Innovative Technology and its Impact on Promoting Motivation and Listening Skills of Iraqi University Learners

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Abstract: This study investigates the possible role of the innovative technology applications in enhancing and developing both the motivation and listening skills of Iraqi EFL learners at an academic context. Based on a case study, seventy-majoring English sophomores at Mustansiriya University were randomly divided between two cohorts, experimental and control groups. The participants were subjected to a pretest and posttest based on a curriculum appropriated to them to be discussed throughout their academic year. A 25-statement designed questionnaire and an 8-statement designed test were dispersed among the participants of the study on the appropriate methods of enhancing and improving motivation and listening skills respectively. Applying Likert Scale, SPSS and LISERAL programs, the statistical data of the two earlier mentioned variables were gathered. The final results of the study showed that male and female respondents were remarkably motivated after receiving their teaching instructions through a Skype device, which is one of the prominent innovative technologies nowadays. Consequently, a significant difference was reported in the listening skill achievement of the experimental group respondents who experienced receiving their instructions via Skype tool as a means of instruction. Grounded on these results, educators are earnestly required to take the innovative technology applications in their considerations in the process of teaching and learning language and in improving the receptive and productive skills of the language.

Keywords: *listening skill, motivation, questionnaire, Skype, social media*

1. Introduction

The English language has dominated internationally. Non-speaking countries of the English language have doubled their efforts to providing the necessary potentials that might establish the

cornerstone for launching a successful language learning program. Such potentials include technological and technical facilities. Technologically, language labs, internet services, and other innovative technologies have been used. From the technical perspective, educators are exerting their efforts to design well-knitted curricula that supposedly meet the needs of the learners and create a real-like context of teaching and learning.

Among these international educational trends, the Iraqi educational system has also experienced the wind of change in terms of language learning and teaching. After the political change in 2003 that Iraq attended, great attempts have been evoked to undertake a dramatic alteration in the educational sector. As such, innovative technologies have emerged to call for a new era of education in Iraq. As a result, teachers of English should be in parallel with such educational advances particularly in language teaching and learning. The holistic spectacle of innovative technology applications has drawn the attention of many educators to think seriously on how to invest such modern technology in the educational field.

Social media applications are growing rapidly, particularly, in the educational domain. Remarkably, social media has taken a significant role in language learning and teaching through the multi-facets of its applications. Therefore, teachers are deemed to be in agreement with such an outstanding technological event. They should be armed with good technological experiences that support them to construct a fruitful context of education and then educate themselves with the myriad faces of social media uses in order to instruct their students in right way. In this vein, the importance of this study lies in the idea that some Iraqi teachers of English are in an urgent need of such innovative technologies that keep them ongoing with the technologically-advanced world, more specifically, in the educational system.

2. Review of literature

Social media applications have a vital role in our daily practices, especially in language learning and teaching. Wessner (2014) explains that social media applications are functioned as platforms for the learning process and a source of backing up students in their academic tasks. Thus, "increasing student collaboration", "Rich eLearning Media Available"and" Real-time news information and discovery" are the products of social media applications (Draskovic, N., Kustrak Korper, A., & Kilian-Yasin, K. 2017). McDonald (2008) reports that social media tools such as Twitter, Myspace and Facebook are a part parcel of students' lives in the USA.

Social media tools are flexible, in other words, they can be used synchronously or asynchronously. In Synchronous performance, a real-time connection happens between learners and teachers. In such a situation, time is bounded; though, it is not restricted geographically. Teleconferencing, video teleconferencing and online chat are examples of synchronous communications. In contrast, the asynchronous performance is not restricted by time and place. E-mail, correspondence courses and Web/server-based are modes of asynchronous situations. (Astorga-Cabezas, 2015)

Almosawi (2017) carried out a study at Misan University in Iraq in which 30 male and female respondents were divided into experimental and control groups. The aim of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of applying YouTube video in teaching grammar on Iraqi EFL

achievement. The study indicated that there was statistically important difference between the experimental and control group. What is more, Alahmar (2016) conducted a study on 57 medical students at Babel University in Iraq to seek the effect of social media applications on the aforementioned students' academic performance. He reported that a great number of students used Facebook for their study whereas others used it for a plethora of activities during their free time.

The current study functions one of the social media applications, i.e., Skype, as a means of teaching the English language as a foreign language EFL to sophomores majoring in English at Mustansiriya University in Iraq. This synchronous tool is assumed to motivate learners to produce the target language soundly. Roe (2007) holds the view that Skype can be functioned as a supportive device for designing a well-constructed project of teaching a foreign language FL. This is due to its features of providing a real-like context of practicing the FL. Receptive and productive skills such as listening and speaking skills can also be improved via Skype. Apparently, drawbacks of Skype are no more than computer equipment or internet link (Walker, Davies and Hewer, 2012). On noticing such distinguished features of Skype, its use in the learning and teaching process might motivate students impressively.

2.1. Motivation

It goes without saying that different types of academic studies and articles have been implemented to comprehend the specific concept of motivation and its supposed role in language teaching and learning. In this way, Richards and Renandya (2002, p. 4) portray the relationship between language learning and motivation by saying that" in language learning, motivation is more specific than in a content-based subject". Additionally, Palmer (2016) sees motivation as mechanisms that activate and direct behavior.

furthermore, Richards and Renandya (2002) stress the teacher's encouragement of students to interact in the process of language learning through both intrinsic and extrinsic faces motivation. In intrinsic motivation, students realize well the fruitful outputs of learning a foreign language. Their mastering a foreign language might open a new horizon in their careers. In extrinsic motivation, rewards presented by teachers might lead to a suitable context of language teaching learning. These rewards might include supplying additional reading materials or they may show students a video to establish a real-like situation of language use (Richards; Renandya, 2002). Meanwhile, Ur (2012) argues that the "extrinsic motivation is based on the perceived benefits of success in learning and penalties of failure". Also, he adds that " intrinsic motivation is associated with the activity of language learning itself: whether it is seen as interesting or boring, personally fulfilling or frustrating" (Ur, 2012, pp. 10-11).

The significance of motivation in second language learning L2 has notably urged many scholars to detect this concept and at the same time to conceptualize certain motivational issues related to the role of motivation in language learning. For instance, Dornyei (2015) holds the view that " motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long, often tedious learning process, indeed all the other factors involved SLA presuppose motivation to some extent" (Dornyei, 2005, p. 65; Dornyei, 2015, p. 72). What's more, long term goals and even students' achievements cannot be ensured without motivation (Dornyei, 2015).

2.2. Listening skill

Big attention and efforts have been exerted by researchers discussing and hypothesizing about the nature and working mechanism of the two variables of the current study namely, motivation and listening skills. As far as listening skill is concerned, Cabezas (2015, p. 40) suggests that "listening skill is often seen as a passive activity or skill because it is developed internally or, rather, it is a cognitive process that does not produce observable results". In this vein, researchers like Richards (2008), Brown (2004), and Buck (2001) consider listening skill as a cognitive, prompt and linear activity that manipulates aural input (Richards 2008, Brown 2004 & Buck 2001, cited in Cabezas, 2015).

Richards (2008) illustrates that listening skill can be understood from two different perspectives: 1-listening as comprehension is "the traditional way of thinking about the nature of listening" (Richards, 2008, p. 3). Additionally, in second language learning, the function of listening or listening comprehension, both listening and listening comprehension are used synonymously, is to make understanding of spoken discourse (Richards, 2008).

In order to comprehend the mechanism of the listening process, Richards (2008) disclose the points of differences between spoken discourse and written discourse. These differences can be totted up as follows:

-Spoken discourse is an on-line activity and there is very little opportunity to listen to it again, so it is usually a spot activity.

-The second language learner holds a view that the spoken discourse is very fast, despite the fact that there is a considerable variation in the speed rates among speakers.

-Spoken discourse is typically seen as unplanned action which is often characterized by hesitation, reduced forms, fillers, and repeats.

-It is characterized by a linear structure, whereas written discourse has a hierarchical structure.

-The unit of organization of written discourse is the sentence, whereas spoken language or discourse is often conveyed one clause at a time but it implies longer utterances in conversation.

-Spoken texts depend on context and personal as well.

-Spoken texts may be produced by the use of a variety of accents, ranging from standard to non-standard to regional and so forth and so on (Richards, 2008, pp. 3-4).

2-Listening as acquisition: Listening skill has a crucial role in simplifying the process of second language learning. In this regard, Schimtd (1990) has stressed that consciousness played a considerable role in language learning. In this way, Richards supposes that " Consciousness of features of the input can serve as a trigger which activates the first stage in the process of incorporating new linguistic features into one's language competence" (Richard, 2008, p. 13). However, Flowerdew and Miller (2014) consider academic listening as "the process of spoken language in academic contexts" (Flowered & Miller, 2014, cited in Murcia, Brinton, and Snow, 2014).

2.2.1. Listening strategies

Vandergrift (1997) offers his taxonomy of listening strategies as follows:

A-Metacognitive strategies: These strategies include:-

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-Planning: advanced organization, directed attention, selective attention, and self-management.

-Monitoring: comprehension monitoring, auditory monitory, double-check monitoring.

-Evaluation: performance evaluation, problem identification.

B- Cognitive strategies

-Inferencing: linguistic, voice, paralinguistic or kinesthetic, extra linguistic, inferencing between parts.

-Elaboration: personal, world, academic, questioning, creative, imagery, summarization, translation, transfer, repetition, resourcing, grouping, note-taking, deduction / induction, substitution.

C-Socioaffective strategies

-Questioning for clarification, cooperation, lowering anxiety, self-encouragement, taking emotional temperature (Vandergrift, 1997, pp., 392-395).

2.2.2 Taxonomy of academic listening skills

Richard's taxonomy of academic listening skills (1983) includes the following:

-ability to identify the purpose and the scope of the lecture,

-ability to identify the topic of the lecture and follow topic development,

-ability to identify relationships among units within discourse (e.g. major ideas, examples),

-ability to identify the role of discourse markers in the signaling structure of a lecture (e.g. conjunctions, adverbs, gambits, routines),

-ability to infer relationships (e.g. cause and effect, conclusion),

-ability to recognize key lexical terms related to subjects / topics,

- ability to deduce meanings of words from context,

- ability to recognize markers of cohesion,

-ability to recognize the function of intonation to signal information structure (e.g., pitch, volume, pace, key),

- ability to detect the attitude of the speaker toward the subject matter.

- ability to follow different methods of lecturing (e.g., spoken, audio, audiovisual),

- ability to follow lecture despite differences in accent and speed,

- familiarity with different registers (e.g., written vs. colloquial),

- ability to recognize irrelevant matter (e.g., jokes, digression, meanderings),

-ability to recognize the function of nonverbal cues as markers of emphasis and attitude),

- knowledge of classroom conventions,

- ability to recognize instructional and learner tasks (e.g., warnings, suggestions, recommendations, advice, instructions) (Richards, 1983, pp., 228-230).

3. The objective of the study

This study aims to offer a technologically-based supportive method of teaching the English language as a foreign language. This occurs by applying Skype device as a way of teaching and as a supportive technique to the teacher-centered class that still operates noticeably among some Iraqi educational institutions. The listening skills and motivation are the two variables that are the focus point of the study.

Basically, the study seeks to underline the extent to which social media applications can motivate learners of the target language intrinsically and extrinsically. It also proposes the possibility of engaging innovative technology in language pedagogy as a supportive technique to the traditional method of teaching, i.e., teaching-centered class.

4. Research Questions

The current study tries to answer the following questions:

1- Is the designed motivation questionnaire valid and reliable?

2- Is there any statistically significant difference between the listening pretest and posttest mean scores of male and female in the experimental group who subjected to social media applications?

3- Is there any statistically significant difference between the listening posttest mean scores of control and experimental groups who subjected to social media applications?

5. Methodology

5.1. Participants

Two sophomore classes majoring in English at Mustansyria University in Iraq were the participants of the current study. Seventy students participated in the study. Thirty-six of the students were female and thirty-four male. All the participants were speaking Arabic as their first language. The decision of choosing sophomores majoring in English to conduct the study was based on the following considerations:

1- Sophomores enjoyed with good experience in dealing with internet-based instructions.
2- Communicative speaking and listening skills were the contents of the subject matter allocated for sophomores and included in their curriculum which was called (Person to Person by Richards, Bycina, and Wisniewska).
3- The participants might be teachers of English in the future, thus, they might exploit this study in applying social media devices in their future classroom activities.
4- Because of their knowledge in English basics, the process of implementing the study will not be difficult.

5.2. Design

Procedures of distributing the respondents into two groups, an experimental group and a control group, happened randomly. Instruction through Skype was applied to the experimental group to investigate its effects on two variables, i.e., listening skill and motivation. Skype was chosen to carry out the study due to its synchronous characteristics in terms of audio and visual features. Moreover, it is installed easily.

5.3. Material

"Person to Person" communicative speaking and listening skills, student book2 was the subject matter of the study included in the curriculum of sophomores majoring in English. Jack C. Richards, David Bycina, and Ingrid Wisniewska are the authors of the aforementioned coursebook. *It comprises 12 units meanwhile the last units (i.e., 10-12) are review units. The* coursebook is based on activities such as *Conversations, Give it a try, listen to this, let's talk, Consider this, Pronunciation focus, and Person to Person.*

5.4. Instrument
5.4.1. Skype

Kern (2013) proposes that Skype is a synchronous device that can offer audio and video calls free of charge. It is a freely downloadable device which enables participants to make audio and video conference among them, nevertheless, only two participants can make video calls through it. Students or the instructor can show Word documents, or slide presentations or exchange websites among them through screen sharing mode which is one of the salient features of the new version of Skype. Moreover, text chat can occur with voice and video at the same time and is recorded automatically.

Moreover, Kern (2013) explains that in the language learning and teaching the application of Skype is not bound to learning formal language but also informal language. As such, different language courses, chat rooms or conversation clubs have their space among the variety of Skype activities. Because they have inclination towards using Skype in the language learning and teaching, many language teachers prefer to deliver their courses online. Therefore, so many educational institutions invite guest speakers via Skype to their classrooms for delivering lectures or participating in a room conference.

The good reputation of Skype tool among other social media applications is attributed to its ease of use, accessibility to teachers and native speakers around the different parts of the world, free service and applicability for many computer programs such as Windows, Mac, Linux, etc., and good audio and video quality. (Kern, 2013)

Grounded on what have been reported earlier about the flexible traits of Skype, the respondents of the experimental group were told to install Skype to their computers according to the instructions given by the teacher of the subject matter. To this end, Skype was functioned as a tool of instructing the respondents of the experimental group through which a variety of classroom activities can be exercised .

5.4.2. Questionnaire

A designed motivation questionnaire was distributed among respondents of the control and experimental groups. The questionnaires were distributed between the two groups in two phases, i.e., pre and post the experiment on both groups. The Likert Scale was used to measure the attitudes of the respondents toward appropriate ways of improving and developing the listening skills of the learners and their motivation as well. The Psychologist Rensis Likert developed this scale in 1932 and named after him. The scale is built on a 5-point scales ranging from *strongly agree*, scored (**5**), *agree* (**scored 4**), *undecided* (**scored 3),** *disagree* **(scored 2),** and *strongly disagree* **(scored 1).** The individual's total score is determined by the sum of the scores of all the items. Hence, the highest likelihood score is assessed by multiplying the numeric value (5) by the number of items (**5xN**), whereas the lowest possible score is **(1xN)** (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2014). The validity and reliability of the questionnaire have been calculated.

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5.5. Procedure

Seventy university students joined to the academic semester in 2019. The students were sophomores majoring in English. They were randomly divided into experimental and control groups. Each group comprised 35 participants, 18 females and 17 males. Both groups were instructed by the same instructor so as to avoid demotivation. The two groups subjected to a pretest and posttest based on the syllabus required to be taught during the academic year. Ten units were taught to both experimental and control groups (from unit 1 to the end of unit 10). Skype device was assigned for teaching the experimental group, whereas the teacher-centered class method was applied to the control group. The entire course took three months to be fulfilled.

Respondents of the experimental group or Skype-based instructions group were informed that the Skype-based method of teaching would be used in this way as a part of a research project. No extra information about the project was unveiled to the participants to keep the research steps secret and not let the participants feel that they were treated differently in a way that would leave an undesirable effect on the final findings of the study. In order to make students participate actively, the Skype-based instruction group was informed that they would get two scores added to their final scores.

Two sessions were administered for each group per week. The control group instructions were held at Mustansiriya University. For the control group, each session took 45 minutes. Meanwhile, Skype tool was used to teach the experimental group during their presence at their homes. The participants were connected with their instructor via Skype. In response to the willingness of the participants, the sessions were administered at night. Sudden power and internet services outages and the female participants' refusal of appearing online due to certain social considerations, each session took at least two hours. Eighteen sessions were administered to accomplish the entire study.

In order to review the viewpoints of both experimental and control groups respondents on the suitable methods of developing and improving the listening skills and motivation , a designed questionnaire (eight statements for listening skill) and (eighteen statements for inner motivation and seven statements for exterior motivation) was distributed among the participants of both groups in pre and post phases of the study. The pretest and posttest were applied on the participants of both groups based on *Person to Person Communicative Speaking and Listening Skills textbook by Richards, Bycina and Wisniewska (2005).*

5.6. Data Analysis

SPSS and LISERAL software were employed to the research data. The standard deviation, mean, confirmatory, coefficients factor analysis, t-value, graphs, reliability and validity of the listening and motivation questionnaires were all measured.

6. Results

6.1 The validity of the motivation questionnaire

This questionnaire includes 25 statements that are based on the five-choice Likert scale (**Strongly Disagree, Disagree; Not sure; Agree; Strongly Agree**)**.** Besides, this questionnaire consists of two internal and external components. The inner component starts with the statement 1 **to 18,** and the external component starts with the statement **19** to statement **25.** The confirmatory factor analysis

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graphs of the motivation questionnaire, the chart of path coefficients and the t-value, Figures **1 and 2**, are shown below.
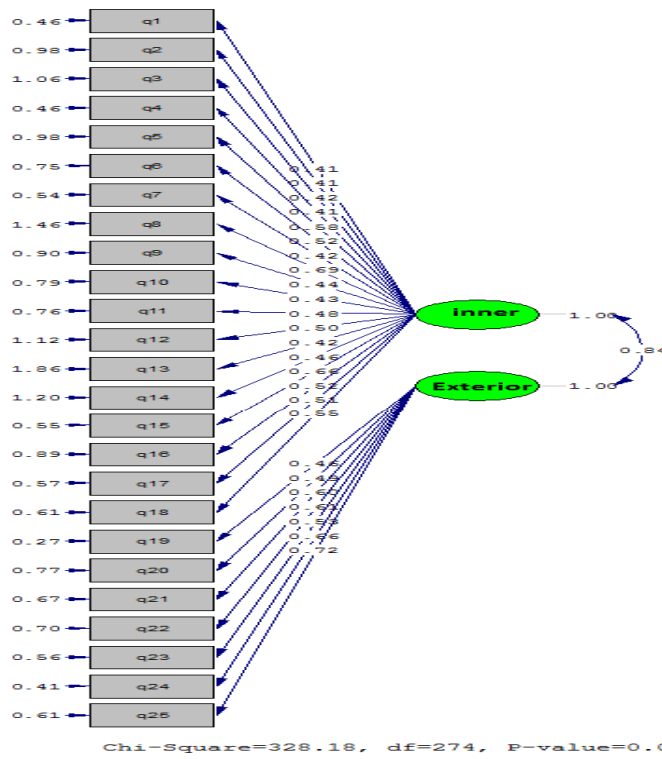

Figure 1 Path Coefficients indicate inner and exterior motivation of learners toward L2 learning.
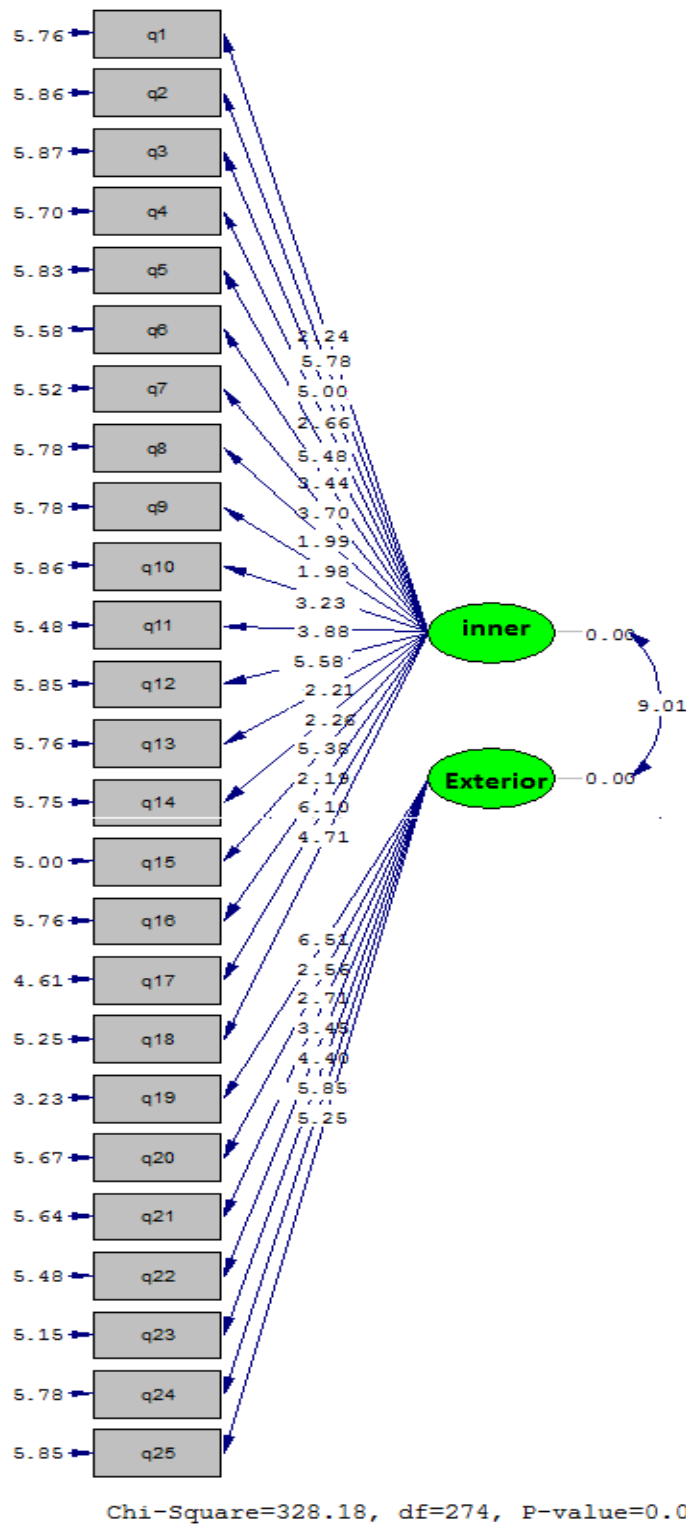
Figure **2.** T-value, Chi-square, df, P-value and RMSEA of the motivation questionnaire

Based on to the above diagrams, the results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the motivation questionnaire can be shown in Table 1. As can be seen, the value of t-value in all questions is higher

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than 1.96. Therefore, it can be concluded that the questionnaire items provide a proper structure for measuring the dimensions studied in the research model.

Table 1:

Confirmatory factor analysis of the motivation questionnaire

Motivation	Questions	Path Coefficients	t-value
Inner	q1	0.41	2.24
	q2	0.41	5.78
	q3	0.42	5.00
	q4	0.41	2.66
	q5	0.58	5.48
	q6	0.52	3.44
	q7	0.42	3.70
	q8	0.69	1.99
	q9	0.44	1.98
	q10	0.43	3.23
	q11	0.48	3.88
	q12	0.50	5.58
	q13	0.42	2.21
	q14	0.46	2.26
	q15	0.66	5.36
	q16	0.52	2.19
	q17	0.51	6.10
	q18	0.55	4.71
Exterior	q19	0.46	6.51
	q20	0.49	2.56
	q21	0.60	2.71
	q22	0.61	3.45
	q23	0.53	4.40
	q24	0.66	5.85
	q25	0.72	5.25

Further, in Table 2, values for fit indices are shown. The RMSEA value is 0.054 and, given that it is more than 0.08; it indicates that the model is acceptable. Also, the relative chi-square value, i.e., the division of chi-square on freedom degree 274.18 / 274 equals to 1.19 and is between 1 and 3. The values of NFI, GFI, IFI, CFI and AGFI indices are also higher than 0.9 as seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2:

Goodness-of-fit indices

χ2/DF	RMSEA	NFI	GFI	IFI	CFI	AGFI
1.22	0.054	0.92	0.93	0.91	0.91	0.93

Therefore, it can be concluded that the values of indices correspond to their interpretive criteria and confirmatory factor analysis confirms the structure of the motivation questionnaire.

6.2. Reliability of the questionnaires

Reliability is a technical feature of the measurement tool. The concept is concerned with the extent to which the same measurement tool yields the same results. The range of reliability is from zero to one. The closer the reliability is to 1, the more reliable the questionnaire is.

In this research, Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the test. This method is used to estimate the internal consistency of a measuring instrument that measures various features. If the alpha value is higher than 0.70, it indicates desirable reliability and, if it is between 0.5 and 0.70, it has average reliability.

In this study, to determine the reliability of the questionnaires and their dimensions, Cronbach's alpha was calculated using SPSS software. The results are shown in Table 3 below. As shown in the table below, the Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaires and their dimensions is more than 0.70, so the reliability of the questionnaire can be confirmed.

Table 3:

Reliability Statistics

Components	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Motivation		
Interior	0.767	18
Exterior	0.719	7
Listening skill	0.785	8

6.3. Achievements of males and females in the listening skill

Based on the curriculum assigned to the participants of this study, a pretest and posttest in the listening skill was administered to the participants (male/female) of the experimental group. The aim was to identify whether the use of social media applications in the teaching process affects the listening achievements of both males and females. The test findings are presented in the following tables:

Table 4:

Listening Statistics (pretest and posttest)

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Listening Pretest score	Male	34	21.00	2.71
	Female	36	21.47	3.06

Listening Posttest score	Male	34	32.32	6.52
	Female	36	34.14	7.66

According to Table 4, in the listening pretest phase, the male participants' mean score was 21.00 with std. 2.71. In contrast, their counterparts of females obtained 21.47 mean score with std. 3.06. In the posttest phase, the mean score of the males was 32.32 and obtained 6.52 std. At the same time, the female participants achieved 34.14 mean score with standard deviation 7.66.
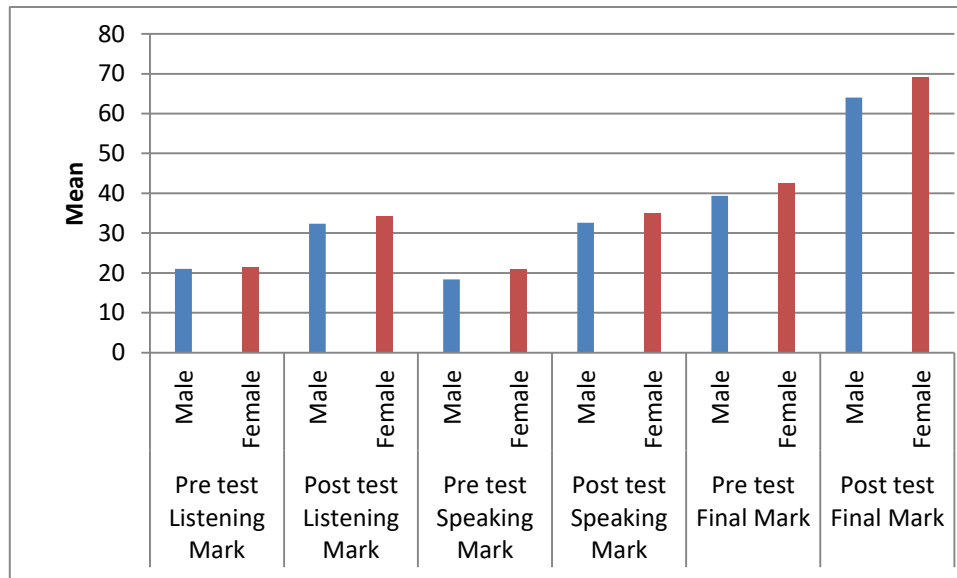

Figure 3. The listening pretest and posttest mean scores of male and female
Participants

Figure 3 illustrates the findings of males and females of the experimental group in the listening pre and posttests. As seen, in both phases of the experiment, the females achievement in the listening skill overcomes the male participants.

Table 5:

Independent sample t-test for comparing listening pretest and posttest mean scores of male and female in the experimental group

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	**Sig.**	**t**	**Df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**	**Mean Difference**	**Std. Error Difference**	**95% Confidence Interval of the Difference**	
								Lower	**Upper**

listening Pretest Mark	**Equal variances assumed**	.150	.700	-0.68	68	.497	-0.47	0.69	-1.85	0.91
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.69	67.733	.496	-0.47	0.69	-1.85	0.90
listening Posttest Mark	**Equal variances assumed**	.985	.324	-1.07	68	.291	-1.82	1.70	-5.22	1.59
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.07	67.292	.288	-1.82	1.70	-5.20	1.57

*significant at the 0.05 level

According to Table 5, there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores of male and female achievements in the listening skill. As seen in Table 4, it is clear that the average mean score of girls is higher than that of boys. This result indicates that female participants expose a great tendency towards employing innovative technology in language teaching and learning.

In the posttest phase, the mean scores of the control group participants in the listening skill were 28.09 with an std. 5.25. In contrast, the experimental group obtained mean scores 38.43 with an std. 4.54 as shown in Table 6. This increase in the mean score of the experimental group might be attributed to the application of social media as a pedagogical method of teaching.

Table *6:*
Listening Statistics (Posttest)

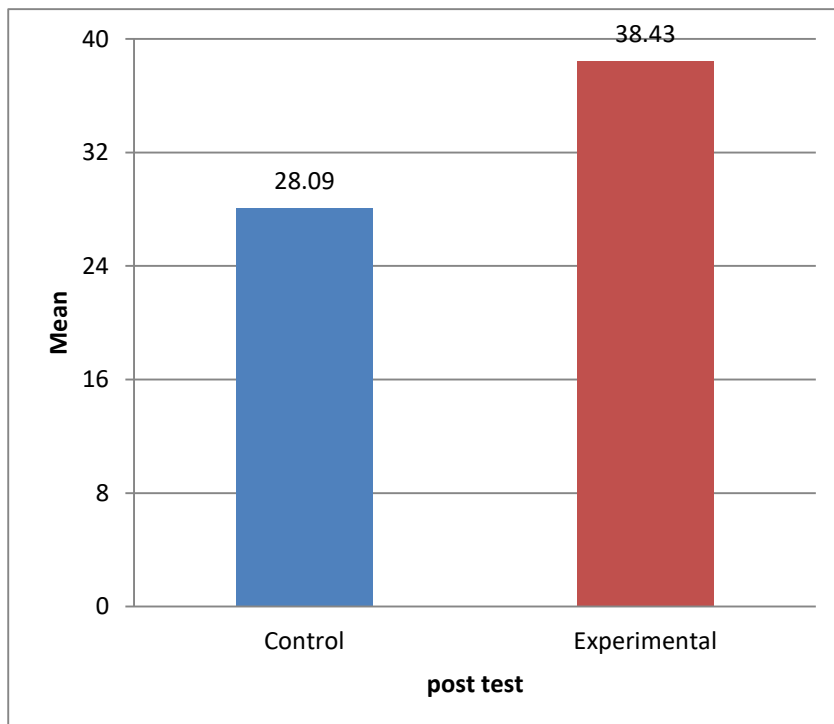| Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control	35	28.09	5.25
Experimental	35	38.43	4.54

Figure 4 Bargraph of the mean scores achieved in the listening skill posttest by control and experimental groups.

Figure 4 illustrates that the control group participants obtained 28.09 mean scores in the listening posttest. At the same time, the participants of the testing group achieved 38.43 mean scores in listening posttest.

Table 7:
Independent samples t-test for comparing listening posttest mean scores of the control and experimental groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	**Sig.**	**T**	**Df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**	**Mean Difference**	**Std. Error Difference**	**Lower**	**Upper**
Equal varianc	1.11	0.30	-8.	68.0	0.000	-10.34	1.17	-	-8.00

es assumes			8.81	0	*			12.68	
Equal variances not assumes			-8.81	66.59	0.000	-10.34	1.17	-12.69	-8.00

*significant at the 0.05 level

Considering that in this test, first, the equality of variances is examined through Levene's test; the significant level relating to the equality of variances is 0.30, and higher than 0.05. Therefore, it can be said that the variances are equal and the results of equality of variances, the first line of the table, can be used for the analysis.

As shown in Table 7, the significant level of the test for the posttest is 0.000 that is less than 0.05 (sig= 0.000<0.05). This result shows that there is a significant difference between the listening posttest mean scores of the control and experimental groups. As seen in Table 6, the listening posttest mean score of the experimental group is higher than that of the control group.

Since the experimental group is the core of this study because it is basically received its instructions via Skype tool to teach listening skill instead of the teacher-centered class according to the practical aspect of the current experiment, making comparison between the two means obtained from the posttest of the control and experimental groups underlined a significant difference between these two means where the control group mean score was 28.09. At the same time, the mean of the experimental group posttest was 38.43. Additionally, there is a remarkable difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores of the testing group participants (male/female). In the pretest phase, the mean score of the males was 21.00, whereas females got 21.47 mean score. In the posttest phase, the male participants obtained 32.32 mean score, while their counterpart of females got 34.14, as seen in Table 4.

7. Discussion

The first research question seeks the validity and reliability of the designed questionnaire of the current study. The overall findings of this question approved the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. As seen in Table 1 and 2, the designed motivation questionnaire enjoys a desirable average of values of indices that ascertain its validity. As can be noted in Table 3, the inner, exterior, and listening skill components of the questionnaire have reliability equals to 0.767, 0.719, and 0.785 respectively. These values of reliability are higher than 0.70 of alpha value. Consequently, these indices support the reliability of the designed motivation questionnaire of the research.

The overall results of the second question of the current study confirm the existence of a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the male and female participants of the experimental group. In the listening pretest and posttest achievement, the females obtained mean scores higher than their counterparts of males. In the listening pretest phase the females obtained 21.47 mean score and 3.06 std., while the males achieved 21.00 mean score and 2.71 std. In the listening posttest phase, the mean scores of the females were higher than males. It was 34.14 mean score for females and 32.32 for males. These results reflect a positive response of the female participants to the applications of social media in language learning.

Namaziandost and Nasri (2019) conducted a study on 40 students to explore the effect of applying the audio-visual aids on teaching listening among Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners. The overall findings of the study revealed that the participants of the experimental group instructed through genuine video achieved high scores than those of the CD-based instruction group. In addition, the findings showed that the audio-visual model of teaching has an effective role in the language learning. Such findings are parallel to the outcomes of this study in terms of the effect of social media in enhancing the listening skill through the application of Skype device.

In a study aimed to detect the role of YouTube videos in improving the listening ability, Ayu (2016) discovered that You Tube videos enables instructors to create a real-like environment through which learners can identify vocabulary, contraction, speed, and tempo of speech. Further, You Tube provides audio-visual mode of communication, which in turn helps learners to figure out what they heard, and then develops their listening skill. Skype-based instruction also provides audio-visual means of connection between the learners and their instructor. The difference is that Skype maintains an instant connection with learners. Therefore, Skype offers a real-like situation of language learning where a learner can overcome language anxiety and then produces a sound language.

The third research question of the current study sought to investigate if there were statistically significant differences in the listening posttest mean scores between the control and experimental groups. The final results of the study answered this question when they showed a significant difference in the listening posttest mean scores between the control and experimental groups. As shown in Table 6, the experimental group achieved 38.43 in mean with std. 4.54. In contrast, the control group obtained 28.09 in mean with std. 5.25. This significant difference in the mean scores revealed the effective role of the social media in the language learning.

If we consider the previous studies in the literature, the findings of the third question come in line with a study conducted by Almosawi (2017) at Misan University in Iraq. In this study, the researcher used YouTube device as a means of teaching English Grammar. The findings of the study showed a significant difference in the mean scores between the experimental and control group due to the use of the aforementioned device.

Additionally, Alahmar's (2016) study on the effect of social media applications on the academic performance of the medical students indicated a great number of students use Facebook for study purposes; meanwhile, others use it for a variety of activities. Such results underpin the idea of the role of social media applications in promoting the listening skill of EFL learners.

8. Conclusion

Based on the overall results of the study, Iraqi teachers of the English language should take into their accounts the role of innovative technology particularly, social media, in creating a native-like environment of language learning. Such educational context may motivate students to do better in their process of learning. Hence, the Iraqi educational institutions are required to provide technological facilities in a way these facilities are accessible by students anywhere and anytime.

More importantly, to gain benefits from the myriad faces of social media, students should not use this innovative technology haphazardly. Therefore, educators should set guidelines for students to define the purpose of using social media. Additionally, they should bring these technological applications into the classroom environment.

Some impediments, such as lack of internet services or inefficiency in managing technology-based teaching, may hinder educators in doing their pedagogical task but extra efforts are needed to accomplish their task of teaching.

The researcher suggests that more attention should be devoted to the use of technology in the language teaching and learning. Further, the researcher noticed that students, who have part- time work, were willing to take their academic instructions via Skype. This is because Skype enjoys audio and visual features in such a way that students of part-time work will keep ongoing with their colleagues who engaged in full time instructions.

Moreover, based on the results obtained in Table 4 and 6, the difference between the means of the two groups (control and experimental) in the listening pre and posttests might lead us to infer that the use of social media is effective on student's learning motivation and leads to motivation of the students in the process of learning second or foreign language.

Finally, further research on the usage of social media applications in the educational domain is needed to provide a supportive method of teaching.

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