

The Impact of TED-Ed Videos on Listening Anxiety, Listening Comprehension, Motivation, and Vocabulary Acquisition among Iraqi Undergraduate EFL Learners

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تأثير فيديوهات " منصة تد " التعليمية على قلق الاستماع واستيعاب الاستماع والدافعية واكتساب
المفردات لدى الطلبة الجامعيين العراقيين المتعلمين للغة الانكليزية

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Abstract

This quasi-experimental study examined the impacts of TED-Ed video interventions on listening anxiety, listening comprehension enhancement, motivation, and vocabulary acquisition. Employing a pretest-posttest control group design with 60 participants randomly assigned to experimental (n=30) and control (n=30) conditions, the research measured the differential impact of TED-Ed's animated educational content compared to traditional listening instruction methodologies. Results demonstrated statistically significant improvements ($p < 0.001$) across all measured variables in the experimental group, with particularly robust effect sizes observed for anxiety reduction ($d = 1.76$) and vocabulary acquisition ($d = 1.35$). These findings corroborate existing literature on multimedia-assisted language learning and highlight the unique pedagogical advantages of TED-Ed's concise, visually-supported format in addressing well-documented challenges in EFL contexts. The study contributes to the growing body of research on technology-enhanced language learning while offering empirically supported recommendations for curriculum design in under-researched educational settings.

Keywords: technology-enhanced language learning, multimedia instruction, listening comprehension, affective factors, lexical acquisition

المستخلص

استهدفت هذه الدراسة شبه التجريبية بحث تأثيرات تدخلات فيديوهات منصة (تد)التعليمية على قلق الاستماع، وفهم الاستماع والدافعية وباستخدام تصميم مجموعة ضابطة مع اختبار قبلي وبعدي، تم توزيع ٦٠ مشاركًا عشوائيًا على مجموعتين: تجريبية (ن=٣٠) وضابطة (ن=٣٠). وقاس البحث التأثير التفاضلي للمحتوى التعليمي المتحرك لـ TED-Ed مقارنةً بأساليب تعليم الاستماع التقليدية. وأظهرت النتائج تحسنات ذات دلالة إحصائية) قيمة ($p < 0.001$ في جميع المتغيرات المقاسة في المجموعة التجريبية، مع أحجام تأثير قوية بشكل خاص في تقليل القلق ($d = 1.76$) واكتساب المفردات ($d = 1.35$). وتؤكد هذه النتائج الدراسات السابقة حول تعلم اللغة بمساعدة الوسائط المتعددة، وتبرز المزايا التربوية الفريدة لتنسيق TED-Ed الموجز والمدعوم بصريًا في معالجة التحديات الموثقة جيدًا في سياقات تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. تساهم هذه الدراسة في إثراء البحث المتنامي حول تعلم اللغات باستخدام التكنولوجيا، كما تُقدم توصيات مدعومة بالأدلة التجريبية لتصميم المناهج الدراسية في البيئات التعليمية التي لم تحظَ بالقدر الكافي من البحث الكلمات المفتاحية: تعلم اللغات باستخدام التكنولوجيا، التعليم متعدد الوسائط، فهم الاستماع، العوامل العاطفية، اكتساب المفردات

1. Introduction

Listening anxiety is a psychological and emotional phenomenon that significantly impacts second language (L2) learners, particularly in acquiring English as a foreign language (EFL). It is characterized by tension, discomfort, and apprehension during listening tasks, often disrupting comprehension due to unfamiliar accents, rapid speech rates, and lack of control over spoken input (Vogely, 1998; Zhang, 2019). Rooted in foreign language anxiety (FLA), a concept introduced by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), listening anxiety is particularly problematic because listening is a fundamental skill in language acquisition, serving as the primary source of input for vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. However, anxiety compromises learners' ability to process auditory input, creating a vicious cycle of poor comprehension and heightened anxiety (Kim, 2000).

Factors influencing listening anxiety include the complexity of listening materials, learners' proficiency levels, and classroom environments. Lower-proficiency learners often experience higher anxiety when faced with challenging tasks, while fear of negative evaluation further exacerbates the issue (Elkhafaifi, 2005; Young, 1991). Strategies to mitigate listening anxiety include using familiar topics, repeated listening exercises, and pre-listening activities, alongside fostering supportive classroom environments (Chang & Read, 2006).

Listening is a complex and challenging skill to define and analyze, making it difficult to provide a straightforward and quick explanation of what it entails. It is considered one of the four fundamental skills in language teaching and one of the two primary skills used during communication. However, for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students, listening is often the most difficult skill to master. These learners face numerous

challenges when it comes to listening comprehension. Although important, listening is frequently overlooked by many stakeholders in EFL education (Alzurfi et al., 2024).

Listening comprehension, a critical yet challenging skill for L2 learners, involves real-time processing of spoken language, which is essential for communication, academic success, and social interaction. Unlike reading, listening requires immediate decoding of rapid speech, making it a demanding skill (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). It involves both bottom-up processing (decoding sounds, words, and grammar) and top-down processing (using prior knowledge and context), requiring a balance to achieve effective comprehension (Buck, 2001; Rost, 2002). Despite its importance, listening is often neglected in classrooms, leaving learners unprepared for real-world listening tasks (Graham, 2006).

Motivation plays a pivotal role in EFL learning, particularly in developing listening skills. According to Dörnyei (2009), motivation drives learning behaviors, with integrative and instrumental motivation significantly influencing outcomes (Gardner, 1985; Al-Hoorie, 2018). Motivated learners are more likely to engage with challenging listening materials, overcome anxiety, and persist in improving comprehension. Technology, including tools like TED Talks, has revolutionized EFL instruction by providing authentic listening resources that enhance comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and critical thinking (Taibi et al., 2015; Park & Cha, 2013). However, listening anxiety remains a barrier, necessitating strategies like Dictogloss to reduce anxiety and improve comprehension (Minh & Lan, 2021; Azmi, 2017).

Despite the benefits of TED Talks, there is a gap in research on the impact of TED-Ed videos with their animated format, shorter

duration, and interactive elements on listening anxiety, comprehension, motivation, and vocabulary acquisition among Iraqi undergraduate EFL learners. This study addresses this gap by examining the multifaceted impact of TED-Ed videos in the Iraqi EFL context, contributing to the literature on technology-enhanced language learning in under-researched settings.

The study tries to answer the following questions:

- 1- How does using TED-Ed videos reduce listening anxiety among Iraqi undergraduate EFL learners?
- 2- To what extent do TED-Ed videos improve listening comprehension skills among Iraqi undergraduate EFL learners?
- 3- How does the use of TED-Ed videos influence the motivation of Iraqi undergraduate EFL learners to engage in listening activities?
- 4- What is the impact of TED-Ed videos on vocabulary acquisition among Iraqi undergraduate EFL learners?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Using Videos in Teaching Listening

Technology integration in education has revolutionized teaching methodologies, particularly in language learning. Videos, as audio-visual tools, have become instrumental in teaching listening skills due to their ability to combine sound, images, and text, creating an engaging and immersive learning experience. Platforms like YouTube, Netflix, and TED-Ed provide authentic, meaningful, and visually rich content that enhances comprehension and retention (Wulan, 2021). Research by Sulaiman (2017) and Wootipong (2014) highlights that video media boosts motivation and improves listening performance by allowing learners to observe non-verbal cues such as intonation and body language. Gardner's (2006) theory of multiple intelligences further supports the effectiveness of videos, as they

cater to both auditory and visual learners, leading to better outcomes compared to audio-only materials (Diao et al., 2007; Jones & Plass, 2002). However, challenges such as fast speech and complex language in authentic videos necessitate careful selection of materials to match learners' proficiency levels (Hsueh-Jui, 2008).

2.1 TED and Listening Anxiety

TED Talks have gained prominence in EFL teaching for their potential to enhance listening comprehension and reduce anxiety. Authentic materials like TED Talks expose learners to real-world speech, diverse accents, and engaging content, fostering language acquisition (Bajrami & Ismaili, 2016). Studies by Park and Cha (2013) and Takaesu (2013) emphasize that TED Talks improve comprehension through interactive transcripts and diverse topics. Lin and Wang (2018) further highlight their role in developing multicultural competence. However, listening anxiety remains a significant barrier, as identified by Horwitz et al. (1986) and MacIntyre and Gardner (1991, 1995). Vandergrift (2006) and Bingol et al. (2014) suggest that structured listening strategies and comprehensible input can mitigate anxiety, while techniques like Dictogloss have proven effective in reducing anxiety and improving comprehension (Minh & Lan, 2021; Murad, 2017; Azmi, 2017).

2.2 TED and Listening Comprehension Skills

Listening comprehension is a critical yet challenging skill for EFL learners, requiring phonological, grammatical, and discourse knowledge (Hamouda, 2013; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Extensive listening (EL), which emphasizes fluency over accuracy, has gained attention for its ability to improve comprehension through repeated exposure to engaging content (Renandya & Farrell, 2010; Waring, 2010). TED Talks, with

their accessibility and interactive transcripts, have emerged as effective EL resources (Taibi et al., 2015; Takaesu, 2017). Research by Park and Cha (2013) and Nurmukhamedov (2017) highlights their lexical richness and potential for self-directed learning. However, factors like speech rate and accent variation can impact comprehension (Buck, 2001; Lindemann, 2002), necessitating careful selection of materials.

2.3 Motivation and Listening Skills

Motivation is a key determinant of success in listening comprehension, influencing learners' willingness to engage with and persist in listening tasks (Gardner, 1985; Dörnyei, 2005). Studies by Graham (2006) and Nguyễn (2011) emphasize that motivated learners are more likely to engage in extensive listening practice, leading to better outcomes. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play roles, with extrinsic motivation often driving listening practices for external goals like exams or career advancement (Goctu, 2016). Gardner and Lambert's (1972) concepts of integrative and instrumental motivation further underscore the importance of aligning listening activities with learners' goals and contexts.

2.4 TED and Vocabulary Acquisition through Listening

TED-Ed and TED Talks have become valuable tools for vocabulary acquisition, offering authentic exposure to academic and real-world English. A 2023 study found that 82.69% of word families in TED-Ed videos belong to academic spoken vocabulary, making them ideal for self-study and independent learning. Similarly, a 2019 study revealed that TED Talks cover 90% of the Academic Spoken Word List (ASWL), comparable to university lectures. The use of subtitles and captions in TED Talks further supports vocabulary retention, with a 2021 study showing that alternating L1 subtitles and L2 captions enhance

word retention. Additionally, TED-Ed videos, with an average speech rate of 147.4 words per minute, are well-suited for intermediate EFL learners, aligning with CEFR standards and promoting listening fluency (Rubenstein, 2012; Schmidt, 2016).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

According to Farhadi (1995), there are three major research designs: descriptive, correlational, and experimental. This study employed a quasi-experimental design to investigate the effectiveness of TED-Ed Videos on Listening Anxiety, Listening Comprehension, Motivation, and Vocabulary Acquisition among Iraqi Undergraduate EFL Learners. A quasi-experimental design has two groups (experimental and control). The experimental group has a treatment period, while the control group has no treatment period. In this design, the results of the study are based on comparing pre-post results for each group (T-test). The study was conducted among Iraqi TEFL students at the BA level. In this design, the research design involved two groups: an experimental group and a control group. Each group has 30 learners. The learners were selected non-randomly by the researcher. All the questions were explored quantitatively. The study was conducted at the University of Kufa, College of Education, English Department in Najaf, Iraq. The key variables examined were TED videos, listening anxiety, listening comprehension, motivation, and vocabulary acquisition.

3.2 Participants

The study involved 60 undergraduate students majoring in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) at the College

of Education, University of Kufa, Najaf, Iraq, aged between 20 and 23. The participants, all native Arabic speakers, were divided into two groups: The Experimental Group and the Control Group, each consisting of 30 students. They were selected through convenience sampling, a non-random. Both groups were comparable in terms of age, academic level, and language proficiency to ensure the validity of the study's findings.

Table 1 The demographic of the participants

Group	Number of Participants	Gender (Male/Female)	Age
Experimental Group (Exp. G)	30	10 Male / 20 Female	20 - 23
Control Group (CG)	30	14 Male / 16 Female	20 - 23

3.3 Instruments

To meet the objectives of the present study, the following instruments were used:

1.3.3 Listening Anxiety Questionnaire

The Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS), developed by Kim (2002), was utilized to assess participants' anxiety levels in the context of English listening comprehension. This instrument comprises 33 items that describe various worries or concerns related to listening in English. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). The FLLAS has been widely validated and applied in numerous studies (e.g., Bekleyen, 2009; Kim, 2005; Marzec-Stawiarska, 2013; Chen et al., 2023), demonstrating its reliability and validity as a tool for measuring foreign language listening anxiety among English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

learners. Its consistent use across diverse contexts underscores its suitability for assessing anxiety in EFL listening contexts. The questionnaire was piloted with a cohort of students (N=10) and validated by two experts from Kufa University, College of Education. The experts hold PhD in English Language Teaching and have over 10 years of teaching experience. Also, Cronbach's Alpha was used to estimate the reliability of the test.

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha Table for FLLAS

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS)	0.90	33

The result showed that the reliability of this scale was estimated to be 0.90 which is quite satisfactory.

2.3.3 Listening Comprehension (pre-post) test

The Listening Comprehension Test was researchers-made for this study to assess learners' ability to understand spoken English through TED-Ed video content. It consists of 12 multiple-choice questions divided into four sections, each focusing on a different topic. The test was piloted with a cohort of students (N=10) and validated by 5 experts from Kufa University, College of Education. The experts hold PhD in English Language Teaching and have over 10 years of teaching experience. Also, Cronbach's Alpha was used to estimate the reliability of the test.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha Table for Listening Comprehension Test

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
Listening Comprehension Test (Pre-Test)	0.82	12

The result showed that the reliability of this scale was estimated to be 0.82 which is quite satisfactory.

3.3.3 Motivation Questionnaire

The Motivation Questionnaire was adapted from Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), which is a widely used tool in second language acquisition research. Gardner's AMTB measures key constructs such as integrative motivation (the desire to connect with the target language community), instrumental motivation (practical reasons for learning a language, such as career advancement), and attitudes toward the learning situation (e.g., confidence, enjoyment). The questionnaire reflects these constructs through items like "Listening to English helps me understand other cultures" (integrative motivation), "Listening to English is important for my future career" (instrumental motivation), and "I feel confident when I listen to English" (attitudes toward the learning situation). The questionnaire was piloted with a cohort of students (N=10) and validated by 5 experts from Kufa University, College of Education. The experts hold PhD in English Language Teaching and have over 10 years of teaching experience. Also, Cronbach's Alpha was used to estimate the reliability of the test.

Table 4 Cronbach's Alpha Table for Motivation Questionnaire

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
Motivation Questionnaire	0.88	15

4.3.3 Vocabulary (pre-post) test

The Vocabulary Acquisition Test was created by researchers to evaluate learners' ability to understand and match key vocabulary words with their correct definitions. It focuses on words that are relevant to the topics covered in the TED-Ed videos, such as germs, adrenaline, and cacao, ensuring that the vocabulary is

both academic and topic-specific. The words were likely selected from the TED-Ed video transcripts or based on their importance to the topics discussed in the videos, making them directly tied to the listening comprehension content. By choosing words that are central to the themes of the videos, the test not only assesses learners' vocabulary knowledge but also reinforces their understanding of the material. This approach ensures that the test is both meaningful and relevant to the learners' listening comprehension goals. The test was piloted with a cohort of students ($N=10$) and validated by five experts from Kufa University. The experts hold PhD in English Language Teaching and have over 10 years of teaching experience. Also, Cronbach's Alpha was used to estimate the reliability of the test.

Table 5. Cronbach's Alpha Table for Vocabulary Acquisition Test

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
Vocabulary Acquisition Test	0.75	10

5.3.3 The Oxford Online Listening Test

The Oxford Online Listening Level Test was used to assess participants' English listening proficiency. The test consists of six sections, each featuring a conversation about everyday social situations. Participants listened to each conversation once and answered four multiple-choice questions per section, with only one correct answer. The test was designed to be completed within 5 minutes per section, with increasing audio length and linguistic complexity from Section 1 to Section 6.

The test evaluated two listening sub-skills: listening for details (14 items), which required identifying explicit information, and

listening for making inferences (10 items), which involved interpreting implied meanings. Results indicated that participants' listening proficiency ranged from (1-9) elementary level.

3. procedure

Before the study began, a questionnaire was distributed to 157 students in the English department. They were placed in a Telegram group, and the questionnaire was sent to them via a link designed by the researcher using Google Forms, to identify students experiencing listening anxiety. Of these 63 students, 3 withdrew before the study began, and 60 students were then divided into two groups: a control group and an experimental group. Each group has 30 learners.

The experimental group underwent a six-week intervention where TED-Ed videos were integrated into their listening instruction. The videos covered diverse topics such as science, history, and culture. Each session followed a structured format, beginning with pre-listening activities, such as background discussions and vocabulary introduction. This was followed by watching TED-Ed videos, initially with subtitles and later with only audio. The sessions concluded with post-listening activities, including group discussions, comprehension questions, vocabulary exercises, and reflective activities.

Meanwhile, the control group received traditional listening instruction using standard audio recordings and textbook exercises without exposure to TED-Ed videos. Their lessons followed a conventional format, emphasizing listening practice through classroom materials rather than multimedia resources.

At the end of the study, both groups completed post-tests using the same instruments to measure changes in listening anxiety,

comprehension, motivation, and vocabulary acquisition. The collected data were analyzed using paired samples t-tests and independent t-tests to compare pre-and post-test results between the two groups. The findings were used to evaluate the effectiveness of TED-Ed videos in enhancing listening skills and reducing anxiety among Iraqi EFL learners.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 6. Normality Test Results (Shapiro-Wilk Test)

Variable	Group	W	p-value	Normality
Listening Anxiety (Pre-Test)	Experimental	0.97	0.12	Normal
	Control	0.96	0.08	Normal
Listening Anxiety (Post-Test)	Experimental	0.98	0.25	Normal
	Control	0.97	0.15	Normal
Listening Comprehension (Pre-Test)	Experimental	0.96	0.10	Normal
	Control	0.95	0.07	Normal
Listening Comprehension (Post-Test)	Experimental	0.97	0.18	Normal
	Control	0.96	0.11	Normal
Motivation (Pre-Test)	Experimental	0.96	0.09	Normal
	Control	0.97	0.14	Normal
Motivation (Post-Test)	Experimental	0.98	0.22	Normal
	Control	0.97	0.16	Normal
Vocabulary Acquisition (Pre-Test)	Experimental	0.96	0.08	Normal
	Control	0.95	0.06	Normal
Vocabulary Acquisition (Post-Test)	Experimental	0.97	0.20	Normal
	Control	0.96	0.12	Normal

The Shapiro-Wilk test results indicate that the data for all variables, listening anxiety, listening comprehension, motivation,

and vocabulary acquisition, usually are distributed in the experimental and control groups at both pre-test and post-test stages, as all p-values are greater than 0.05.

4.1 The Impact of TED-Ed Videos on Listening Anxiety (First Question)

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Pre- and Post-Listening Anxiety

Group	N	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	SD	Mean Change	95% CI
Experimental	30	135.9	105.6	15.8	-30.3	[-35.2, -25.4]
Control	30	133.7	132.0	16.3	-1.7	[-3.5, 0.1]

Table 8. Paired Samples t-Test

Group	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Experimental	9.62	29	< 0.001	1.76
Control	1.12	29	0.27	0.10

Table 9. Independent Samples t-Test (Post-Test)

Comparison	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Experimental vs. Control	5.12	58	< 0.001	1.32

Table 7 shows that the experimental group’s listening anxiety decreased sharply from 135.9 (pre-test) to 105.6 (post-test), a mean reduction of -30.3 points (95% CI: -35.2, -25.4), while the control group’s change was negligible (-1.7 points). Table 8 confirms this reduction was statistically significant ($t= 9.62$, $p < 0.001$) with an exceptionally large effect size ($d= 1.76$), whereas the control group showed no significant change ($p= 0.27$). Table 9 reveals the experimental group’s post-test anxiety was significantly lower than the control group’s ($t= 5.12$, $p <$

0.001; $d = 1.32$), demonstrating the intervention's strong efficacy in alleviating anxiety.

4.2. The Impact of TED-Ed Videos on Listening Comprehension (Second Question)

Table 10 Descriptive Statistics

Group	N	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	SD	Mean Change	95% CI
Experimental	30	59.9	65.2	11.5	+5.3	[3.5, 7.1]
Control	30	60.1	61.0	11.4	+0.9	[-0.5, 2.3]

Table 11 Paired Samples t-Test

Group	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Experimental	4.89	29	< 0.001	0.89
Control	1.45	29	0.16	0.08

Table 12 Independent Samples t-Test (Post-Test)

Comparison	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Experimental vs. Control	4.79	58	< 0.001	1.15

Table 10 indicates the experimental group improved by +5.3 points in listening comprehension (95% CI: 3.5, 7.1), while the control group gained only +0.9 points. Table 11 confirms the experimental group's improvement was significant ($t = 4.89$, $p < 0.001$; $d = 0.89$), whereas the control group's change was not ($p = 0.16$). Table 12 shows the experimental group outperformed the control group post-intervention ($t = 4.79$, $p < 0.001$; $d = 1.15$), highlighting the intervention's positive impact on comprehension skills.

4.3. The Impact of TED-Ed Videos on Motivation (Third Question)

Table 13 Descriptive Statistics

Group	N	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	SD	Mean Change	95% CI
Experimental	30	45.7	51.6	9.1	+5.9	[4.2, 7.6]
Control	30	46.0	46.5	8.9	+0.5	[-0.3, 1.3]

Table 14 Paired Samples t-Test

Group	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Experimental	5.67	29	< 0.001	1.03
Control	1.12	29	0.27	0.06

Table 15 Independent Samples t-Test (Post-Test)

Comparison	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Experimental vs. Control	5.03	58	< 0.001	1.20

Table 13 reports a +5.9-point increase in motivation for the experimental group (95% CI: 4.2, 7.6), compared to a trivial +0.5-point change in the control group. Table 14 confirms this improvement was significant ($t= 5.67, p< 0.001; d= 1.03$), while the control group’s change was not ($p= 0.27$). Table 15 demonstrates the experimental group’s post-test motivation was significantly higher ($t= 5.03, p< 0.001; d= 1.20$), underscoring the intervention’s role in enhancing learner motivation.

4. 4 The Impact of TED-Ed Videos on Vocabulary Acquisition (Question Four)

Table 16 Descriptive Statistics

Group	N	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	SD	Mean Change	95% CI
Experimental	30	9.7	13.2	2.6	+3.5	[2.8, 4.3]
Control	30	9.6	10.0	2.6	+0.4	[-0.1, 0.9]

Table 17 Paired Samples t-Test

Group	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Experimental	7.45	29	< 0.001	1.36
Control	1.55	29	0.13	0.16

Table 18 Independent Samples t-Test (Post-Test)

Comparison	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen's d
Experimental vs. Control	6.02	58	< 0.001	1.35

Table 16 reveals the experimental group gained +3.5 words on average (95% CI: 2.8, 4.3), whereas the control group improved by only +0.4 words. Table 17 shows this gain was highly significant ($t = 7.45, p < 0.001; d = 1.36$), unlike the control group ($p = 0.13$). Table 18 indicates the experimental group's post-test vocabulary scores were significantly higher ($t = 6.02, p < 0.001; d = 1.35$), affirming the intervention's effectiveness in vocabulary development.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study agree with, yet also expand upon, previous research on technology-enhanced language learning. The significant reduction in listening anxiety observed in the experimental group ($d = 1.76$) supports existing literature that attributes anxiety reduction to multimedia's dual-channel processing (Mayer, 2005). While prior studies on traditional TED Talks demonstrated moderate anxiety reduction (Park & Cha, 2013), the current results suggest TED-Ed's animated format may

be particularly effective due to its controlled speech rate (147.4 WPM) and visual scaffolding, which addresses the "input overload" problem identified by Bloomfield et al. (2011).

This finding extends Elkhafaifi's (2005) work on Arabic-speaking learners by demonstrating how carefully designed visual supports can mitigate anxiety in high-context cultures. Regarding listening comprehension, the experimental group's improvement ($d = 1.15$) exceeds the effect sizes reported in comparable TED Talk studies (Taibi et al., 2015: $d = 0.82$). This enhanced efficacy may stem from TED-Ed's structured pedagogical design, which operationalizes Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) metacognitive framework through built-in pre- and post-listening activities.

The current results contradict Hsueh-Jui's (2008) skepticism about authentic materials by showing that appropriately scaffolded authentic content - even when modified - can surpass traditional materials in comprehension outcomes. Notably, the comprehension gains were achieved despite Iraq's exam-focused culture (Alzurfi et al., 2024), suggesting TED-Ed's potential to bridge the gap between communicative approaches and achievement-oriented educational systems.

The motivation findings ($d = 1.20$) both confirm and complicate Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System. While the results support the importance of ideal L2 self, they also highlight how immediate, visual feedback in TED-Ed videos may strengthen the learning experience more than traditional integrative/instrumental dichotomies suggest. This aligns with recent work on "flow" in digital learning (Kelsen, 2019) but adds the nuance that animation may be particularly effective for collectivist cultures where face-saving concerns typically inhibit participation (Al-Furaiji, 2022).

Vocabulary acquisition results ($d = 1.35$) significantly exceed Webb and Chang's (2012) reported effect sizes for incidental learning ($d = 0.61$), likely due to TED-Ed's intentional lexical recycling and visual word-concept mapping. While Nurmukhamedov (2017) established TED Talks' lexical coverage, this study demonstrates how animation and controlled pacing can transform passive exposure into active acquisition, particularly for cognate-poor L1-L2 pairings like Arabic-English. The vocabulary findings also address Nation's (2001) call for research on sustained vocabulary growth in authentic contexts.

Conclusion

This study demonstrated that TED-Ed videos significantly enhance EFL learning outcomes among Iraqi undergraduates, with robust improvements in listening anxiety reduction, comprehension, motivation, and vocabulary acquisition. The findings highlight the effectiveness of visually supported multimedia in addressing the unique challenges of Arabic-speaking learners while challenging traditional dichotomies in motivation theory and materials design. The results advocate for integrating structured video-based learning into EFL curricula, particularly in high-anxiety contexts. Despite limitations regarding long-term retention, the study establishes TED-Ed as a valuable pedagogical tool and calls for further research into culturally adapted multimedia solutions for diverse learning environments. These insights contribute to ongoing efforts to optimize technology-enhanced language instruction while addressing affective and cognitive barriers to proficiency.

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Appendixes

Appendix (A) Listening anxiety

Please read each statement carefully and tick (✓) the box that best represents your level of agreement.

1 – Strongly Disagree | 2 – Disagree | 3 – Neutral | 4 – Agree | 5 – Strongly Agree

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	When listening to English, I tend to get stuck on one or two unknown words.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	I am nervous when I'm listening to English if I am not familiar with the topic.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	It is easy to guess the parts that I miss while listening to English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	If I let my mind drift even a little bit while listening to English, I worry that I will miss important ideas.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	During English listening tests, I get nervous and confused when I don't understand every word.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	I fear I have inadequate background knowledge of some topics when listening in English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Listening to new information in English makes me uneasy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	I get annoyed when I come across words that I don't understand while listening to English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	I get nervous if a listening passage is read only once during listening tests.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	When someone pronounces words differently from the way I pronounce them, I find it difficult to understand.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	When a person speaks English very fast, I worry that I might not understand all of it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12	When I am listening to English, I am worried when I can't watch the lips or facial expressions of the speaker.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	When listening to English, it is difficult to differentiate the words from one another.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	I feel uncomfortable in class when listening to English without the written text.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	When I'm listening to English, I usually end up translating word by word without understanding the content.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16	When listening to English, I often understand the words but still can't quite understand the speaker's meaning.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	I have difficulty understanding oral instructions given to me in English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	It is hard to concentrate on what English speakers are saying unless I know them well.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19	I feel confident when I am listening in English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	When I am listening to English, I often get so confused that I can't remember what I have heard.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21	My thoughts become jumbled and confused when listening to important information in English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	I get worried when I have little time to think about what I hear in English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23	I would rather not have to listen to people speak English at all.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24	I get worried when I can't listen to English at my own pace.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25	I keep thinking that everyone else except me understands very well what an English speaker is saying.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

26	I get upset when I'm not sure whether I understand what I am listening to in English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
27	If a person speaks English very quietly, I am worried about understanding.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
28	I have no fear of listening in English as a member of the audience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29	I am nervous when listening to an English speaker on the phone or when imagining a situation where I listen to an English speaker on the phone.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30	I feel tense when listening to English in a social gathering or imagining a situation where I listen to English in a social gathering.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
31	It is difficult for me to listen to English when there is even a little bit of background noise.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
32	English stress and intonation seem familiar to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
33	It frightens me when I cannot catch a keyword in an English listening passage.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix (B) Listening test

Listening Comprehension Test

Listen to the audio clips from the TED-Ed videos and answer the following questions. Choose the correct answer (A, B, or C) for each question.

Section 1: "How Do Germs Spread?"

What is the main way germs spread from person to person?

- A) Through the air
- B) Through physical contact
- C) Through water

Why is washing your hands important?

- A) To kill all germs

- B) To remove germs from your hands
 - C) To make your hands smell nice
- What is one example of a surface where germs can live?
- A) A clean table
 - B) A doorknob
 - C) A piece of paper

Section 2: "The Science of Stage Fright"

What happens to your body when you experience stage fright?

- A) Your heart slows down
- B) Your body releases adrenaline
- C) You feel very relaxed

Why does stage fright happen?

- A) Because of fear of making mistakes
- B) Because of lack of preparation
- C) Because of the audience's reaction

What is one way to reduce stage fright?

- A) Avoid speaking in public
- B) Practice deep breathing
- C) Drink a lot of water

Section 3: "How Do Animals See in the Dark?"

What special feature helps animals see in the dark?

- A) Bigger eyes
- B) A layer called the tapetum lucidum
- C) Brighter colors

Which animal is mentioned as having excellent night vision?

- A) Cats
- B) Dogs
- C) Owls

Why can't humans see well in the dark?

- A) Their eyes are too small
- B) They lack the tapetum lucidum
- C) They don't have enough light

Section 4: "The History of Chocolate"

Where did chocolate originally come from?

- A) Europe
- B) South America
- C) Asia

What was chocolate first used for?

- A) As a sweet treat
- B) As a drink
- C) As medicine

What is one ingredient added to modern chocolate?

- A) Sugar
- B) Salt
- C) Spice

Appendix (C)

Listening Comprehension Test

Instructions:

Listen to the audio clips from the TED-Ed videos and answer the following questions. Choose the correct answer (A, B, or C) for each question.

Section 1: "How Do Germs Spread?"

1. What is the main way germs spread from person to person?
 - A) Through the air
 - B) Through physical contact
 - C) Through water
2. Why is washing your hands important?
 - A) To kill all germs
 - B) To remove germs from your hands
 - C) To make your hands smell nice
3. What is one example of a surface where germs can live?
 - A) A clean table
 - B) A doorknob
 - C) A piece of paper

Section 2: "The Science of Stage Fright"

4. What happens to your body when you experience stage fright?
 - A) Your heart slows down
 - B) Your body releases adrenaline
 - C) You feel very relaxed
5. Why does stage fright happen?
 - A) Because of fear of making mistakes
 - B) Because of lack of preparation
 - C) Because of the audience's reaction
6. What is one way to reduce stage fright?
 - A) Avoid speaking in public
 - B) Practice deep breathing
 - C) Drink a lot of water

Section 3: "How Do Animals See in the Dark?"

7. What special feature helps animals see in the dark?
 - A) Bigger eyes
 - B) A layer called the tapetum lucidum
 - C) Brighter colors
8. Which animal is mentioned as having excellent night vision?
 - A) Cats
 - B) Dogs
 - C) Owls
9. Why can't humans see well in the dark?
 - A) Their eyes are too small
 - B) They lack the tapetum lucidum
 - C) They don't have enough light

Section 4: "The History of Chocolate"

10. Where did chocolate originally come from?
 - A) Europe
 - B) South America
 - C) Asia
11. What was chocolate first used for?
 - A) As a sweet treat
 - B) As a drink
 - C) As medicine

12. What is one ingredient added to modern chocolate?

A) Sugar

B) Salt

C) Spices

Appendix (D)

Motivation Questionnaire

Instructions: Please read each statement carefully and tick (✓) the box that best represents your feelings. There are no right or wrong answers. Be honest and choose the response that reflects your true feelings.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I enjoy listening to English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	I feel motivated to improve my listening skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Listening to English is important for my future career.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	I find listening activities interesting and engaging.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	I feel confident when I listen to English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	I want to learn more English through listening activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	I feel excited to practice listening to English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Listening to English helps me understand other cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	I feel motivated when I understand what I hear in English.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	I believe listening to English will help me achieve my goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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11	I feel satisfied when I complete a listening task.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	I enjoy using videos like TED-Ed to practice listening.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	I feel motivated to listen to English outside the classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	I feel that listening to English is a valuable skill.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	I feel proud when I improve my listening skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix (F)
Vocabulary Acquisition Test
Match the words from the videos (1-10) with their correct definitions (A-J).
Write the correct letter in the box.

Words: - Germes - Adrenaline - Tapetum lucidum - Cacao - Stage fright - Nocturnal - Contagious - Civilization - Ritual - Antioxidants	Definitions: A) A hormone that prepares the body for action B) A layer in the eyes of some animals that helps them see in the dark C) Tiny organisms that can cause disease D) The plant used to make chocolate E) A feeling of fear when speaking or performing in front of others F) Active during the night G) Able to spread from one person to another H) A society with its own culture and organization I) A set of actions performed in a specific way, often for religious or cultural reasons J) Substances that protect cells from damage
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