



Using WhatsApp for interactive tasks

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British Council World Teachers' Day

7/10/21





OVERVIEW

- Introduction
 - Out-of-class learning
 - Mobile learning
 - WhatsApp
- WhatsApp activities
- Results
- Recommendations



Out-of-class learning

- TL Contact = Increased proficiency

Sundqvist (2009)

- Hours a week (B2, N=1,000+)

– 4h30/week

Mackay (2015)



Mobile Language Learning

In a word.....





Potential

Motivating

Realistic

Convenient



- helps avoid *'motivational dissonance'*

Ushioda (2013)

- *'Teachers should catch up and teach with the tools our students really use'*

Brooks-Young (2010)

- *'Push and pull'*

Motiwalla (2007)



Artificial
Intrusive
Privacy



- 'comparable with interactions within the walls of a face-to-face classroom'

Lamy and Zourou (2013: 3)



**“I suppose I’ll be the one
to mention the elephant in the room.”**



 WhatsApp

7.26.17



1 Billion
daily active users



1.3 Billion
monthly active users



55 Billion
messages sent per day



4.5 Billion
photos shared per day



60 languages
supported



1 Billion
videos shared per day



WhatsApp - Research

- Gutiérrez-Colon et al., (2013): Improving learners' reading skills through instant short messages
- Han and Keskin (2016): *Using WhatsApp to Reduce EFL Speaking Anxiety*
- Jafari and Chalak (2016): *The Role of WhatsApp in Teaching Vocabulary to Iranian EFL learners at Junior High School*
- Andujar, A. (2020): *Mobile-mediated dynamic assessment: A new perspective for second language development.*

The WhatsApp groups

Group	A (2017)	B (2019)	C (2020)	D (2021)
Level	B2.1	B1	B2	B2
Mode	F2F Summer intensive	F2F Saturdays	Blended/ Zoom	Synch./ Zoom
Nº students	N=23	N=13	N=10	N=17
Duration	100h	100h	40h	100h
Gender	11 F, 12 M	9F, 4M	6F, 4M	8F, 9M
Mean age	21	27	30	21

The WhatsApp programme

Group	A (2017)	B (2019)	C (2020)	D (2021)
Duration	5 weeks	4 weeks	5 weeks	6 weeks
Nº Tasks	8	4	5	21
Related to course?	No	Yes	Yes	No
Task types	Open/Drills	Open	Open/Drills	Open: Learner-generated prompts

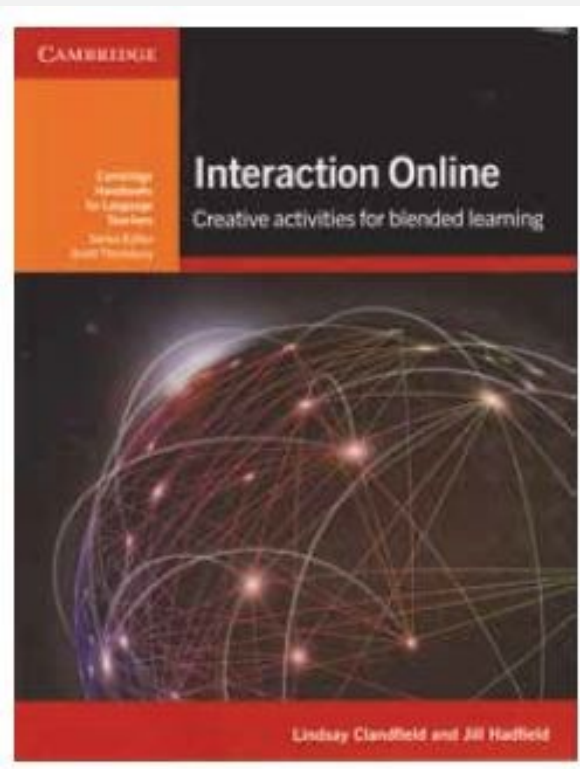


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‘Independent’ Tasks



Interaction Online

Clandfield, L. & Hadfield, J.
(2017) Cambridge
Handbooks for Teachers
(CUP)



The WhatsApp programme

Clandfield & Hadfield (2017) recommendations:

- Set up like classroom tasks:
 - Demo first
 - Clear instructions
- Break task up into stages
- Set deadlines
- Be present and positive, withdraw support gradually



The WhatsApp programme

Interaction patterns

- Pass the parcel
- Confetti



The WhatsApp programme

Pass the parcel

This or That



EIM level 4 summer...

Angel , Angels, Anna , Arosel...



Before you start, have a look at this list. These are some ways of agreeing in English (from emphatic to weak):

Definitely! (Emphatic)

For sure!

Absolutely!

Yes.

I guess.

I suppose (weak)

Task 1:

I'm going to write two things. You need to choose which one you prefer. Write the name of the thing you prefer and use one of the expressions from the list.



EIM level 4 summer...

Angel , Angels, Anna , Arosel...



For example, I write this:
Travelling by bus or travelling by train?

You write:

Travelling by train, absolutely!

If you don't like travelling by bus and you don't like travelling by train, you can write:

Neither!

Ready? Let's start!
Travelling by bus or travelling by train?

14:2



Anna (4A Summer)

If I have to choose between



Carlos (4A Summer)

You

Hi everybody! This is the second WhatsApp task. Before you start, have a look at t...

Travelling by train, for sure!

14:34

Oscar (4A Summer)

You

Hi everybody! This is the second WhatsApp task. Before you start, have a look at t...

I guess that is better travelling by train, because you can have more places to sit in!

14:37

Miquel (4A Summer)

WhatsApp task 2:

Interaction.

Thank you for your ideas. Now it's your turn. Think if two things that are different, but related. The first person who is ready can post their two things. The next person responds, then posts their two things e.g.

A: Bus or train?

B: Train, definitely! Cats or dogs?

C: Cats, for sure! Pasta or pizza?

And so on.....

Start when you're ready.



The WhatsApp programme

This or That

- wine or beer?
- summer or winter?
- Harry Potter or Game of Thrones?
- Apple or Android?

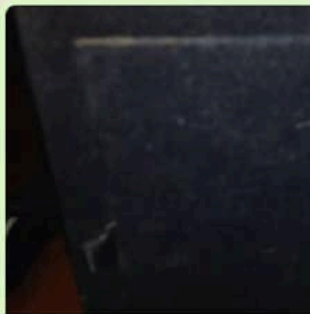


The WhatsApp programme

Confetti

THE
GUESSING
GAME

My angle on....
Choose an object
own that has a special
meaning for you.
picture of a part
object from an unusual
angle. Try to make
picture so that it
to see (but not in
You'll see my picture
Please post your picture
tomorrow, then I'll
the next part of the



Part 2:
Look at your classroom
pictures. Choose the
ask questions to try
out what the object
owner can only answer
or 'no' e.g.:
Is it made of metal?
Yes, it is.
Do you use it in the
No, you don't.

If three people have
asked questions about
object you chose, choose
another picture. Post
questions by tomorrow
(Thursday). If no one
found the answer by
the owner should tell

José Luis (4A Summer)

You

OK - 10 points?

Ohh!! -10 points!! Jessica is
from Scotland and you are a
weepy (llorón) man.

🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇧🇬🇬🇧 (Extra points to
Marie Curie!)

15:50

20 Jul 2017

If you haven't already
guessed the mystery
objects, the owners should
now reveal what they were.
Mine was (the back of) a
photo frame with a picture
of my dad. What about yours?

09:51 ✓



< 2 EIM I Angel

< 2 EIM lev Angel, Ar

< 2 EIM level 4 summer... Angel, Angels, Anna, Arosel...

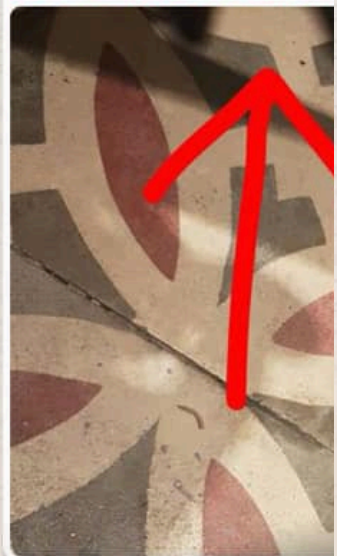
José Luis (4A S

Josep (4A Suni
Yes Jose you disc
Its my bike

It was very diffi
a cycling exper

José Luis (4A Su
One part of the c
like a shadow in t
You need to obser
realize completly

José Luis (4A Su



It is the ring that
chain

Josep (4A Summer)



For you Jose 22:05

José Luis (4A Summer)
Guau! I like your bike! 22:10

José
It was
cyclin
I can't
floor

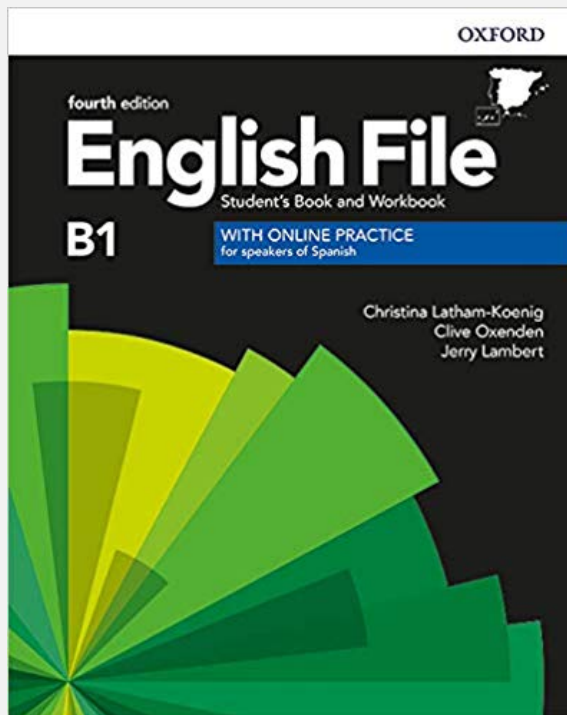
José Luis (4A S
One part of the
like a shadow in
You need to ob

I like the floor 23:

21 Jul 2017



‘Integrated’ Tasks



*English File B1, 4th
edition*

Latham Koenig, C.,
Oxenden, C. & Lambert, J.
(2019) OUP

Unit 9: Quantifiers

8/5/2019

Hello Superstars! This week's task helps us to practise **quantifiers**. Take a photo of what's in your fridge. Other people will make some suggestions about what you could make for dinner.

12:18 ✓✓

Example:

12:18 ✓✓

Jasmin UB



Wow, Jasmin! You don't have **enough** food for a big meal. But you've got **a few** eggs and **lots of** vegetables, so you can make an omelette.

12:21 ✓✓



Teacher

Wow, Jasmin! You don't have **enough** food for a big meal. But you've got **a few** eggs and **lots of** vegetables, so you can make an omelette.

12:22

Teacher



Guys, someone help me! What can I have for dinner tonight?

12:22

Student 12

Well, Mathew! You have a lot of meat. Maybe you can do a bbq and invited all us to lunch. Then we can do some shots of tequila.

13:46

Student 6

Hajjajajaja

13:56

Student 7

I think that Matthews has too much meat for a class of 20 people. Maybe, it's enough for 30, but not for 20.

16:25

And, obviously, there isn't enough "Jose Cuervo" for everybody

16:26

Student 3

Why do you have lots of meat and a few fish? I suggest you to change your diet. Eat less meat and add more vegetables.

16:29

Student 3

Student 7

And, obviously, there isn't enough "Jose Cuervo" for everybody

Hahaha

16:35

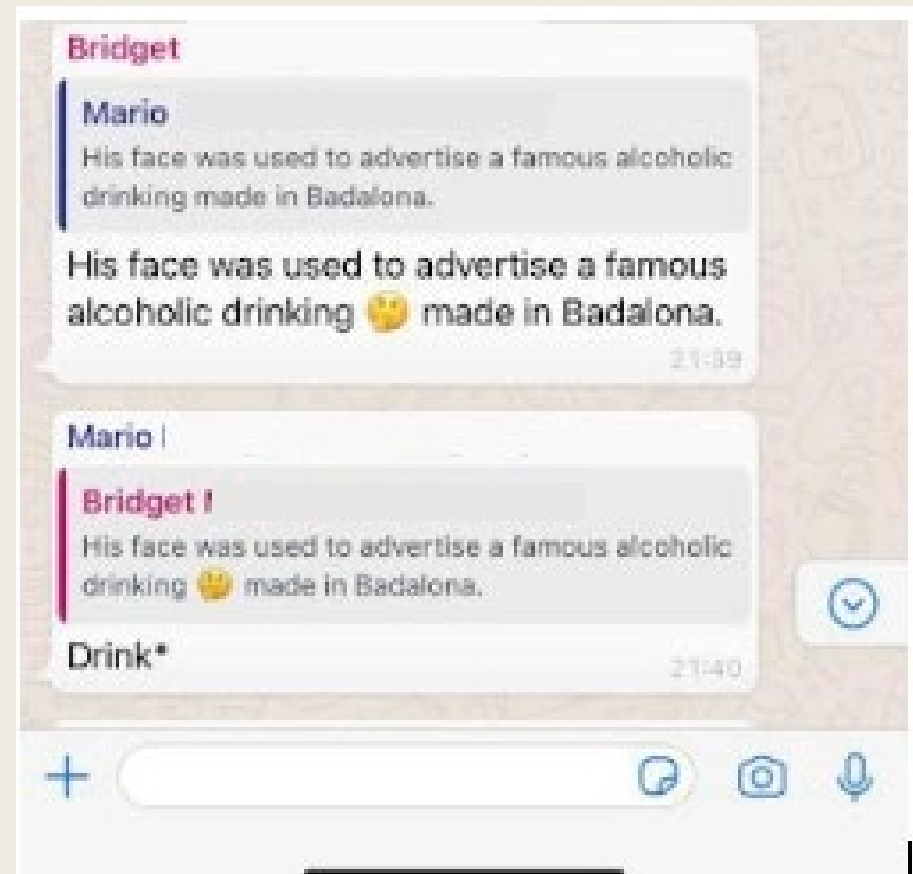
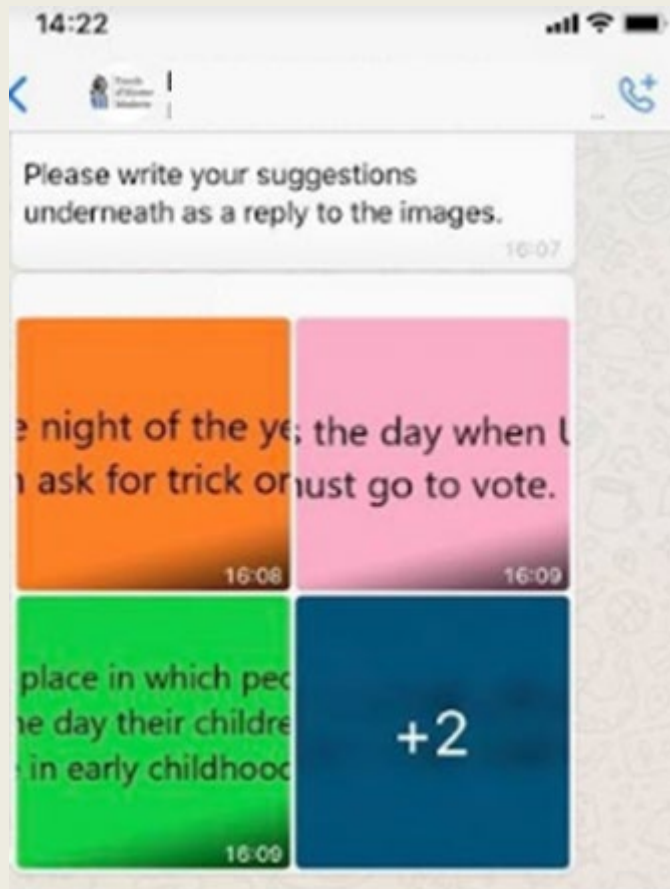
9.5.2019

Student 15

I think that Matthew doesn't have enough meat for one dinner . You don't have to switch off the frigde, because you will haven't any ediable food!



'Integrated' Tasks: Feedback



Spontaneous interaction



‘Learner-generated’

Teacher models a
prompt

Learners respond

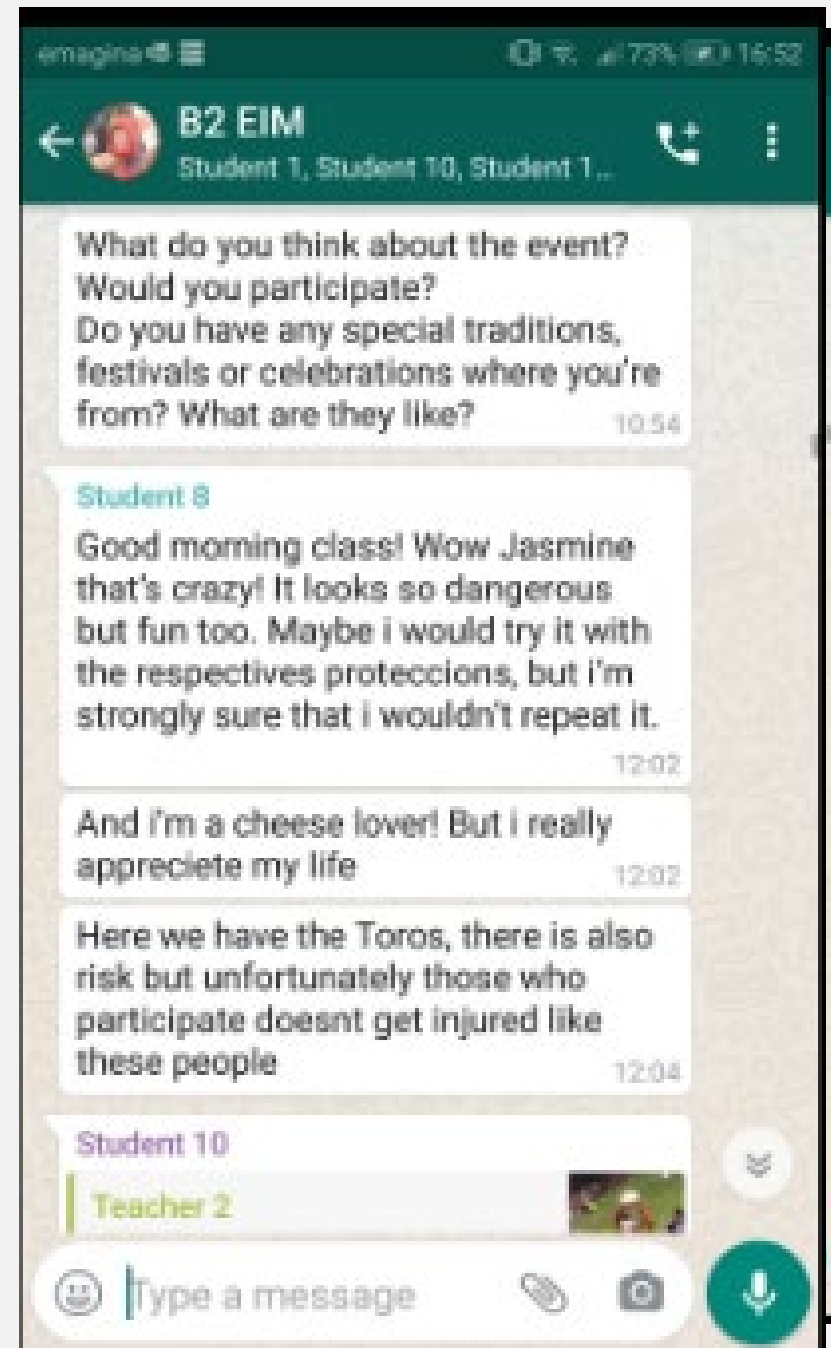




Image tweeted by @kaarendu



Teacher sets calendar

suggests ideas:

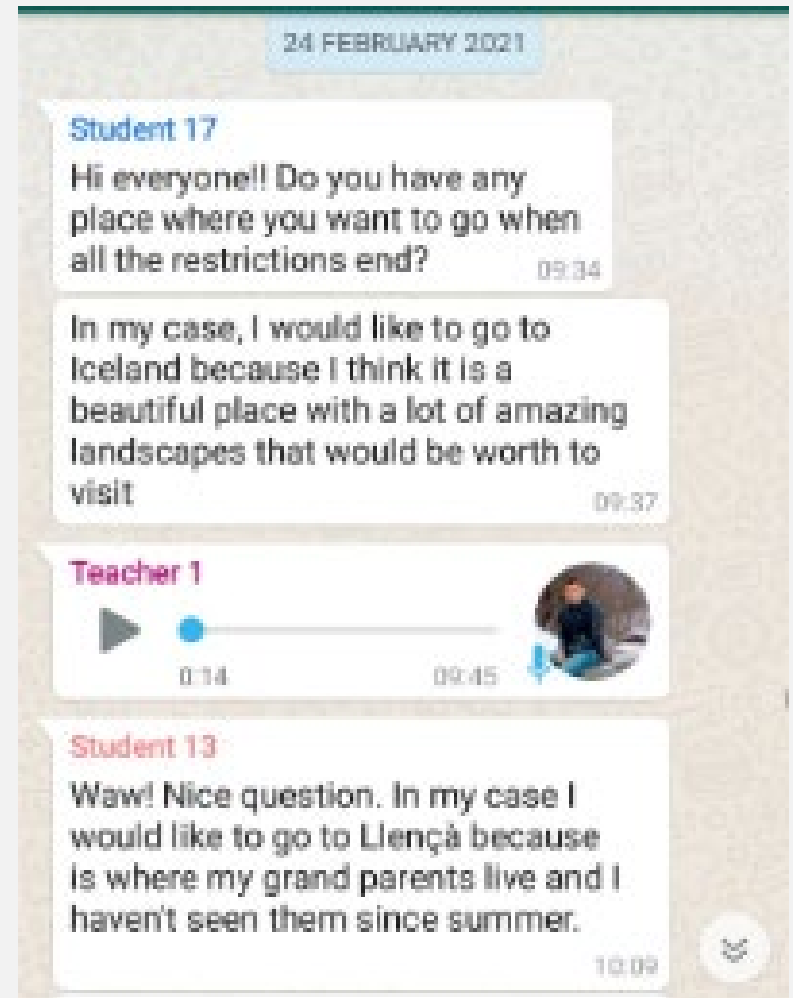
- *viral videos, memes*
- *current events*
- *students' lives*

provides frames:

- *What's your favourite? Why?*
- *Have you seen? What did you think?*
- *What do you know about?*



Learners provide
prompts
Others respond



Results

Group	A (2017)	B (2019)	C (2020)	D (2021)
Total messages	764	158	623	626
Teacher / Researcher	105 (14%)	47 (30%)	259 (42%)	291 (46%)
Students	659 (86%)	111 (70%)	364 (58%)	335 (54%)
Average per day	22	6	21	13
Average per student	28	9	36	20



Results - participation

Successful tasks

- Drills
 - 'safe' parameters, but ss often want to go beyond the demands of the task
- Exchange of personal information
- Involve images
- Learner-generated
- *Reluctance with speaking tasks



Results - participation

- Group Dynamics
 - Students who joined group late tended not to participate
- Attrition effect
 - Participation drops with each stage of a task

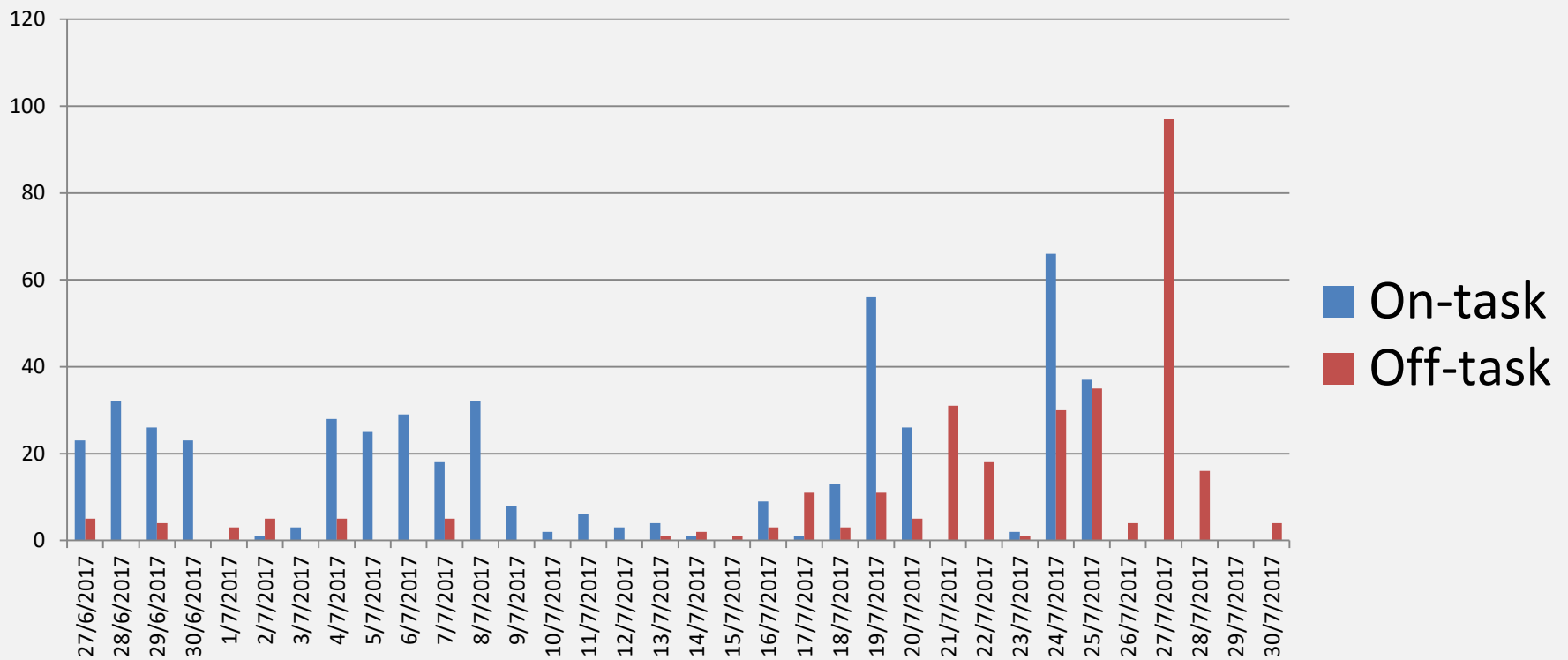


Results – type of contribution

- Increases out-of-class TL use
 - Minimal contributions in L1
- Agency and Autonomy
 - Students took over the group



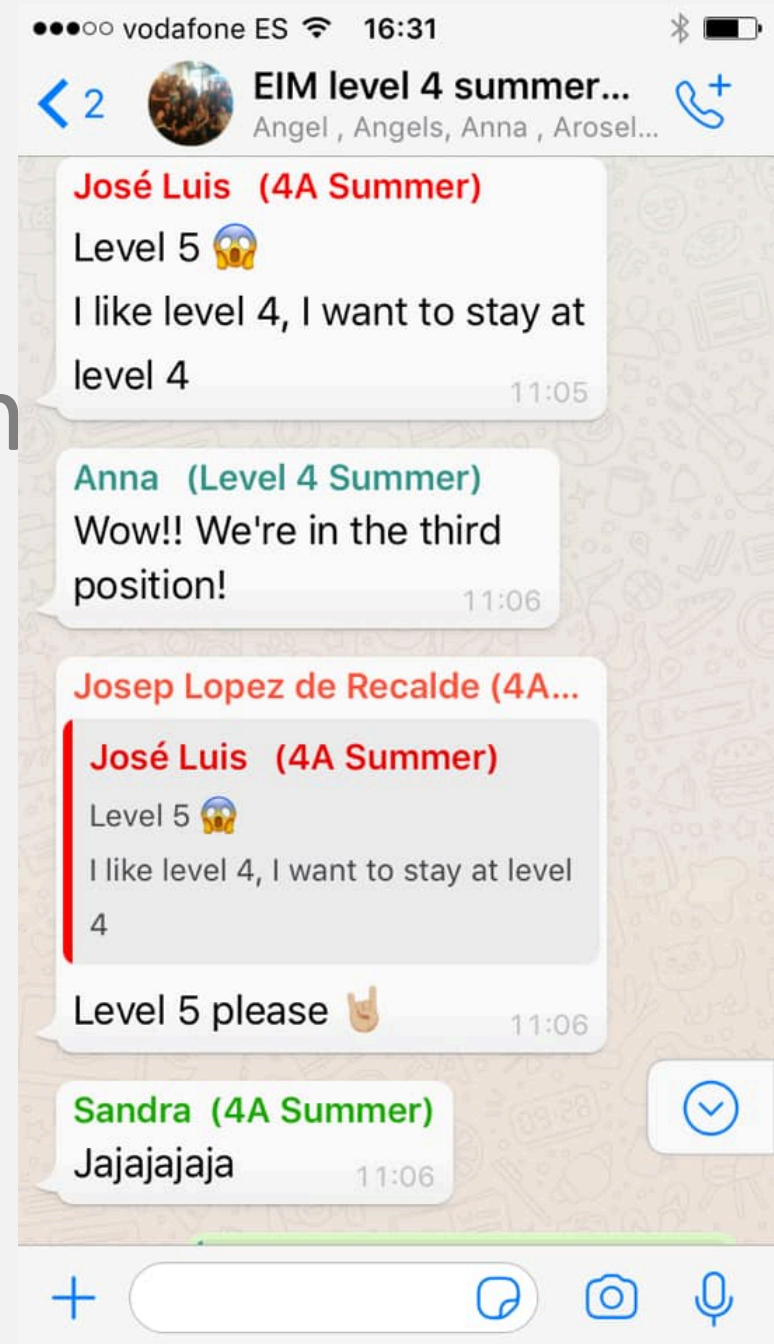
Results: type of contribution (group A)



Results – type of con

Off-task contributions:

1. Admin.
2. Social

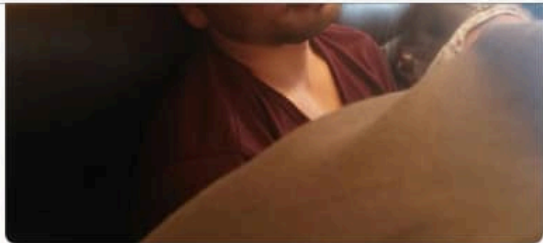




Results – identity

They became themselves in the group:

- Real-life behaviour
- Personalities
- Teasing / joking



#soñandoconelaprobado

15:12

Angel (4A Summer)

🥰🥰🥰 so cute 15:12

Carlos (4A Summer)

Ufhsud 15:12

Bdjdhdbd 15:12

Bdjdhdsu 15:12

Hdjdbd 15:12

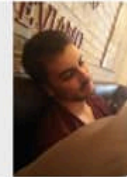
Sandra (4A Summer)

😂😂😂😂 15:12

Angel (4A Summer)

Miriam (4A Summer)

#soñandoconelaprobado



The final task 🐒 what are dreaming Carlos!

15:13

Sandra (4A Summer)

Angel (4A Summer)

The final task 🐒 what are dreaming Carlos!

😂😂😂😂

15:14

Oscar (4A Summer)

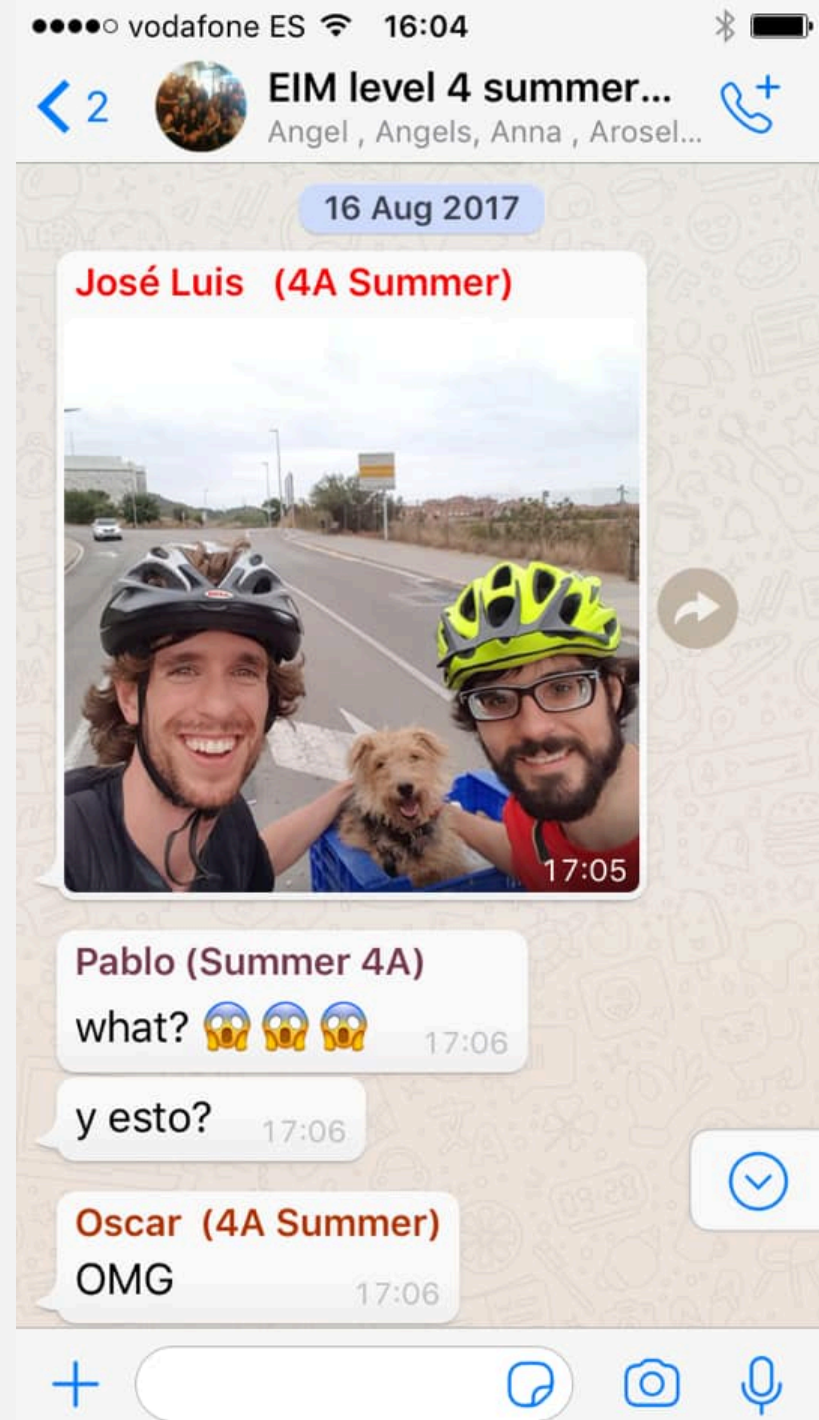
About food 15:16

Obviusly 15:16

David (4A Summer)

Results – feedback

- Positive response
- Prefer immediate feedback
- Some age differences
- Interaction continued (in English) after the course had finished.





Practical tips

Tip 1

Start the WhatsApp group as soon as possible.

Tip 2

First few days: tell ss who to ask, establish calendar for prompts.



Practical tips

Tip 3

Images encourage interaction.

Tip 4

There's no such thing as a stupid question.





Practical tips

Tip 5

Alternate drills for accuracy and open activities for fluency.

Tip 6

Pre-teach common expressions, e.g. Hahaha, Wow! etc.



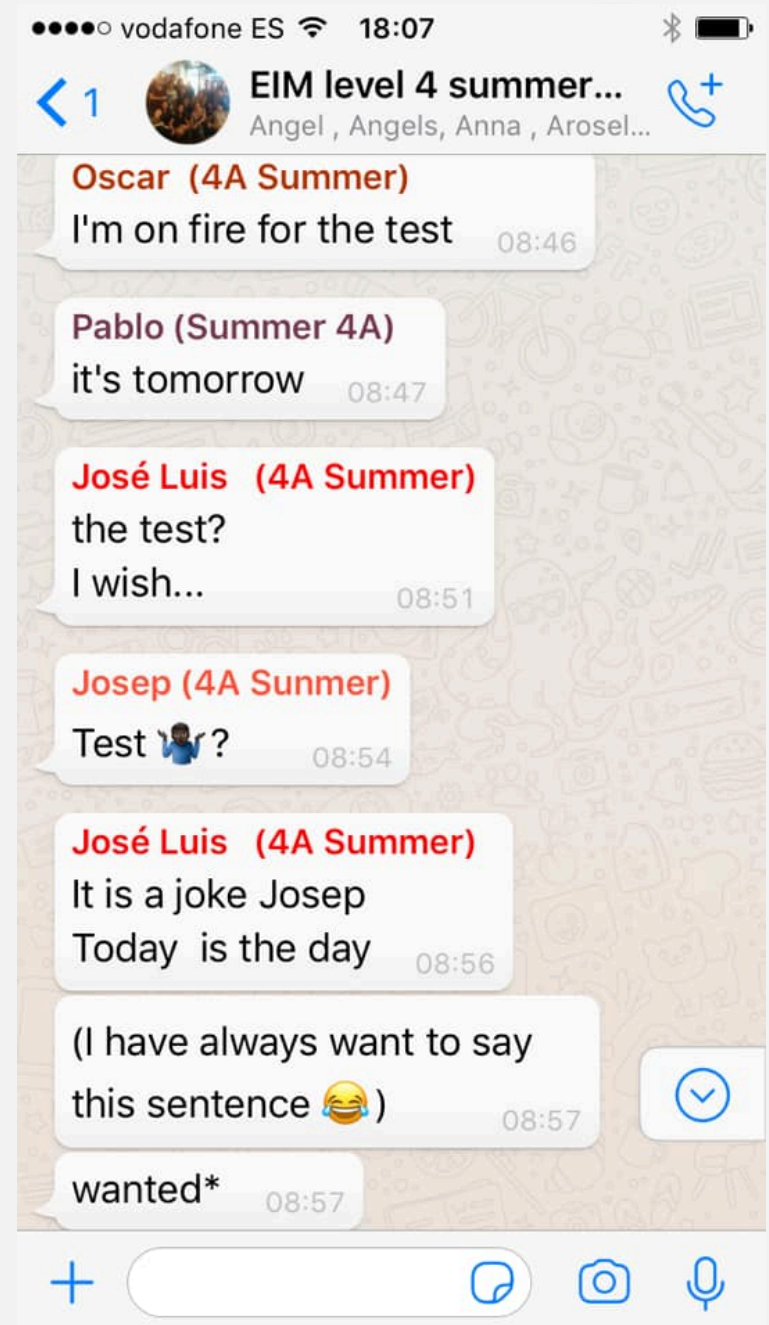


Practical tips

Tip 7

Vary correction!

- upon request?
- recurrent errors
- in the chat
- in class





Practical tips

Tip 8

Use emoticons
for feedback





Practical tips

Tip 9

Personal participation encourages learner-generated interaction.

Tip 10

Speaking tasks will need more practice!





Publications

Mackay, J., Andria, M., Tragant, E. & Pinyana, A.
(2021) WhatsApp as part of an EFL programme:
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Tragant, E., Pinyana, A. Mackay, J. & Andria, M.
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References

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THANK YOU!

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Acknowledgements:

María Andria

Matthew Evans

Daniel Fernández

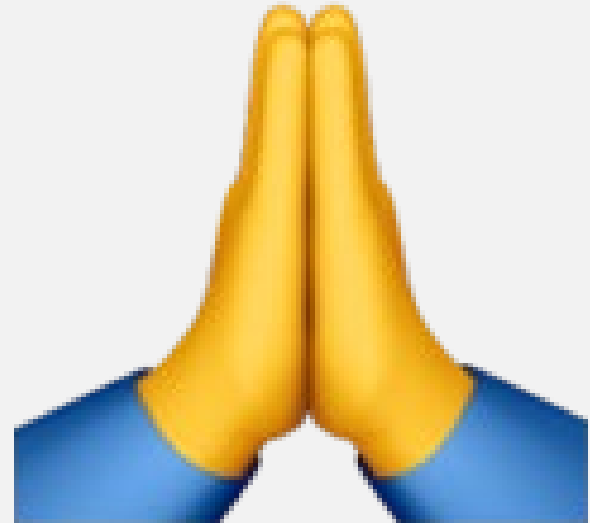
Jasmine Green

Bridget Murphy

Angels Pinyana

Elsa Tragant

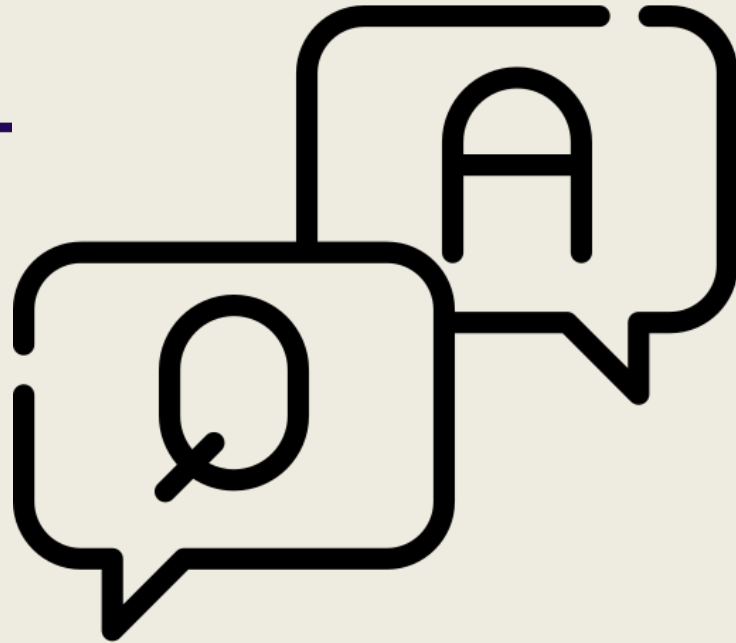
Jasmin Virgils



Research project FFI2016-80576-P

Funded by:





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