THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEENTHE TYPES OF LISTENING STRATEGY USE, LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCE, LEARNER AUTONOMY AND LISTENING PROFICIENCY

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Abstract

In the process of learning a language as a second or foreign language it seems that the learners know what to learn but they don't know how to learn. This problem is more salient in Iran with Iranian learners learning English as a foreign language, especially for listening comprehension ability which is the most problematic skill for them. This current study wants to investigate the relationship between learning style preferences, listening strategies, learner autonomy and listsening proficiency. The aim of the study is to help students, teachers, and material developers to overcome the problem. Seventy eight university students studying English as a foreign language took a listening comprehension test and completed three questionnaires related to learning style preferences, metacognitive listening strategies and learner autonomy. The data were analyzed by Linear Regression, Multi Linear Regression, and Spearman Correlation. The result showed that there is not any meaningful relationship between the types of listening strategies, learning style preferences, learner autonomy and listening proficiency.However, there was meaningful relationship between metacognitive listening strategies, learning styles and leaner autonomy. So it can be concluded that metacognitive awareness listening strategies are not so useful for improving listening proficiency. Different learners with different learning styles perform equally on answering listening comprehension questions, and different learning styles do not make difference in listening comprehension ability. Autonomous learners are not more successful in answering listening comprehension questions than the other learners. By focusing on learner's listening strategies and learning styles there will be more autonomous EFL learners.

Key words: listening proficiency, listening strategy, learning style, learner autonomy

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1. Introduction

To acquire language, a child starts to listen and just after one or two years listening, he/she develops speaking, reading and then writing. So listening is a prime and the most important stage in first language acquisition. But what about second or foreign language learning?

Listening is the Cinderella skill in second language learning. All too often, it has been overlooked by its elder sister-speaking. For most people, being able to claim knowledge of a second language means being able to speak and write in that language. Listening and reading are therefore secondary skills-means to other ends rather than ends in themselves (Nunan, 2002).

This problem is more salient in Iran .Although the undergraduate students have studied English for 6 years and they may be able to write or read and, to some extent, speak English, they have serious problems in listening. Even graduate students cannot fully comprehend listening texts such as movies, news, etc.

For many years the general teaching practice has involved selection and presentation of materials through methods and techniques considered useful to the learners thinking that all of them need the same thing and learn in roughly the same way(s) (Mehrdad and Ahghar, 2013).

The aim of this study is to show the relationship between the learning style preferences, the listening strategies use, learner autonomy and the listening comprehension ability, to determine which of them can predict better the listening comprehension score.

Knowing the importance of student learning style, autonomy level and their impact on learning helps teachers take into consideration such factors when choosing the appropriate techniques and tasks for their lessons (Nematipour,2012).

As in all stages of education, the improvement of learning and teaching process has been a key issue in higher education. Thus, a better understanding of the factors that influence academic performance is necessary (Brajapati et al., 2010).

Language learning and language use strategies have come into their own both as important source of support to learners in their efforts to master a second language, and to teachers in their efforts to facilitate their learners' acquisition of the language in question (Cohen, 2002).

Teacher-fronted classroom is one of the most serious problems in educational system of Iran. Perhaps this way of handling a class (teacher-fronted) affects the learners' language

proficiency and results in learners' weakness in performing language skills such as listening comprehension. Thus today the shift from teacher-fronted to learner-centered class as well as making learners take responsibility of their learning has been emphasized and much attention has been paid to the learner autonomy.

Benson (2008) argued autonomy is directly related to learning so the role of the learner and his/her contribution in the process of second language learning is very important. The practice of autonomy in the classroom creates a whole new environment especially in those contexts in which the educational system is teacher-fronted.

The following six research questions are investigated in this study:

1. What is the relationship between learning style preferences and listening proficiency of the learners?
2. What is the relationship between listening strategy use and the listening proficiency level of the learners?
3. What is the relationship between the learners' autonomy level and their listening proficiency?
4. What is the relationship between learning style preferences and metacognitive strategy use of the learners?
5. What is the relationship between learning style preferences and learners' autonomy level?
6. What is the relationship between listening strategy use and learners' autonomy level?

2. Review of the Literature

The current study aims to investigate the relationship between the types of listening strategy use, learning style preferences, learner autonomy, and listening proficiency. Here we are going to explorethe earlier researches and studies that have been conducted on these issues.

2.1 Studies on Listening Strategies

A recent study was done by Harris & Grenfell (2008) based on the impact of strategy instruction in listening relative to other powerful factors e. g. socio-economic background.

In this quasi-experimental study, 120 12-to-13-year-old learners who were learning French were divided into intact experimental and control group. Experimental group received explicit strategy instruction during their lessons, the control group did not. After nine months the results showed that listening strategy instruction benefited all students regardless of their prior attainment or prior attitude, their gender, or bilingualism.

Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) compared the pre-test and post-test listening comprehension scores of two groups of high-beginner/ lower intermediate French learners. One of these two groups received metacognition instruction for 13 weeks (in the form of a pedagogical cycle) while the other group did not. The results showed that the experimental group performed better than the control group.

Graham et al. (2011) carried out a research on 15 lower-intermediate learners of French in England. The learners were given two different audio-recordings on the same topic at time 1 and time 2 (after six months). They were asked to write (in English) ever thing they had understood. And also the learners had to answer multiple-choice questions of four texts. (The questions were in English). Then they were interviewed to see how they were going about comprehending the text and answering the questions. The teachers were also interviewed to show the relationship between the learners' strategic behavior and their teachers approach to listening. The results of the study can be summarized as:

Without listening strategy instruction, learners listening proficiency was improved a little after six months.

The learners (especially non-movers and decliners) showed stability in manner of strategy use.

Differences in strategy use between groups (more proficient and less proficient learners) were more evident than changes in strategy use between the two time points.

Since the teachers viewed listening as a task to be completed rather than as a skill to be taught, there was no link between teachers approach to listening and students strategy use.

Rahimi & Katal (2012) carried out a study in four universities of Tehran. 141 university students took part as participant in this study. Their internet and device use hours as well their habit of working with post casting were assessed. They also completed a podcast-use readiness questionnaire and Metacognitive Listening Strategies Questionnaire (MALQ).

The study demonstrated a strong relationship among metacognitive listening strategies awareness, readiness to use podcasting and actual use of podcasting for learning English as a foreign language. (Rahimi & Katal, 2012)

2.2 Studies on Learning Style Preferences

In those mentioned researches only the strategies used by the learner in listening activities was studied but we should know that learning strategies are influenced by learning

styles. Strategies are the specific behaviors that may sometimes be associated with one or another learning style (Cohen, 2002). .

Sahragard and Mallahi (2014) carried out a study to explore the language learning style preferences of a group of Iranian EFL learners and differences in the styles of learners with different L2 writing proficiency levels. Willing's (1988) Language Learning Styles Questionnaire was used in this study.

It was revealed that communicative language learning style was the dominant learning style among the learners. As for the language learning style of the most proficient writers, it was indicated that majority of these writers had a communicative learning style preference that assisted them to act more productively and guided them to create organized texts and defend their argument or positions in a structured way (Sahragard and Mallahi, 2014).

All of the mentioned studies demonstrated a direct or indirect positive relationship between learning style preferences and second or foreign language proficiency but there are some studies which their results show contrast.

Bailey et al. (2000) carried out a research to examine the role of learning styles in foreign language achievement. The subjects were 100 American university students learning French or Spanish. The PEPS designed by Dunn et al. (1991) was administered to participants. The PEPS is an individuals' preferences survey in each of 20 different modalities.

The findings showed that learning style may not be a strong predictor of foreign language proficiency, at least for this sample of American college students. Those learners who were higher achievers in foreign language classes liked informal classroom designs and preferred not to get information via the kinesthetic mode. So, it can be said that there is a negative relationship between "hands-on" learning style (kinesthetic) and foreign language achievement.

For example Tabatabaei and Mashayekhi (2013) did a study to determine differences in learning styles of Iranian pre-university EFL learners across different levels of proficiency. The Productivity Environmental Preference Survey (PEPS) adapted from Dunn and Dunn Learning-Style Model was used in this study.

Tabatabaei and Mashayekhi showed that there is not a strong, but low relationship between the learning styles and foreign language achievement, i.e. pre-university students' learning styles did not affect their success and different learning styles did not result in different performances.

2.3 Studies on Learning Style and Learning Strategies

Ma and Oxford (2014) point out reflective and introverted learner likes metacognitive strategies. He/she uses both metacognitive and effective strategies to help him/her overcome a personal issue, and regain perspective and motivation to concentrate and learn; visual learners prefer note-taking which is a kind of cognitive listening strategy.

Serri et al. (2012) investigated the relationship between learners' listening strategy use' cognitive, metacognitive, social/affective, while they listen to the texts and some of their individual differences. Forty upper-intermediate TEFL undergraduate students were surveyed. They were studying English in a nongovernmental University for academic purpose.

For determining personality traits, they completed NEO questionnaire with Persian adoption. Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness were measured by this questionnaire. For determining the proficiency level of listening comprehension, the learners took 40-items IELTS Listening TEST derived from CambridgeUniversity press (2008). The learners also completed Soloman and Felder's (2001) questionnaire that consisted of 44 two choice items to identify their active, reflective sensitive, intuitive, visual, verbal, sequential and global learning styles. To check the learners' motivation, Laine's Motivation Questionnaire (1988) adapted by Salimi (2000) was used. It included five-point Likert scales 36-items. And finally, to show the listening comprehension strategies that the learners apply in doing listening activities, Vandergrift's Listening Strategy Questionnaire (1997) was used. It includes 34 questions to identify metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective strategies.

The results of the distribution and Chi-Square tests indicated that the learners with different IDs used the same proportion of cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies. All of the learners applied cognitive strategies more than metacognitive and social/affective strategies.

Almost none of the learners used social /affective strategies and only five percent of the students used metacognitive strategies.

By using Pearson product moment correlation Serri et al. showed that there was a significant relationship between learners' level of motivation and the use of cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies and there was a negative correlation between the learners' age and motivation .

In order to use which variables can predict better the listening strategies use, regression analysis was used. The data analysis revealed that just motivation and personality traits were important in predicting the listening Comprehension strategies use.

To show the relationships of learning styles and cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies in listening comprehension, Liu (2008) did a research and found that communicative learners applied cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective strategies "flexibly and actively", authority oriented learners used cognitive strategies more, as well as analytic learners; while concrete learners preferred to use social/affective strategies.

2.4 Studies on Learner Autonomy

To show the relationship between language proficiency and self-directed language learning, Gan (2004) got 357 Chinese students from two mid-eastern universities completed a survey probing self-directed language learning attitudes and strategies. The following results were achieved:

1. There isn't any strong relationship between attitudes to SDLL and language proficiency.
2. Learner achievement was significantly affected by perceptions of confidence and abilities in caring out self-directed language learning.
3. Against the stereotype notion about Asian learners, they are not only active but also positive towards SDLL.

According to Najeeb (2013) one of the tools which help the learners become autonomous is aware of their own learning styles and to use them to their advantage

Nematipour (2012) conducted a research to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' autonomy level and their learning style. 200 undergraduate students completed the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ) developed by Reid (1987) and a Learner Autonomy Questionnaire developed by Zhang and Li (2004).

The results indicated that the most preferred learning styles among Iranian EFL learners are kinesthetic and visual learning styles which have a significant relationship with high level autonomy.

One of the purposes of the current study is to show the relationship between learner autonomy and learning strategies, particularly listening strategies, because these two issues are interwoven.

Based on Oxford's (2008) opinion the learners who employ more strategies are more active in the language learning process, so she knows learning strategies as signs of autonomy.

Ahmadi (2013) conducted a study to measure Iranian learners' perceptions towards autonomy in terms of their responsibility perceptions and activity types inside and outside of the classroom, as well as the employment of metacognitive strategies. 133 law major students studying English for specific purpose participated in this study. Two sections of Chan, et al.'s (2002) Leaner Autonomy Questionnaire (responsibility and activity) and part D of Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) were used.

The results showed that students did not feel ready for the autonomous learning in the most important aspects of learning and they believed that teaching activity should be designed by the teacher, and teacher has responsibility of selecting objectives. They did not do most of autonomous activities used in this study and they were medium users of metacognitive strategies. There is one rewarding result in this study and that is the notion of shared responsibility in evaluating. Students had the notion of shared responsibility in evaluating their course and their learning (Ahmadi, 2013).

Liu (2011) did a study among Chinese college students. 126 EFL learners completed a 37-item questionnaire composed of four parts. The content of parts were: Personal details, learning motivation, learner's attitudes or beliefs in language teaching and learning, and finally learner's beliefs in learner autonomy in language teaching and learning.

The findings indicated that:

a) Most Chinese students have certain knowledge of learner autonomy, but they need help and advice from the teachers. They believe that autonomy doesn't mean the language classroom is not necessary; a good classroom environment can help them to develop capacity for autonomy.

b) Developing positive attitudes toward learner autonomy and appropriate learning strategies and learning styles and habits are crucial to the success of the development of learner autonomy.

In some of those mentioned studies the relationship between learning style preferences and learner autonomy or the relationship between learner autonomy and learning strategies were showed. And also some studies demonstrated the relationship between learning style preferences and the learner's use of learning strategies. Some studies investigated the effects of learning style preferences or learning strategies on a certain skill such as writing proficiency.

The current study is going to investigate the relationship between learning style preferences, metacognitive listening strategy, and learner autonomy; and also it wants to show the relationship between learning style preferences, learner autonomy, metacognitive listening strategy, and the learners' listening comprehension ability among Iranian university students, a work that have not been done with one dependent variables and several independent variables.

3.Method

Seventy eight students from Hakim Sabzevari University and Neyshaboor University participated in this study. They were native speakers of Persian. They had learned English for seven years before coming to university; three years in guidance school and four years in high school. They were majoring in English literature. All of these students were accepted at graduate level through a nationwide entrance examination. Almost all of them were at first or second year of their study. Considering these facts, we can suppose that their English proficiency level is not so different.

Three instruments were used in this research: learning style survey, TOEFL junior standard test, metacognitive awareness listening questionnaire, learner autonomy questionnaire.

3.1 Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire

It is a six-point Likert scale, 21-item questionnaire with five distinct factors significantly related to L2 listening comprehension success: problem-solving, planning and evaluation, mental translation, directed attention and person knowledge.

Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) was developed, tested and validated by Vandergrift, Goh, Mareschal and Tafaghodtary (2006). They also trialed it with L2 listeners in Canada, Singapore, and Netherland.

3.2 Learner Autonomy Questionnaire

A Learner Autonomy Questionnaire developed by Zhang and Li (2004) was used in this study to determine the autonomy level of the learners. The items of this questionnaire range from

dependent problem solving to independent problem solving which is in line with the Vygotskian concept of learning development.

3.3Learning Style Survey

For finding the learners' learning style preferences we used Learning Style Survey constructed by Cohen, Oxford, and Chi.This questionnaire includes 11 parts with 110 questions of five-point Likert scale (0=never, 1=rarely, 2=sometimes, 3=often, and 4=always). Each part corresponds to a special group of learning style.

3.4 TOEFL Junior Standard Test

To measure the learners' listening comprehension ability TOEFL Junior Standard test was used. This 42-item multiple-choice test measures the students' ability to listen and understand English for interpersonal purposes, instructional purposes, and academic purposes. The TOEFL Junior Standard test is an objective and reliable tool for measuring the learners' English communication skills.

This is a quantitative study. The design of this study is ex post facto (post hoc).

To analyze the gathered data and to show the relationship among learners' learning style preferences, the use of listening strategies, learner autonomy, and listening comprehension ability, Pearson Correlation, ANOVA, Linear Regression, and Multi Linear Regression were used.The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). For all the analyses, the alpha level was set at .05.

4. Results

4.1 Predicting Listening Proficiency by MALQ

Considering metacognitive awareness listening strategies aspredictive variable and listening proficiency as dependent variable, Linear Regression was used to predict listening proficiency.

Pearson Correlation test (table 4.1) showed that at the level of 5% there isn't any meaningful correlation between listening score and metacognitive awareness listening strategies (r=0.12, p=0.26>0.05).The result of linear regression also showed that metacognitive awareness listening strategies cannot predict listening score (F(1,75)=1.27,P=0.26>0.05).According to

R^2=0.01, it can be said that only 1.7% variations of listening score can be explained by learner Autonomy.

So according to above results the second research questioncan be answered as "there is no relationship between listening strategies and listening proficiency of the learners".

Table 4.1: *Correlation between MALQ and Listening Proficiency*

		Listening Proficiency
Listening Strategies Use	Pearson Correlation	.129
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.262
	N	77

4.2 Predicting Listening Proficiency by MALQ Parts

Metacognitive awareness listening strategy is divided into five parts: problem solving, planning evaluation, mental translation, direct attention, and person knowledge.

Considering metacognitive awareness listening strategy parts aspredictive variable and listening proficiency as dependent variable, ANOVA and Multiple Linear Regression was used to predict listening proficiency.

Pearson Correlation test (table 4.2) showed that at the level of 5% there isn't any meaningful correlation between listening score and metacognitive awareness listening strategy parts (p>0.05).The result of multiple linear regression also showed that none of the metacognitive awareness listening strategy parts can predict listening score (F(5,71)=0.29,P=0.91>0.05).According to R^2=0.02 it can be said that only 2.1% variations of listening score can be explained by metacognitive awareness listening strategy parts.

Table 4.2: *Correlation between MALQ Parts and Listening Proficiency*

		Listening Proficiency
Problem solving	Pearson Correlation	.12
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.27
	N	77
Planning evaluation	Pearson Correlation	.07
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.51
	N	77
Mental translation	Pearson Correlation	.09

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.43
	N	77
Direct attention	Pearson Correlation	.10
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.37
	N	77
Person knowledge	Pearson Correlation	.06
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.55
	N	77
Listening Strategies Use	Pearson Correlation	.12
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.26
	N	77

4.3 Predicting Listening Proficiency by Learning Style Survey Preferences

Considering learning style preferences aspredictive variable and listening proficiency as dependent variable, ANOVA and Linear Regression was used to predict listening proficiency.

Pearson Correlation test (table 4.3) showed that at the level of 5% there isn't any meaningful correlation between listening score and learning style preferences (r=0.10, p=0.36>0.05).The result of linear regression also showed that learning style preferences cannot predict listening score (F(1,75)=0.82, P=0.36>0.05).According to R^2=0.01 it can be said that only 1.1% variations of listening score can be explained by learner Autonomy.

So according to above results the first research question can be answered as "there is no relationship between learning style preferences and listening proficiency of the learners".

Table 4.3: *Correlation between Learning Style Survey and Listening Proficiency*

		Listening Proficiency
Learning Style Survey	Pearson Correlation	.10
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.36
	N	77

4.4 Predicting Listening Proficiency by Learner Autonomy

Considering learner autonomy aspredictive variable and listening proficiency as dependent variable, ANOVA and Linear Regression was used to predict listening proficiency.

Pearson Correlation test (table 4.4) showed that at the level of 5% there isn't any meaningful correlation between listening score and learner autonomy (p>0.05, r=0.03).The result of linear regression also showed that learner autonomy cannot predict listening score

($F(1,75)=0.11$, $P=0.74>0.05$). According to $R^2=0.00$, it can be said that only 1% variations of listening score can be explained by learner Autonomy.

So according to above results the third research question can be answered as "there is no relationship between the learner's autonomy level and their listening proficiency".

Table 4.4: *Correlation between Learner Autonomy and Listening Proficiency*

		Listening Proficiency
Learner Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	.03
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.74
	N	77

4.5 Predicting MALQ by Learning Style Survey

Considering learning style survey aspredictive variable and MALQ as dependent variable, ANOVA and Linear Regression was used to predict listening proficiency.

Pearson Correlation test (table 4.5) showed that at the level of 5% there is meaningful correlation between learning style survey and MALQ ($r=0.43$, $p=0.00<0.05$).The result of linear regression also showed that learning style survey can predict MALQ ($F(1,75)=17.53$, $P=0.00>0.05$). According to $R^2=0.18$ it can be said that 18.9% variations of MALQ can be explained by learning style survey.

So according to above results the fourth research question can be answered as "there is meaningful relationship between learning style preferences and listening strategy use of the learner".

Table 4.5: *Correlation between MALQ and Learning Style Survey*

		Listening Strategies Use
Learning Style Survey	Pearson Correlation	.43
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77

4.6 Predicting MALQ by Learning Style Survey Parts

Learning style survey includes 23 parts. Each part identifies a certain learning style. In this section we want to investigate the relationship between MALQ and these parts separately.

Considering learning style survey parts aspredictive variable and MALQ as dependent variable, ANOVA and Multi Linear Regression was used to predict listening proficiency.

Pearson Correlations test (table 4.6) shows the correlations between MALQ and the parts of learning style survey at the level of 5%. There is meaningful correlation between MALQ and part 3 A, part 4 A, part 5 B, part 6 A, part 6 B, part 7 A, part 8 A, part 9 A, part 11 A.

The result of multi linear regression also showed that part 3 A, part 5 B, part 7 A and B can predict MALQ score ($F(4,72)=21.21$, $P=0.00<0.05$). These parts can explain 54.1% of MALQ variations ($R^2=0.54$). Part 3 A, part 7 A and B have a positive effect on MALQ and part 5 B has negative effect on MALQ.

Table 4.6: *Correlation between MALQ and Learning Style SurveyParts*

		Listening Strategies Use
a1	Pearson Correlation	.28
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.01
	N	77
b1	Pearson Correlation	.16
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.15
	N	77
c1	Pearson Correlation	.02
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.80
	N	77
a2	Pearson Correlation	.12
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.28
	N	77
b2	Pearson Correlation	.03
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.78
	N	77
a3	Pearson Correlation	.49
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77
b3	Pearson Correlation	.21
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.06
	N	77
a4	Pearson Correlation	.38
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77
b4	Pearson Correlation	.09

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.42
	N	77
a5	Pearson Correlation	.23
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.03
	N	77
b5	Pearson Correlation	.41
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77
a6	Pearson Correlation	.40
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77
b6	Pearson Correlation	.33
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77
a7	Pearson Correlation	.51
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77
b7	Pearson Correlation	-.10
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.35
	N	77
a8	Pearson Correlation	.38
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77
b8	Pearson Correlation	.18
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.10
	N	77
a9	Pearson Correlation	.27
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.01
	N	77
b9	Pearson Correlation	.23
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.03
	N	77
a10	Pearson Correlation	.23
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.03
	N	77
b10	Pearson Correlation	.16
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.15
	N	77
a11	Pearson Correlation	.43
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77

b11	Pearson Correlation	.24
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.03
	N	77

4.7 Predicting MALQ by Leaner Autonomy

Considering learner autonomy aspredictive variable and MALQ as dependent variable, ANOVA and Linear Regression was used to predict listening proficiency.

Pearson Correlation test (table 4.7) showed that at the level of 5% there is meaningful correlation between learning style survey and learner autonomy (r=0.31, p=0.00<0.05).The result of linear regression also showed that learner autonomy can predict MALQ (F(1,75)=8.05, P=0.00>0.05). According to R^2=0.09, it can be said that 9.7% variations of MALQ can be predicted by learner Autonomy.Learner autonomy has a positive effect on MALQ (B=0.40).

So according to above results the sixth research question can be answered as "there is meaningful relationship between the learner's autonomy level and listening strategy use".

Table 4.7: *Correlation between MALQ and Learner Autonomy*

		Listening Strategies Use
Learner Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	.31
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	77

4.8 Predicting Learning Style Survey by Leaner Autonomy

Considering learner autonomy aspredictive variable and learning style survey as dependent variable, ANOVA and Linear Regression was used to predict listening proficiency.

Pearson Correlation test (table 4.8) showed that at the level of 5% there is meaningful correlation between learning style survey and learner autonomy (r=0.28, p=0.01<0.05).The result of linear regression also showed that learner autonomy can predict learning style survey (F(1,75)=6.52, P=0.01>0.05). According to R^2=0.08, it can be said that 8% variations of learning style survey can be explained by learner Autonomy.Learner autonomy has a positive effect on learning style survey (B=1.28).

So according to above results the fifth research question can be answered as "there is meaningful relationship between the learner's autonomy level and learning style preferences".

Table 4.8: *Correlation between Learning Style Survey and Learner Autonomy*

		Learning Style Survey
Learner Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	.28
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.01
	N	77

5.Discussion and Conclusion

The present study wants to show the relationship between metacognitive awareness listening strategy and listening comprehension ability.

Although Harris & Grenfell (2008), Vandergrift and Tafaghodtri (2010), Zeng (2007), Chen (2009) showed metacognitive listening strategy improved listening comprehension ability, the result of data analysis of this study showed that there is not any meaningful relationship between MALQ and listening proficiency.

The study also investigates the relationship between learning style preferences and listening scores.

The findings of a research on learning styles by Riazi and Riassati (2007) among Iranian EFL learners indicated that the teachers were not aware of their learners' learning style preferences.

By analyzing the data it was found that the participants (as a sample of Iranian students) are more visual than auditory or kinesthetic.

It was shown that there is no meaningful relationship between learning style preferences and listening scores that is in line with Tabatabaei and Mashayekhi's (2013) study. Bailey et al. (2000) showed that learning style may not be a strong predictor of foreign language proficiency.

This research was going to show the relationship between the learner autonomy and the listening comprehension ability.

The analysis of data showed that there is no relationship between Learner Autonomy questionnaire and the listening scores. Gan (2004) also found that there isn't any strong relationship between attitudes to self-directed language learning and language proficiency.

Data analysis also indicated that there is a meaningful relationship between learning style survey and metacognitive awareness listening questionnaire. This result is congruent with the results of Gallan (1999), Ma and Oxford (2014), and Liu (2008)'s studies.

The data analysis showed that there is a relationship between Learner Autonomy and Learning Style Survey.

This result seems to be partly congruent with the findings of the study conducted by Gultekin and Karababa (2010) and studies by Nematipour (2012), Guven and Sunbul (n.d), and Najeeb (2013).

Analysis of data indicated that there is meaningful relationship between MALQ and learner autonomy. This result is in line with the findings of Liu's (2011) study. Cotterall (1995) believes that metacognitive strategy is one of the aspects of learners' readiness for autonomy. Oxford (2008) knows learning strategies as signs of autonomy.

Form the above results and discussion we can conclude:

Metacognitive awareness listening strategies are not so useful for improving listening proficiency.

Different learners with different learning styles perform equally on answering listening comprehension questions, and different learning styles do not make difference in listening comprehension ability.

Autonomous learners are not more successful in answering listening comprehension questions than the other learners.

By focusing on learner's listening strategies and learning styles there will be more autonomous EFL learners.

6. Implications and Applications of the Study

The results of this study can have pedagogical implications for students, teachers, material developers, and decision makers.

Ma and Oxford (2014) state:

Finding out students' preferred learning styles and helping students become aware of them is the first step. The teacher should assure students that there are no better or worse learning styles. All learning styles build on students' learning strengths and can be potentially helpful. With the teacher's help and guidance, each student can learn to understand the potential advantages and disadvantages of the varied components of his or her learning style profile, as well as the combined effects of these components. Teachers can encourage students to manage

their learning styles to make combined effects as positive as possible. Then the teacher can help students to explore the interactions between their learning strategies and learning styles.

Teachers can choose the materials and syllabuses that are learner-centered or when they want to choose classroom activities, they need to take these features into account: Learner style, learner preferences, and language strategies (Chan et al., 2002).

Language teachers are advised to be flexible in strategy instruction. They should not follow the same lesson plan across different classes or different schools for strategy instruction (Sadeghi et al., 2014).

Once learners are aware of their own learning styles. It enables them to adapt their learning strategies to suit different learning tasks in particular contexts. Learners can take advantages of their learning styles by matching learning strategies with their styles; similarly, learners can compensate for disadvantages of their learning styles to balance their learning by adjusting learning strategies (Oxford, 1993).

And also Sims and Sims (2006) note that learners can go through the process of changing the original preferred learning style to an adapted learning style and to an optimal learning style in order to reach the learning goal.

7. Suggestions for Further Research

The present study investigated the relationship between learning style preferences, learner autonomy and listening proficiency. It can be valuable for another study to investigate the relationship between learning style preferences, learner autonomy and other skills such as speaking.

This study showed the relationship between listening strategies and listening proficiency through questionnaires. Another research can be done by having the participants divided into two groups (control and experimental group) as well as having a treatment between pre-test and post-test of listening proficiency to investigate the effect of listening strategies on listening proficiency.

This study didn't consider gender effect. A similar study can show the effect of gender on the relationship between learning style preference, learner autonomy, listening strategies and listening proficiency.

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