongly believed that English language teaching can become fun and effective where innovative instructional media like WhatsApp are embedded in the instructional presentation. However, in English language instructions, the teachers can help students utilize their precious time, mobile data, and phone to learn not useless 'tik-toking' with their friends. It will also help them learn "anywhere-everywhere" as the content

presented to them can be accessed, read, reread, and download anytime everywhere. It also led to the accommodation of students' differences in terms of learning styles. The visual learners can be accommodated with video accompanying text, the audio learners were provided with audio content, and the kinaesthetic learners were accommodated with the movements as presented by the audio-visual content.

Recommendations

The paper recommended the following:
   i.   That there are new media for teaching the English language that can help the teachers present content by accommodating students' differences.
   ii. The teachers should update their knowledge of social media to change it from students wasting their precious resources to serving as a media of learning.

Suggestions for Further research

This study deals with the effects of WhatsApp on learning evaluative listening skills among students of tertiary institutions in Sokoto. Other areas that need further studies include:
   1.   The effects of WhatsApp on learning listening skills in secondary school
   2.   The use of WhatsApp to teach reading and speaking skills at the tertiary level

References

Adebiyi, A. A. (2015). Using WhatsApp in the Teaching and Learning of English: A study of the University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Nigeria (FUNAAB). *Journal of the English Language Teachers Association of Nigeria (ELTAN)*(5).

Akter, Z (2006). Redefining Communicative Competence in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Bangladesh. Harvest: *Jahanginagar Studies in Language and Literature* 24 (**1**),9-26.

Davis, G. A. (2007, May). Cognitive pragmatics of language disorders in adults. In *Seminars in Speech and Language* (Vol. 28, No. 02, pp. 111-121). Copyright© 2007 by Thieme Medical Publishers, Inc., 333 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001, USA.

Deng, L. & Yuan H. K. (2009). Blogs in higher education: implementation and issues. Techtrends, **53**(3):95-96.

Gao, Y. (2005). Applying the technology acceptance model (TAM) to educational hypermedia: A field study. *Journal of educational multimedia and hypermedia.***14**(3):237-247.

Rajagukguk, H. & Sirait, J. (2019). *Critical Listening. 2019 International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences and Authors,* DOI: 10.22161/ijels.book.cl.

Masrom, M. & Hussein, R. (2008). User Acceptance of Information Technology: Understanding Theories and Model, Venton Publishing, Kuala Lumpur.

Parmy, O. (2015). Facebook's Phone Company: WhatsApp Goes to the Next Level with its Voice Calling Service. Forbes Retrieved April 18, 2015.

Purdy, M. (2019). *Listening in Everyday Life: A Personal and Professional Approach.* Retrieved on 20th, June, 2018 from http://www.txnu.edu.cn/listening/szliu/efiniion.htm

Riyanto, A. (2013). *English Language Learning Using WhatsApp Application*. Khmad Rianto, Love for All, Hatred for None. Word Press, the Splendid Theme.

Rogers, M. (1990). *Listening in Language Learning.* Louder Longman.

Saide, R. (2015). Computer anxiety in E-learning. The effect of computing self-efficacy, *Journal of Information Technology in Education*, vol. 8.

Shaozhong, L. (2005). May 5. What is Pragmatic. Retrieved March 10, 2017. http://www.gxnu.edu.cn/personal/szliu/efiniion.htm