

The Role of Skype in Developing Listening and Speaking Skills of EFL Learners

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Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article History</p> <p>Received: October 23,2020</p> <p>Accepted: January 18, 2021</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords Listening Skill, Social Media, Skype, Speaking Skill.</p> <p>DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.4448068</p>	<p><i>This study examines the potential role of advanced technology applications in the academic sense of improving and enhancing both the listening and speaking skills of EFL learners. Seventy-majoring English sophomores at Al-Mustansiriya University in Iraq were divided randomly into two cohorts, experimental and control classes. A pretest and post-test were applied to the participants of the two groups which were based on a curriculum designed for them to be addressed during their academic year. An eight-statement designed questionnaire on listening skill and six-statement designed questionnaire on speaking skill were distributed among the respondents of the two groups to investigate the appropriate methods of enhancing and improving the listening and speaking skills of EFL learners. The statistical data of the two previously described variables were obtained using the Likert Scale, SPSS and LISERAL programs. The final results of the study showed that after receiving their teaching instructions via Skype device, the experimental respondents were remarkably motivated in the listening and speaking skills. As a result, a significant difference was recorded in the listening and speaking performance of the experimental group respondents at the end of the experiment. Based on these findings, educators are strongly required to take into their account the use of technology applications in the teaching and learning language process and in enhancing the responsive and efficient abilities of the language.</i></p>

1. Introduction

It is worth noting that in non-English speaking countries, the global widespread of the English language has triggered the curiosity of the citizens of these countries to make extra efforts in an attempt to master this language. To gain mastery and proficiency in this language, educational institutions, wither governmental or private, have also been set up to teach the English language at all levels. In this vein, the matter of searching for suitable methods of teaching and learning becomes a supreme goal of teachers and researchers as well.

New technological advances have produced suitable learning environments. These advances have come with different aspects of technology which, in turn, become essential motives and rewards in our daily life. In consequence, educational specialists do not spare any time and effort in their educational career to profit from such modern facilities for the sake of making progressing in the pedagogical domain. Therefore, there is the possibility of using social media platforms in the university environment for teaching and learning (Heinze & Reinhardt, 2011, as cited in Wankel, 2012). Moreover, Sarachan and Reinson (2012) expect that "social media successfully and sustainably integrated will shape the pedagogical terrain of the future" (Sarachan & Reinson, 2011, as cited in Wankel, 2012).

Due to their multi-uses, social media applications have played a tremendous role in influencing the content and level of the language to be studied. It opens the horizon of learners to seek appropriate ways of structurally and semantically mastering the target language. Educators should then use social media with their distinct faces to help students achieve the optimal degree of language proficiency.

The teacher-centered class approach has become one of the classic teaching strategies that focus on the role of the teacher in the class rather than the involvement of students in influencing the learning strategy they prefer. Hence, involving innovative technology as a pedagogical method in the field of education may meet the needs of students in terms of developing their cognitive abilities.

Listening and speaking abilities, among other language learning abilities, become the intended goals of education specialists. Therefore, educational specialists started to incorporate technology-based facilities in the classroom setting to enable language learners to cope with real-life situations and then improving the receptive and productive skills of learners.

Social media apps such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, wikis, Skype, and others, have arisen to meet the needs of both teachers and learners as well. Hence, Brown and Lee (2015, p. 242) agree that "networking in online environments has become an increasingly popular form of social interaction." As a result, the use of social

media facilities may provide a real language environment to the learners since these facilities create social interaction between learners and teachers or between learners and the native speakers of the target language. Therefore, the purpose of this study investigates the role of Skype in improving language learning skills, more specific, listening and speaking skills.

2. Literature review

Huge concepts and examples have been launched since the advent of social media applications during the 1990s (Barnhardt, 2009) to specifically explain and determine this emerging technology. For instance, Tadros defines social media as "any media that help integrate technology into lives of people for communication" (Tadros, 2011, as cited in Wankel, 2012). Besides, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) see social media as a community of internet-based applications that build on Web 2.0's ideological and technological foundations and enable user-generated content to be produced and shared.

Social media applications, particularly in the field of language learning and teaching, have played a vital role in our daily lives. As Wessner (2014) demonstrates, social media applications act as learning process channels and as a source for assisting students in their academic tasks. McDonald (2008) notes that social media sites like Twitter, Myspace and Facebook are part of the lives of students in the United States.

To investigate the utility of using social media software for educational purposes, several studies have been carried out. The harmonious aspect of these studies about the utility of the use of social media in the field of education seems to be difficult to achieve. Some researchers suggest that both positive and negative aspects of social media are portrayed in terms of its use in education, while others can go beyond that and draw a dark image of its utility in education. Ventayen and Ventayen (2017) try to divide their findings into two perspectives in a study entitled 'Role of social media in education,' one reflecting the understanding of teachers of the usefulness of social media usage in an academic context and the other insight into the use of social media in a non-academic setting. Much of the research population claimed that social media plays an important role in academic activities (Ventayen and Ventayen, 2017). On the other hand, Gupta (2013) says that the use of Facebook devices for academic purposes does not have any substantial impact on academic success. Piotrowski (2015), on the other hand, analyzes the results of 29 dissertations obtained from the ProQuest's Dissertation and Theses database, in which these dissertations emphasized the role of social media applications in the educational field. The findings indicated that these researches have very positive views on the use of social media for educational purposes.

In a study conducted by Al Tal and Al-Salaimh (2020) on the efficacy of social networking sites on the commitments and successes of students, researchers developed a four-axis questionnaire in which 150 students participated. The questionnaire focused on the degree of students, the most widespread platforms, the amount of hours students spent on social networks, the time students spent learning, and the effect of these social sites on students' academic achievements. The final results of the study showed that among other social media apps, Facebook came first. It was also noticed that the key purpose of the use of social media by students was entertainment. Moreover, students spent 44 hours studying via social media devices alone.

The receptive skills, such as listening skill and productive skills, like speaking have their great prominence in FL/SL acquisition. They are of importance that the success of each one of these skills depends on the other skill. They are intermingled skills. Even though listening comprehension has not taken such room in the considerations of several researchers, many people regard speaking skills as the central index of language skills. This might be attributed to human beings' innate propensity to favour speaking skills over listening skills, as they view the former as an objective proof of language skills, while the latter is seen as passive. As such, Astorga (2015) argues 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" (p. 40).

Scholars agree that language skills are based on the integration of the four language development skills i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing. The language learner is prepared to generate sound language as these four abilities intermingle appropriately. The value of combining receptive capacity, i.e. listening ability, and that of constructive ability, i.e. speaking ability, is asserted by Mart (2020). This is due to the idea that attaining proficiency in oral production is ultimately related to a learner's ability to listen. Mart (2020) considers listening skills in this regard as a position that leads a learner to have more understanding of language structures, lexical units, phonological awareness, and metacognitive development. Adopting a quantitative approach, Mart (2020) subjects 45 first-year students of English as a foreign language EFL in a study to explore the degree to which merged listening and speaking practices enhance the development of oral skills and how such integration of these two skills benefits learners in achieving outstanding progress in language production. Due to the combination of both listening and speaking abilities, the overall results of the study suggest that there is a remarkable growth in oral production. The development and enhancement of listening skills pave the way for oral output to achieve considerable growth.

Brown and Lee (2015) assure the convergence of the four skills, i.e. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing in language learning and training. They opined that these four skills were inseparable. They also found that

listening implies speaking, as it is done in academic settings, and it can include writing in the form of note-taking.

Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) related the achievement of prominent listening skills to processes that educators should follow when giving their lessons. They wanted teachers to inspire their learners with constructive teaching strategies, such as having a real-like listening atmosphere, encouraging students to listen carefully while doing their listening activities, and teachers should not respond either condescendingly or sarcastically to students. Besides, educators can shift their classrooms from a teacher-centered classroom to a student-based classroom. Theoretical guidelines for building sound methods of teaching listening skills should also be applied.

On the other hand, speaking needs an audience, while writing and reading are related to one another. Lazaraton (2002) stresses in her study of second language speaking that speaking skills seem to be a central ability in second language learning, and many academics share this opinion. Also, Lazaraton (2002) describes speech as "the main skill by which a language is acquired, and it is almost certainly so at the beginning level" (Lazaraton, 2002, cited in Murcia, Binton and Snow, 2004). Boonkit (2010, p. 1306) considers the ability to speak as "one of the four macro skills to be developed as a means of effective communication in both first and second language learning contexts." The ability to speak is seen as a way by which the words of the mouth transmit messages (Bashir, Azeem & Dogar, 2011).

Also, in classroom activities, this ability in language production does not have enough space. EFL learners lack a sufficient opportunity to speak the English language inside or outside their classroom setting. Speaking requires practice and listening attentively on the part of the learner to achieve a satisfying level of speech, like any other ability in language development. Consequently, educators are expected to strengthen their teaching method with activities that improve and enhance the speaking capacity of their learners.

In other ways, Brown (2007) suggests several intrinsic principles that pave the way for speaking abilities to be taught, including concentrating on fluency and precision; providing intrinsically motivational techniques; encouraging the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts; providing adequate input and correction; capitalizing on the natural relation between speaking and listening; allowing students to initiate oral communication and promote the creation of speech strategies (Brown, 2007, pp., 331-335).

3. The objective of the study

The goal of this study is to provide a supportive technology-based method of teaching English as a foreign language. Listening and speaking skills are the two factors that are the subject of the analysis.

The study aims to underline the degree to which social media applications can internally and extrinsically inspire learners of the target language. It also suggests the possibility of engaging the conventional teaching process, i.e. the teaching-centered class, with emerging innovations in language pedagogy as a supporting technique.

4. Research questions

- 1- Is there any statistically significant effect on the listening achievement of the testing group participants due to the application of social media?
- 2- Is there any statistically significant effect on the speaking achievement of the testing group participants due to the application of social media?

5. Methodology

5.1. Participants

The participants of the present study were two sophomore classes majoring in English at Mustansyria University in Iraq. The research included seventy students. Of the students, thirty-six were female and thirty-four male. Arabic was spoken by all the participants as their first language. The decision to select sophomores majoring in English to conduct the research was based on the following factors:

- 1- Sophomores have had strong experience dealing with internet-based directions.
- 2- The material of the subject matter allocated to sophomores and included in their curriculum was called communicative speaking and listening skills (Person to Person by Richards, Bycina, and Wisniewska).
- 3- In the future, the participants could be English teachers, so they could use this study to incorporate social media devices in their future classroom activities.
- 4- Due to their knowledge of English basics, it will not be difficult to enforce the study process.

5.2. Design

Procedures were randomly applied to distribute the respondents into two cohorts, an experimental group and a control group. Skype instructions were applied to the experimental community to examine its effects on two factors, i.e. listening and speaking skills. Due to its synchronous characteristics in terms of audio and visual features, Skype was chosen to conduct the analysis. In addition, it can be installed easily, therefore, respondents of the experimental group were asked to install Skype.

5.3. Material

The topic of the study included in the curriculum of sophomores majoring in English was "Person to Person" communicative speaking and listening skills, student book 2. The writers of the aforementioned coursebook are Jack C. Richards, David Bycina, and Ingrid Wisniewska. Although the last units (i.e. 10-12) are review units, the coursebook includes 12 units. It focuses on receptive and productive activities.

5.4. Instrument

5.4.1. Skype

Skype is one of the most significant groundbreaking tools for language teaching and learning that can be used. There is a growing literature focusing on the benefits and drawbacks of using Skype in the process of teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

As an alternative to conventional phone calls, Eaton (2012) states that Skype was originally introduced as a voice-over-Internet-protocol (VOIP) service. As such, Skype's usability brings many educators into their classrooms to integrate technology. What is more, compared to other synchronous learning technologies, Eaton (2010) discusses certain undesirable features of Skype. Skype offers integration with a very limited number of users, i.e. no more than six users at one time, according to the same author. Besides, Skype does not find features such as whiteboards, polling, and other templates that could be used in more advanced technologies. However, due to its usability, easy-installed and free use, Skype is a favoured teaching method for educators who are less comfortable with implementing advanced technology in the context of the classroom. As a result, Skype has been confirmed to be an exemplary method to assist and improve teachers in improving technical skills.

Kern (2013) stresses that the use of Skype devices in language learning and teaching is not limited to formal language learning but also informal language learning. Various language classes, chat rooms or talk clubs have subsequently found their place in the diverse array of Skype events. Since they are interested in using the Skype tool as a modern pedagogical approach in the process of language learning and teaching, a significant number of language teachers are in favour of doing their courses online.

Milojkovic (2019) believes that devices for synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC), such as Skype, are considered one of the most modern technologies used in the field of education. This is due to its capacity for a wide range of learners to exchange knowledge, ideas and opinions. To this end, Skype can create a real-like communication environment that forms a forum for a multitude of topics to be explained and addressed.

5.4.2. Questionnaire

Between control and experimental respondents, two constructed questionnaires were distributed. An eight-statement designed questionnaire on listening skill and six-statement designed questionnaire on speaking skill. The questionnaires were distributed in two phases between the two groups, i.e. before and after the experiment on both groups. The Likert Scale was used to measure respondents' attitudes towards effective ways of strengthening and enhancing the learners' listening and speaking skills. The scale is based on a five-point scale ranging from strongly agreed (scored 5), agreed (scored 4), undecided (scored 3), disagreed (scored 2), and strongly disagreed (scored 1).

5.5. Procedure

Seventy University students enrolled in the 2019 academic semester. Sophomores majoring in English were the participants of the current study. They were divided into experimental and control groups randomly. There were 35 participants, 18 females and 17 males in each party. Both groups were taught by the same teacher. During the academic year, the two groups were subjected to a pretest and posttest based on the syllabus needed to be taught. Ten units in both experimental and control groups were taught (from unit 1 to the end of unit 10). For teaching the experimental group, Skype equipment was allocated, while the teacher-centered class approach was applied to the control group. It took three months for the whole course to be accomplished.

To analyze the perspectives of respondents from both experimental and control groups on the best methods to improve and strengthen listening and speaking skills, two designed questionnaires (eight statements for listening skill) and (six statements for speaking skill) were distributed in the pre and post phases of the analysis.

5.6. Data Analysis

SPSS and LISERAL software were used for the study data. The standard deviation, mean, confirmatory coefficients of factor analysis, t-value, graphs, reliability and validity of listening and speaking questionnaires were all measured.

6. Results

6.1. Construct validity of the listening skills questionnaire

Eight items which have been built based on the five-option Likert-type scale are included in the listening questionnaire. Such options include **1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: not sure, 4: agree, and 5: strongly agree**. In this study, items 46.1 to 46.8 are connected to the ability to listen.

The CFA schematic representation, path coefficients and t-value of this questionnaire are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

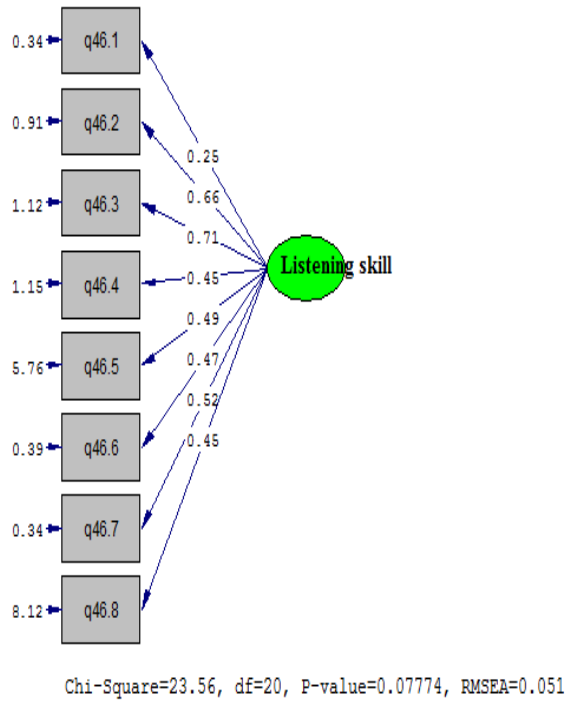


Figure 1. Path coefficients for the listening skill questionnaire

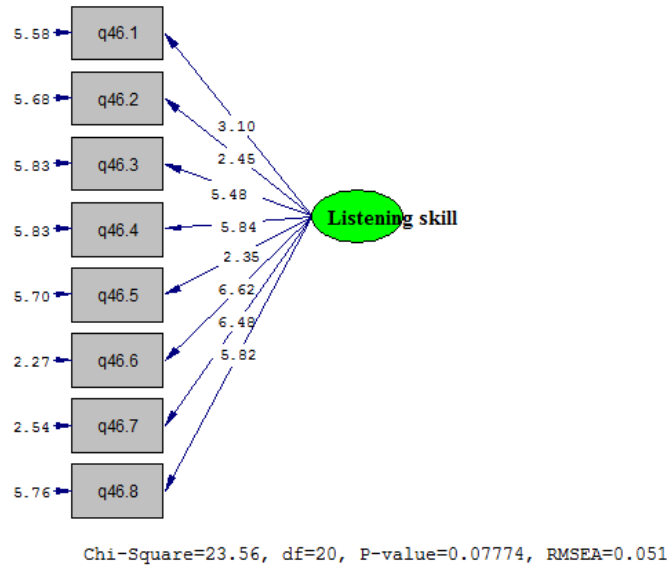


Figure 2. T-value for the listening skill questionnaire

From Table 1, a description of the results of the listening capacity questionnaire obtained from the CFA is given. As shown in Table 1, the value of t (t-value) in all items is greater than 1.96 or less than -1.96. It can therefore be said that the questionnaire items have the right factor structure for the calculation of the measurements studied in the study model.

Table 1. Results of the CFA for the Listening Skill Questionnaire

	Questions	Path Coefficients	t-value
Listening skill	q46.1	0.61	3.10
	q46.2	0.66	2.45
	q46.3	0.71	5.48

q46.4	0.45	5.84
q46.5	0.49	2.35
q46.6	0.47	6.62
q46.7	0.52	6.48
q46.8	0.45	5.82

For the listening ability questionnaire, Goodness-of-fit indices are provided in Table 2. These indices are within the appropriate range based on the results shown in this table (RMSEA= 0.051<0.08, $\chi^2/DF= 1.17<3$, and NFI, GFI, IFI, CFI, and AGFI > .9 indices).

Table 2. Goodness-of-fit Indices for the Listening Skill Model

χ^2/DF	RMSEA	NFI	GFI	IFI	CFI	AGFI
1.17	0.051	0.91	0.92	0.93	0.93	0.91

The findings in Table 2 show that the principles are compliant with their requirements. The structure of the listening capacity questionnaire is then verified by the CFA. It can be inferred that this scale was perfectly accurate and that the model seemed to be suitable. The final model demonstrated a very good fit for the results. The data obtained in this analysis seemed to support the model.

6.2. Construct validity of the speaking skill questionnaire

There are six items built based on the five-option Likert-type scale in the speaking questionnaire, including **1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: not sure, 4: agree, and 5: strongly agree; 5)**. The items from 45.1 to 45.6 in this sample belong to this questionnaire. The CFA representation of this questionnaire, path coefficients along with t-value, was demonstrated in Figures 3 and 4.

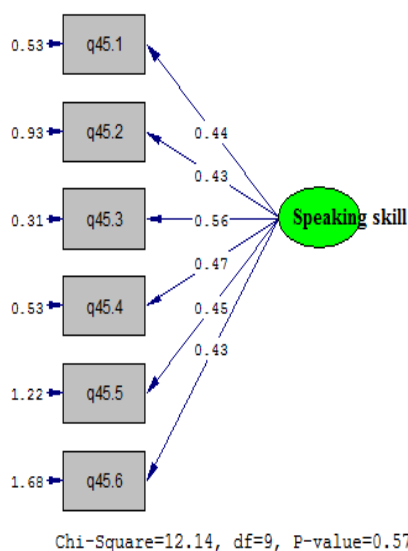


Figure 3. Path coefficients for the speaking skill questionnaire

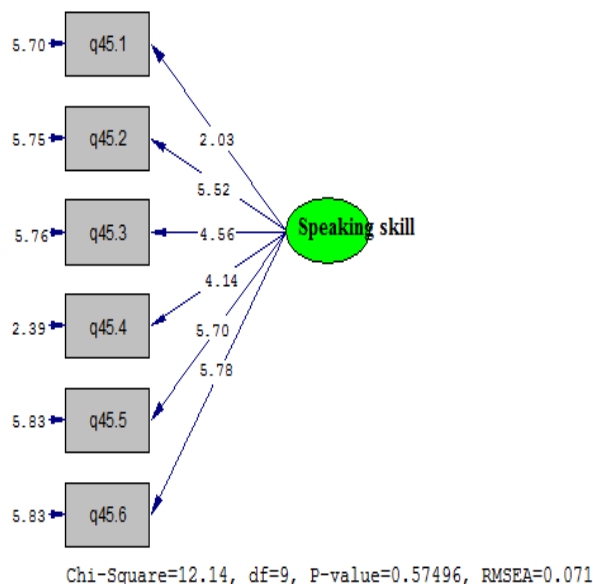


Figure 4. T-value for the speaking skill questionnaire

Table 3 provides an overview of the findings obtained by the CFA for the speaking skill questionnaire based on Figures 3 and 4. The value of t-value in all items is greater than 1.96 or less than -1.96, as Table 3 reveals. Therefore, it can be said that the questionnaire items for measuring the dimensions examined in the research model have a proper factor structure.

Table 3. Results of the CFA for the Speaking Skill Questionnaire

	Questions	Path Coefficients	t-value
Speaking skill	q45.1	0.44	2.03
	q45.2	0.43	5.52
	q45.3	0.56	4.56
	q45.4	0.47	4.14
	q45.5	0.45	5.70
	q45.6	0.42	5.78

The Goodness-of-fit indices for the speaking skill questionnaire are shown in Table 4. All these indices are within the acceptable range as shown in this table (RMSEA=0.071<0.08, $\chi^2/DF= 1.34<3$, and NFI, GFI, IFI, CFI, and AGFI indices >0.9).

Table 4. Goodness-of-fit Indices for Speaking Skill Model

χ^2/DF	RMSEA	NFI	GFI	IFI	CFI	AGFI
1.34	0.071	0.93	0.91	0.92	0.91	0.91

Based on Table 4, the principles reflect continuity with their standards. The structure of the speaking skill questionnaire is then verified by the CFA. It is concluded from the findings in Table 4 that the values are consistent with their requirements. The scale thus enjoyed reasonable validity and the model proved to be suitable. The final model demonstrated a very good fit for the results. In other words, the data obtained in this study seemed to support the model.

6.3. Reliability of the questionnaires

In the range of zero to one the reliability index is. The higher the reliability is close to 1, the more the instrument (e.g. questionnaire) is reliable.

The Alpha coefficient of Cronbach was used in this research to estimate the reliability (i.e. internal consistency) of the questionnaires and their various measurements. This approach is used to estimate the internal accuracy of a measurement tool that measures different characteristics. If the alpha value is greater than 0.7, it implies desirable reliability and has moderate reliability if it is between 0.5 and 0.7. In Table 5, the findings are demonstrated.

Table 5. listening and Speaking Sections of the Questionnaires, Number of Items, and Reliability Indices in the Questionnaires

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
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	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Speaking skill	0.712	6
Listening skill	0.785	8

The results of Cronbach's Alpha analysis show that the internal consistency and dimensions of the listening and speaking questionnaires are higher than 0.7. The reliability of the questionnaires is therefore confirmed as they have obtained acceptable indices of the Alpha of Cronbach as a whole as well as in the dimensions.

6.4. Comparison of pre-test listening scores in the control and experimental classes

A pretest and posttest of listening skills were administered to the participants of the experimental and control group based on the curriculum assigned to the participants of this study. The goal was to assess whether the use of social media apps in the teaching process impacts the listening achievements of both groups. Figure 5 and Table 6 show the findings of the pre-test descriptive statistics for the experimental and control groups.

Table 6. Group Statistics for Pre-test Scores of Listening

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control	35	21.54	3.13
Experimental	35	20.94	2.62

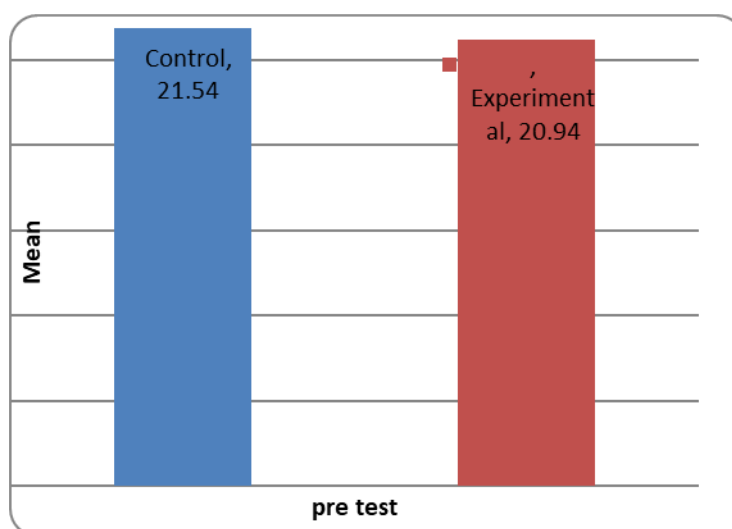


Figure 5. Descriptive statistics of pre-test scores of listening

As shown in Table 6 and Figure 5 the mean pre-test listening scores for the control group and the experimental group are 21.54 and 20.94, respectively. An independent t-test of samples was performed to ensure that this variation in means was significant. The findings are presented below in Table 7.

Table 7. Independent Samples T-test of Pre-test Scores of Listening in the Two Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							Eta Squared
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Equal variances assumed	1.07	0.30	0.87	68.00	0.388	0.60	0.69	-0.78	1.98	0.011
Equal variances not assumed			0.87	65.99	0.388	0.60	0.69	-0.78	1.98	

In this test, using Levene's test, the assumption of the equality of variances is initially investigated. As the degree of significance for the equality of variances is 0.30 (> 0.05), according to Table 7, it can be said that variances are equal and that the results related to the equality of variances can be used for analysis.

Based on the results shown in Table 7, the significance level for pre-test scores is equivalent to 0.388 (sig. = $0.388 > 0.05$), so it can be assumed that the null hypothesis is supported with 95% confidence. In other words, there is no significant difference in the pre-test listening scores between the control group and the experimental group. The test level of Eta squared is 0.011, which is a low value.

6.5. Comparison of the listening post-test ratings in the control group and experimental group

In the following tables, the results for this section are presented. In the two groups, the effects of descriptive data on post-test scores are shown.

Table 8. Group Statistics for Post-test Scores of Listening

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

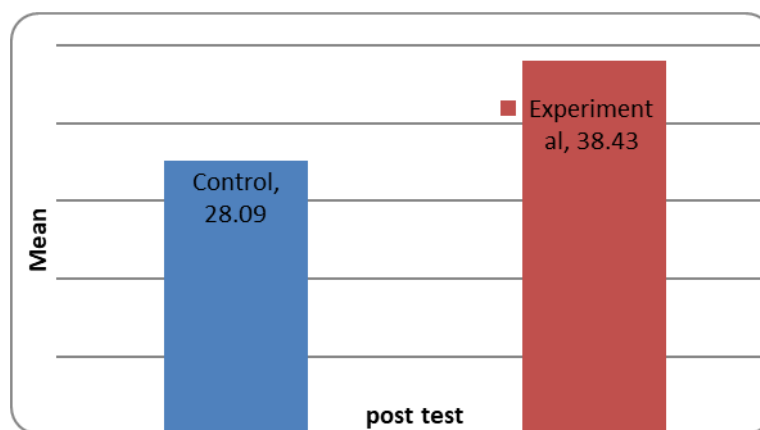


Figure 6. Descriptive statistics for post-test scores of listening

Table 8 and Figure 6 indicate that for the control group and experimental group, the mean post-test listening scores are 28.09 and 38.43, respectively. Therefore, in the study community, the average of the post-test listening scores is greater. An independent t-test of samples was performed to ensure that this variation in means was significant. The findings are presented below in Table 9.

Table 9. Independent Samples T-test of Post-test Scores of Listening in the Two Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						Eta Squared	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower		Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.11	0.30	-8.81	68.00	0.000*	-10.34	1.17	-12.68	-8.00	0.533
Equal variances not assumed			-8.81	66.59	0.000	-10.34	1.17	-12.69	-8.00	

*significant at the 0.05 level

In this test, using Levene's test, the assumption of the equality of variances is initially tested. As the degree of significance for the equality of variances is 0.30 (> 0.05), according to Table 9, it can be said that variances are equal and that the results related to the equality of variances can be used for analysis.

Based on the outcomes shown in Table 9, the significance level for listening post-test scores is 0.000 (sig. = $0.000 < 0.05$), so it can be assumed with 95% certainty that the null hypothesis is dismissed. This suggests that there is a major differentiation in the post-test listening ratings between the control group and the experimental group. The Eta squared test rating is 0.533, which is a high value.

Since the experimental group is the core of this study and its instructions are received via Skype tool to teach listening skills rather than the teacher-centered class according to the practical aspect of the present experiment, comparing the two means obtained from the control post-test and the experimental groups highlighted a substantial difference between these means where the control mean scores was 28.09. At the same time, the mean value of the post-test experimental group was 38.43. This proposes that the effect of using social media, i.e. Skype, in the process of learning and teaching language is seen in the difference between the mean scores of the two groups.

6.6. Comparison of the speaking pre-test scores in the control and experimental groups

The outcomes for this section are presented in the following tables. The results of descriptive data on pre-test scores in speaking skill are seen in the two groups.

Table 10. Group Statistics for Pre-test Scores of Speaking

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control	35	19.57	3.52
Experimental	35	19.77	3.08

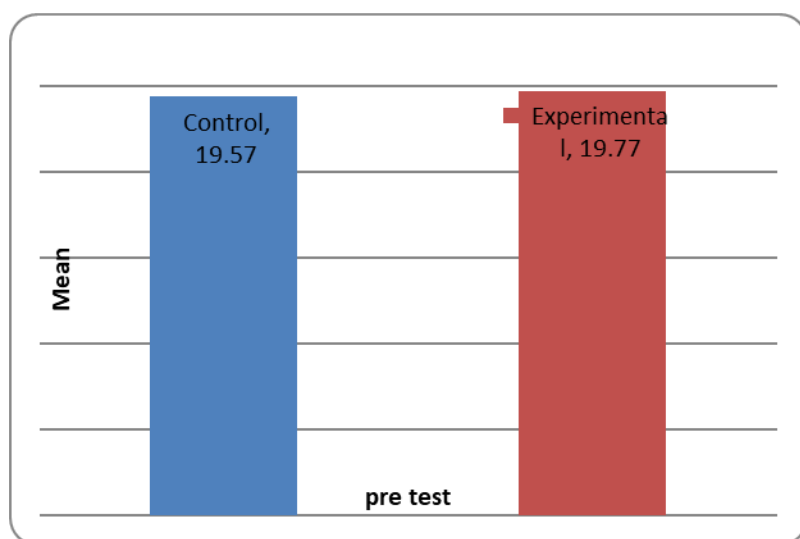


Figure 7. Descriptive statistics of pre-test scores of speaking

Based on the values shown in Table 10 and Figure 7, the mean speaking pre-test scores in the control group and experimental group are 19.57 and 19.77, respectively. In the testing group, this mean is greater than that of control. To ensure that the difference in means was significance, an independent sample t-test was run. Table 11 below summarizes the findings.

Table 11. Independent Samples T-test of Pre-test Scores of Speaking in the Two Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							Eta Squared
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Equal variances assumed	0.44	0.51	-0.25	68.00	0.80	-0.20	0.79	-1.78	1.38	0.001
Equal variances not assumed			-0.25	66.83	0.80	-0.20	0.79	-1.78	1.38	

First in this test, using Levene's test, the assumption of the equality of variances is tested. As Table 11 shows, since the degree of significance is 0.51 (> 0.05) for the equality of variances, it can be said that the variances are equal and it is possible to use the results related to the equality of variances for analysis.

From the results shown in Table 11, the level of significance for speech pre-test scores is 0.80 (sig. =0.80 > 0.05), so it can be assumed that H0 is endorsed with 95 per cent confidence. This suggests that there is no significant difference in the pre-test speaking scores between the control group and the experimental group. The test level of Eta squared is 0.001, which is a very low value.

6.7. Comparison of speaking post-test scores in the control and experimental groups

In the following tables, the results for this section are shown. Figure 8 and Table 12 display the effects of descriptive statistics of speech post-test scores in the control and experimental classes.

Table 12. Group Statistics for Post-test Scores of Speaking

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control	35	27.09	5.87
Experimental	35	40.51	6.27

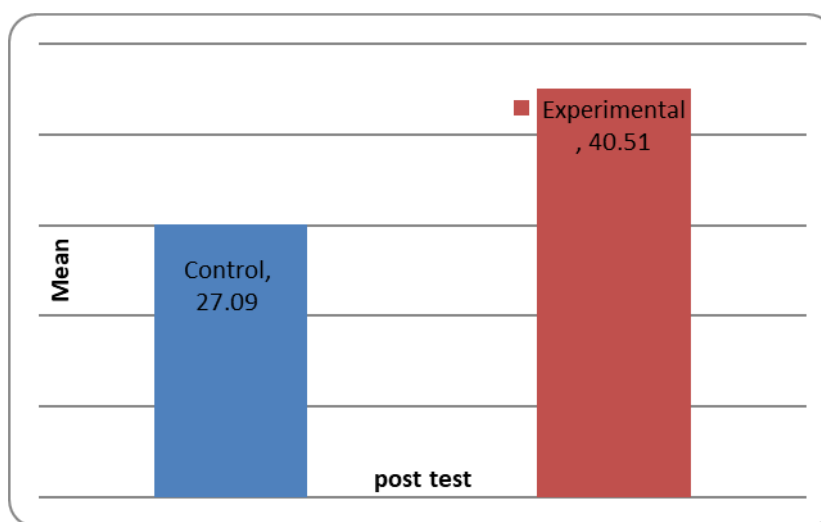


Figure 8. Descriptive statistics for post-test scores of speaking

Based on Table 12 and Figure 8, the mean speech post-test scores in the control and experimental groups are 27.09 and 40.51, respectively. Therefore, the average in the study category of post-test speech scores is higher than that of control. To make sure that the difference in means was significant, an independent sample t-test was administered. The results are shown in Table 13 below:

Table 13. Independent Samples T-test of Post-test Scores of Speaking in the Two Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							Eta Squared
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Equal variances assumed	0.11	0.74	-9.25	68	0.000*	-13.43	1.45	-16.33	-10.53	0.557
Equal variances not assumed			-9.25	67.7	0.000	-13.43	1.45	-16.33	-10.53	

*significant at the 0.05 level

For this test, the principle of equality of variances using Levene's test is first tested. As Table 13 shows, since the degree of significance is 0.74 (> 0.05) for the equality of variances, it can be said that the variances are equal and it is possible to use the results related to the equality of variances for analysis.

As shown in Table 13, the significance level for post-test speaking scores is 0.000 (sig. = 0.000 < 0.05) and it can be said that H0 is rejected with 95 per cent confidence. This suggests that there is a substantial difference in

the post-test speech ratings between the control group and the experimental group. The test standard of Eta squared is 0.557, which is considered a high value.

Grounded on the statistical findings of the post-test scores of the two groups in the speaking achievement, it is obvious that the testing group has obtained high mean scores in this phase of the study (see Table 12). This indicates the role of the modern technology applications in creating such a significant increase in the post-test mean scores of the experimental group in the speaking skills.

7. Discussion

The overall results of the first research question of the study confirm the presence of a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group's participants and their counterpart in the control group in the listening achievement. The difference in the mean scores is noticed in the post-test phase of the study. In the post-test phase, the mean scores of the experimental group were 38.43 with an std. 4.54, while the control group obtained mean scores 28.09 with an std. equals to 5.25 (see Table 8). Such a difference in the mean of the two groups in the listening skills explains the effect of social media applications in the process of language teaching and learning.

Huah and Jarret (2014) conducted research using QR codes (quick response codes) and cell phones as creative technology tools to improve both listening and speaking skills for non-English language teacher trainers and secondary school teachers in the process of teaching the English language. The research aims to impact the development of both listening and speaking skills to the degree that digital technologies (i.e. cell phones and quick response codes) affect the development of both listening and speaking skills. The overall results of the study showed that synergies between QR codes and mobile phones were involved in enhancing learners' listening and speaking skills during the learning process.

Ayu (2016) discovered in a study to identify the role of *YouTube* videos in improving listening ability that *YouTube* videos enable teachers to build a real-like atmosphere in which learners can recognize vocabulary, contraction, rhythm and speed of speech. In addition, *YouTube* offers an audio-visual communication mode, which in turn allows students to find out what they have learned and then improve their ability to listen. These results enhance the idea of applying social media in the language teaching and learning which in turn improves the listening skills of EFL learners.

The second research question seeks the extent to which social media usage affects the EFL learners' speaking skills. The final results of the study reveal a gap in the post-test mean scores of the control and experimental groups in the speaking achievement. The testing group participants outperformed their counterparts of the control group in the speaking performance both in pre and post-test phases of the experiment. In the pre-test phase, the control and experimental groups scored means 19.57 with an std. 3.52 and 19.77 with an std. 3.08, respectively. In the post-test phase, the control group obtained 27.09 with an std. 5.87, whereas the experimental mean scores were 40.51 with an std. 6.27.

Khan, Ayaz and Khan (2016) sought the impact of *Skype* on the growth of university-level speaking skills of learners, its effectiveness in motivating the speaking skills of learners and contrasting the skills and abilities of *Skype*-based EFL learners with their counterparts of the conventional English teaching method. 30 students were chosen by the researchers and divided into two groups, i.e. the experimental and control group. After statistically processing the study data, the final results showed that the use of *Skype* in language teaching improved the experimental group's speaking skills, encouraged them to achieve language skills, and improved their comprehension and mental capacity to speaking skills.

In a French-language curriculum with a particular emphasis on listening and speaking, Demouy and Kukulska-Hulme (2010) explored the consequences of using mobile devices. A group of 100 participants taking an undergraduate distance program engaged in a mobile language learning project in their study. The project was implemented in the United Kingdom through a French-language curriculum. The research was primarily intended to explore the interactions of participants concerning mobile devices while they are participating in extracurricular listening and speaking activities. The findings revealed that the respondents had a positive attitude towards the experiences and acknowledged "the specific value of this type of practice as a step towards authentic communication" (p. 217).

The findings of the aforementioned literature studies signify the importance of directing our attention to the use of modern technology in the educational domain as a means of teaching and learning. These findings are parallel with the findings of the current study.

8. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the significant role of modern features of technology, particularly social media, in constructing a native like-setting for language learning and teaching should be taken into consideration by English language teachers. This educational environment will inspire students to do better in

their learning process. Therefore, educational institutions are expected to have technical facilities so that students can access these facilities anywhere and at any time.

Technology involvement in language teaching and learning is not bound to improving the receptive or the productive skills of language learning but it covers both of these skills of language acquisition. Hence, educational trends begin to utilize these innovative technologies in making huge changes in their approaches to teaching. Therefore, teachers should be ready to coincide with this dramatic change in the pedagogical process. As a result, world universities and institutions started organizing webinars to enhance worldwide teachers with suitable ways of teaching, especially in time of Covid-19. Having said that, myriad faces of social media platforms are launched to meet the needs of the current juncture. Additionally, these modern technologies should be brought into the classroom environment.

Also, the difference between the means of the two groups (control and experimental) in the listening and speaking pre and post-tests, based on the results of the study, could lead us to conclude that the use of social media is successful in the learning motivation of students and contributes to students being motivated to learn a second or foreign language.

Finally, to provide a supportive method of teaching, more research on the use of social media applications in the educational sector is needed.

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