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The Relationship between Iranian EFL Learners' Motivation and Attitudes towards English Learning and Their Inference Ability in Listening Comprehension

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Abstract

This thesis attempts to measure the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' motivation and attitude towards English learning and their inferencing ability in listening comprehension. In order to address the issue, a qualitative and quantitive study was conducted on a sample of 60 adult females. A listening pre-test administered to identify the participants' level of listening comprehension. After taking pre-test, the Attitude/Motivation questionnaire was distributed among the participants in order to determine respondents' attitudes and motivation level towards English language learning. Next, students took part in a treatment program for two months, including eight weeks and three days per week. They attended an English class of American English File book 3 (1997), to improve their listening ability. Finally, a listening post-test administered to measure the participants' inferencing ability while they listened to number of excerpts. The focus of all sequences of pre-test, treatment and post-test were on listening skill. The results revealed that was a significant positive relationship between motivation and attitude and listening test performance. The findings also revealed that a significant positive relationship listening performance of learners in understanding short and extended linguistic discourse in terms of their inferencing ability. In order to analyze the data in addition to the statistical indexes like, frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, an inferential statistics method series of independent samples t-test- has used. The raw data obtained from AMTB questionnaire and listening test were submitted to SPSS program and the subsequent computations were made.

Keywords: Motivation, Attitude, Inferencing Listening Comprehension, Pre-Test, Post-Test, Treatment, Questionnaire

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Introduction

There are many individual factors that contribute to learning a second or foreign language including English. The most important factor appeared to be motivation due to influences on the rate and success of second/foreign language learning (McDonogh, 1983, Ellise, 1994 as cited in Jordens, 2006). They further asserted that one of the most important factors influencing their success and failure in learning the language is students' motivation.

The other certain factor is learners' attitudes, because an ESL/EFL learners' motivation in learning a certain language is influenced by learners' attitudes toward learning that language. Attitudesmight be positive or negative in which it reinforces or decreases the motivation of language learning. The relation between motivation and attitude toward language learning has been the concern of many researchers (Youssef, 2012; Gardner, Tremblay, Masgoret, 1997; Hsieh, 2008). Today, the concept of students' motivation has been oriented in many theories of foreign/second language learning and certainly the role of students' attitudes have been emphasized in foreign/second language learning.Gardner and Lambert (1972, cited in Hsieh, 2008)claim that 'the learner's motivation is determined by learner's attitudes towards the other group in particular and by their orientation towards the learning task itself'(p.30).In addition, Lifrieri (2005) believes that "attitude is necessary but insufficient for linguistic attainment" (p.14) .

Listening comprehension is an important, active and complex skill which both learners and instructors find it challenging. Listeners must be able to combine sounds, meaning of vocabulary and grammatical structure and explanation of stress and intonation and in a final manner interpret it immediately even in the larger sociocultural context (Vandergrift, 1999). So, speakers provide only information which are necessary to be inferred by listeners. Inexpert listeners are able to discriminate sounds, recognize words and identify grammatical and pragmatic units, but they cannot grasp the context as a whole. Listeners need to make inference in order to make sense of discourse. To achieve the context, listeners are needed to resort to skills as a means of obtaining synthesis skills. Inferential ability helps listeners connect the corpus linguistic to background knowledge and then get the global context. Based on the significance of making inference during listening comprehension, concerning the importance of motivation and attitudes towards Learning English, the current study tends to reveal the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' motivation and attitudes towards English learning and their inferencing ability in listening comprehension.

Review of the Literature

There have been many definitions and interpretations for motivation and attitude as global concepts. Based on studies conducted, motivation and attitude appear to be associated with acheivement.

Motivation

Definition of motivation is very hard. As Gardner (2006) states "motivation is a very complex phenomenon with many factors… thus, it is not possible to give a simple definition" (p.242). Motivation has been defined by many schools of thought. Behavioristics school of thought view motivation as result of stimulus-response leading to reward (Camerson, 1994 & Pierce). Each of theories of behavioral learning postulates a major factor for motivation. Classical conditioning theory emphasizes on biological responses to associated stimuli that energize and direct behavior (Huitt & Hummel, 1997a), yet for

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operant learning theory the major factor of motivation is consequences, that is, reinforcers provide relish to increase behavior and the punishers provide disrelish leading in behavior (Huitt & Hummel, 1997b). From the cognitivists perspective, the term motivation is a theory that wants to describe human behavior in the case of consideration of received information, as opposed to an inbuilt series of instructions that govern responses to different situations (Ausubel, Novak & Hanesian, 1968). Cognitive motivation depicts the needs of information and knowledge that are based on curiosity and exploratory activity. This includes history of students' life and pas experience, containts knowledge acquired from childhood have been learned and facilitated in the contxt of socio-cultural opportunities and also knowledge that they have been acquired during the process of learning (Woolfolk, 1990). Cognitive psychology claims that using memory, motivation, thinking and reflection play an important role in learning. Cognitive theorists see learning as an internal process, and explains that the amount of learning depends on processing capacity of the learner, the amount of effort expended during the learning process, and the depth of the processing (Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Craik & Tulving, 1975), and also the learners' existing knowledge structure (Ausubel, 1974). However, constructivists fall in the trap of "framework for conceptualizing motivation as socially negotiated by participants in which motivation is inseperable from the instruction process and the classroom invironment (Ushioda, 2009). Constructivists bealives that learners active rather than passive and they don't receive knowledge from the outside; rather they interpret and process what is received and then create knowledge. In this theory the learner is the center of learning process. The construction of the knowledge includes both aspects of physical and intellectual learning activities (Duffy & Cunningham, 1996). Despite the differences all above, all three schools of thought, have emphasized the concept of "need", that is, employment of needs is rewarding, requires choices, interpreted in a social context" (Brown, 2000, p. 161).

The presence and the value of motivation in shooting up second/foreign language learning are indisputable. Lifrieri (2005, p, 4) guides that if asked about the factors which effect individual levels of success in any activity – such as learning-, most people would name motivation among that factors. Brown (2000) points out that "it is easy to second language learning to claim that a learner will be successful with the proper motivation" (p.160). Some scholars asserted that there is distinction between instrumental motivation and integrative motivation. While the both are the essential elements of success, integrative motivation is found to sustain long-term success learning second language (Taylor, Meynard and Rheault 1977, Ellis 1994). In some researchers conducted by Gardner and Lambert integrative motivation is viewed as being more important in a formal learning environment than instrumental motivation (Ellis 1994). In other studies, the instrumental motivation has been emphasized. Although two types are stressed, but instrumental motivation is known as a significant factor in many researches. Students who support an integrative approach to language study are usually highly motivated and therefore more successful in a language learning. In addition to Gardner integrative and instrumental motivation, the third type of motivation in terms of "developmental' motivation has been mentioned by Cooper and Fishman (1977, p. 243). According to them, this motivation is related to "personal development or personal satisfaction". This type of motivation contains activities as watching movies and reading book in English (ibid). Another type of motivation is assimilative motivation. By assimilative motivation learner desire to become identical member of the target speech community. The learner maybe cannot stress his feelings according the social group, but he will appear his attitude toward the group through conducting himself to the norms of the group (Graham 1998).

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By the reflection of all above, researchers view the motivation both in isolation or integration. Spolsky (1989, p. 160) asserted that "a language may be learned for anyone or any collection of practical reasons (p. 32).

Attitudes

Eagly and Chaiken (2007) describe the concept of attitude as a psychological desire that is expressed by assessing a significant entity with some degree of favor or disfavor. Fazio (2007) views attitude as a hypothetical construct that represens an individual's degree of like or dislike for an item as well as positive or negative views of a person, place, thing, or events. Baker (1992, p, 10) views attitudes as "a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behavior". According to Gardner (1985, p, 1o) regards that "motivation refers to combination of effort and desire to achieve the goal of language learning plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language". However, Breckler (1984) categorizes the concept of "attitudes" as cognitive, affective and behavioral. A *cognitive* component is the beliefs segment of attitude When someone forms an opinion about any person, object or situation, the cognitive component plays the role. The *affective* one is the feeling segment of attitude. When someone attaches someone's emotion to the opinion about any person, object, or situation; the affective attitude comes to play. Finally, the *behavioral* component refers to behavioral attitude. When a person attaches a behave or act to the opinion about any person, object, or situation; the behavioral component plays. These three components are interrelated (McGuire, 1969). Ostrom (1969) suggests that it does not really matter whether all or only one of the three components are measured because there is a high intercorrelation between the three components and in fact they dominate uniqueness of each component.

Inferencing ability in listening

Inferenceing is a cognitive process to make meaning of a text in both listening and reading comprehension. As limited researches have been proceeded to inferential ability in listening comprehension, thus some sources in this literature review concerns inferential ability in both reading and listening. However, Lund (1991) belives that the listening is the same as reading because both of them use meaning by comprehension and decoding the language, although the two positions agree that this decoding happen in a different manner. Indeed, Eysenk (1990), Clark and Clark (1997) and Rost (1990), indicate that listeners must utilize inferencing in order to make sense of discourse.

Activating inferential ability has been done by at least four different levels by listeners; phonetic/ phonological, lexical/ semantic, grammatical and the pragmatic. According to Shaozhong (2005), there have been two distinguished meanings or intents in each utterance or communicative act of verbal communication. The first meaning or intent is sentence meaning or the informative intent, and the second meaning or intent is the speaker meaning or communicative intent (Leech 1983; Sperber and Wilson 1986). The ability to comprehend and produce a communicative act is referred to as pragmatic competence (Kasper 1997) which includes one's knowledge of social distance, differences in the social status between the speakers involved, cultural knowledge, e.g. politeness norms, and linguistic knowledge, both explicit and implicit.

Buck (1991) suggests five different inferential types to make in listening comprehension. The first inferential type refers to guess how certain characters feel some particular point in a narrative and story.

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The second inferential type refers to find reason for information clearly stated in the text. The third one refers to make a deduction about some aspect of a story, which is very similar to previous type, expect that the listener benot asked about clearly stated information. The fourth-inferential type refers to make predictions on how listeners think a story will develop, and the last inferential type refers to find reasons for what seemed like an obvious inference made by a text construct.

The text might be difficult or ambiguous to understand without a title. Appropriate background knowledge could be contribution to comprehension before and during reader /hearer's exposure to the text or discourse.

Related Empirical Studies

There is a plethora of research that has been carried out internationally to investigate learner's motivation and attitude toward the English language and also learner's listening comprehension. For example, In Bahrain, relation of some sociocultural variables, attitudes and motivation of young Arab students learning English as a second language were also of concern for many researchers. One of the revelant studies was that of Lori & Ansari (2001) who surveyed a number of variables pertaining to the socio-cultural outlooks of 412 young Arab students learning English as a foreign language and the relation of their attitudes and motivation prior to their learning of the language. An attitudinal scale was developed based on Gardner & Lambert's attitudinal/ motivational scale (1972). The results demonstrated that certain variables appeared to be correlated with student's attitudes and motivation more than others.

Lili (2013) carried out a study in order to investigate the role of motivation & attitude in second language learning in Dalian Jiatony University. Based on Gardner & Lembert's research (1972), the researchers developed a questionnaire to elicit the data required. The questionnaire was administered on 30 students. The findings revealed that motivation &attitude play a very important role in foreign language learning and various learners have various motivation and attitudes. In addition, there is no answer to this question if one type of motivation or attitude is superior to another to lead to language learning success.

Another study by Ghazvini & Khejelpour (2011) attempted to explore attitudes and motivation in learning English as a second language high school study. The sample of the study consisted of 123 Iranian male and female students. The instrument used was a questionnaire. Result showed that girl students are more interactively motivated and boy students are more instrumentally motivated to learning language. In addition, the girls have more positive attitude toward learning English than boys; they also are more inclined to bilingualism. However, there is no significant difference between high school students in motivational orientations, while they have positive attitude to learning English as a second language.

Statement of the Problem

A socio-psychological investigation of the learner is important in both understanding the learning situation and the learners' mindset towards English. Gardner (1985) proposes that second language acquisition is 'truly a socio-psychological phenomenon, it is concerned with the development of communication skills between an individual and members of another cultural community. The present study focuses on motivation orientations of the Iranian students and their attitudes towards learning English.

All persons in their everyday life deal with listening in some sorts. Handling the comprehension of variety of listening, EFL learners must have some crucial usages for the process of listening comprehension.

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There are a variety of studies that have been carried out on the relationship between foreign language teaching and learning towards reading comprehension with learners' motivation and attitude in some countries, but there has been a low degree of regard about the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' motivation and attitude towards English learning and their listening comprehension in particular. In order to bridge this gap, the researcher will aim at enquiring the relationship between motivation and attitude towards English learning and their listening comprehension. To achieve this purpose, the present study seeks answers to the following corresponding questions formulated for the current study.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

1. Is there any significant relationship between EFL learners' motivation and attitudes towards English learning and their inferencing ability in listening comprehension?
2. Is there any significant difference in the listening performance of EFL learners in understanding short and extended linguistic discourse in terms of their inferencing ability?
2. The following null hypotheses were formulated in line with an above research questions:
3. H0 (1): There is no significant relationship between EFL learners' and motivation and attitudes towards English learning and their inferencing ability in reading comprehension.
4. H0 (2): There is no significant difference in the performance of EFL learners in short and extended linguistic discourses in terms of their inferencing ability.

Materials Method

A sample of 60 participants including adult females, have been randomly selected from a population of intermediate level English language students in Time Institute in Tehran. The researcher administered a Listening pre-test to identify the participants' level of listening comprehension. Accordingly, those whose scores fall within one standard deviation above and below the mean were considered as upper intermediate English learners whose age range falls between twenty and twenty-five.

In this study, three instruments were utilized.

1. A Listening Comprehension as pre-test.

The first instrument employed in the current investigation was the listening pre-test adopted from American English File book 2, by Clive Oxenden and Christina Latham-Koenig (1996). The pre-test included 35 multiple choices, cloze test and True-False items requiring 20 minutes to be answered. The test measured the participants' English language knowledge, focusing on listening comprehension (see Appendix A).

2. Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) Questionnaire

Following the Listening pre-test, the questionnaire of Gardner's Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB, 2004) was used which included 116 items and was administered to the participants to determine their types of attitudes and motivation towards English language learning. This questionnaire has been adopted from the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) which was used for institutional advanced level students studying English as a foreign language. Gardner states that AMTB is documented, validated, and standardized on a sample of Canadian students (see Appendix B). Reliability check was calculated. The related table is presented in the results chapter.

3. Listening comprehension post-test

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Another test administered in the present study was a post-test on listening comprehension taken from the American English File book 3, by Clive Oxenden and Christina Latham-Koenig (1996) to identify the participants' inferencing ability and to see if students' listening comprehension has improved after treatment. Concentration of this book is on listening comprehension.

Each stage of the test allows the participants to come closer to understanding the conversation. The multiple choice questions allow learners to use small key points which they may have picked upon to eliminate answers and choose the best ones. In the cloze test, participants must use a certain amount of information to be able to make sense of sentences and choose the appropriate words. Next, students listen for the gist of the conversation. Using what they have processed and familiar words, they can create an overview of the subject, and briefly understand the main points. Finally, learners listen to notice the details. This allows them to fully analyse the conversations. Therefore, they try to understand all aspects of the text, including word by word. At this point, it is expected that the participants will have a detailed understanding of the subject.

The test consisted of 30 items including multiple-choice questions, cloze test, listening for gist and listening for details, based on short and extended conversations. The advocated time has been 20 minutes. Learners listened to the recording once, and answered the questions while they were listening. Students should be able to recognize and infer the correct answers. The content validity of both tests has been checked and verified by two EFL experts. Also the reliability of both listening tests was examined through Cronbach's Formula which turned to be 0.8 and 0.8.3 respectively.

After taking the pre-test, the participants took part in a treatment program for two months, including eight weeks and three days per week. They attended an English class of American English File book 3 (1997), to improve their listening ability. Researcher has chosen this book as concentrating of this book is on listening comprehension. The class concentrated on: interesting, integrated listening material, practice in "getting the gist and listening for details" and practice in dealing with authentic spoken language.

Students were supposed to be motivated and integrated by listening to short and extended texts and tasks which were challenging in terms of speed, length and language difficulty. Longer listening was broken into separate parts with different tasks, to avoid memory overload. Alternative ways to deal with listening was pausing and listening in sections. These treatments were done by an experienced instructor of the institute and have been observed and checked regularly by the researcher.

Different steps have been followed to accomplish this research. First, the Listening pre-test was administered and the participants of the study were selected based on the measurement of the participants' English language knowledge focusing on listening comprehension. Next, the Attitude/Motivation questionnaire was distributed among the participants in order to determine respondents' attitudes and motivation level towards English language learning. After that the treatment was applied to prepare students for post-test. Finally, a listening post-test has been administered to measure the participants' inferencing ability while they listen to a number of excerpts. After listening to each excerpt, the learners were expected to respond to the questions by choosing the appropriate answer, which they arrive at by making inferences based on what they heared.

Data analysis

The gathered data have given to SPSS software, and after determining the mean of the pre-test and post-test, a survey method of the correlational study was administered to evaluate foreign language learners'

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motivation and attitude in relation to inferencing ability in their listening comprehension. This analysis was conducted both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Significance of the Study

In this study, the researcher aims to investigate the relationship between two types of non-linguistic factors, motivation and attitudes, towards English learning and their inferencing ability in listening comprehension. To be aware of the learner's non-linguistic types, teachers and authorities would be able to exert some strategies for better teaching andplanning curriculum respectively. Studying non-linguistic types from the psycholinguistic view might disclose the linguistic factors in learning. The result of this method might be the better learning of students. Thus, learner's awareness of appropriate teaching impacts human learning and subordinately language learning.

RESULTS

AMTB questionnaire reliability check

An Alpha Cronbach method was applied to guarantee the reliability of the given questionnaire. The results indicated reliability index of **.881**for the questionnaire. Therefore, it was acceptable for being used in the study.

Table 1- Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.881	**116**

Results of first research question

To investigate the first research question of whether there was any statistically significant relationship between EFL learners motivation and attitudes towards English learning and their Inferencing ability in listening comprehension, at first the researcher analyzed the results of the AMTB questionnaire and sorted out students in two groups: group one that had positive attitude and high motivation (PA/HM) and group two that had negative attitude and low motivation (NA/LM).

Table 2- Descriptive Statistics of Types of Attitude and motivation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	30	51.7	51.7	51.7
	2	28	48.3	48.3	100.0
	Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Based on table 2, 51.7% of students had high motivation and positive attitude. 48.3% had low motivation and negative attitude.

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Table 3-One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		pretest	posttest
N		51	53
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	35.7843	42.2453
	Std. Deviation	6.97514	9.81063
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.115	.180
	Positive	.054	.152
	Negative	-.115	-.180
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.820	1.309
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.512	.065

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

As it is clear from Table.3, the result of the normality test shows that p values of the two tests (.512, and .065) are more than the significance level (0.05). Therefore, we can accept the assumption of normality and we can use parametric tests for comparing the results of the pretest and posttest. In order to answer the first research question, first the gained scores from pretest to posttest in group were computed.

Test of Normality of pre and posttests.

Table 4- Descriptive Statistics of two Groups on both tests

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	1	30	35.70	7.962	1.454
	2	28	33.07	6.566	1.241
posttest	1	30	49.33	8.687	1.586
	2	28	33.29	8.721	1.648

The finding of descriptive statistics (table 4) showed the mean and standard deviation of pretest and posttest in groups (group 1: HM/PA, group 2: LM/NA). Based on the figures in table 4 there is not much difference between mean scores of pretest in two groups, but the mean scores of posttest in two groups point to a large difference between the performances of the mentioned groups.

Table 5- Paired Samples Test for group 1

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	pretest - posttest	7.086	13.159	1.728	9.546	2.626	3.522	57	.001

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As is evident from Table 5, there was a statistically significant difference between the performances of group one (HM/PA) on pretest and posttest p. value (.001) which is smaller than .05, so, a statistically significant difference existed between pre-test and posttest in group one.

Table 6- Paired Samples Test for group 2

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 2 pretest - posttest	3.659	11.206	1.971	6.342	3.164	4.522	57	.476

As is evident from Table 6, there was a no statistically significant difference between the performances of group two (LM/NA) on pretest and posttest; p. value (.476) which is larger than .05, so, no statistically significant difference was found between pre-test and posttest in group two.
Table 7 demonstrates the descriptive statistics of both groups on posttest.

Table 7- descriptive statistics of posttest in two groups

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	1	30	49.33	8.687	1.586
	2	28	34.29	8.721	1.648

As table 7 indicates, the students in group one with positive attitude and high motivation performed higher than the other group with a mean score of 49.33 as compared to the mean score of 34.29 obtained by group two.

Table 8- Independent Samples t-test for listening comprehension in groups

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
posttest	Equal variances assumed	.573	.461	3.321	56	.003	12.048	2.287	7.466	16.629
	Equal variances not assumed			3.321	55.694	.003	12.048	2.287	7.465	16.630

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Based on the above table, in the independent-samples t-test output box, the results of Levene's test for the equality of variances are presented (Table 8). Levene's test shows whether the variance of scores for the two groups is the same or not. The Sig. value of Levene's test is .461, which is larger than .05, so, in this table, the first row of the table which refers to Equal variances should be used. Under the section labeled t-test for equality of means, the column labeled Sig. (2-tailed), shows the value of .003. It means that there were significant differences between the listening scores of the students with positive attitude and high motivation and those with negative attitude and low motivation. Investigating the means of the two groups showed that the students with positive attitude and high motivation had higher listening scores than the ones with negative attitude and low motivation. Therefore, the first research hypothesis was rejected.

Table 9- Results of correlation statistics between AMTB and listening comprehension

		AMTB test
Posttest	Pearson Correlation	.621
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	58

As the results presented in table 9 show, there is a statistically significant relation with significant level of 0.001 between AMTB and listening comprehension performance. The Pearson coefficient is 0.62 indicating a relatively high direct correlation. Thus, we can say that the level of attitude and motivation (AMTB) would affect the Iranian EFL learners over all listening comprehension ability.

Results of second research question

The second research question focused on any significant difference in the listening performance of learners in understanding short and extended linguistic discourse in terms of their inferencing ability.

Table 10 below presents the descriptive statistics of the sample groups' performances on short and extended linguistic discourse in posttest listening comprehension.

Table 10- Descriptive statistics of posttest on short and extended excerpts

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Short	1	30	21.47	4.058	.741
	2	28	13.71	6.194	1.170
Extended	1	30	32.03	7.876	1.438
	2	28	18.64	6.430	1.215

As indicated in table 10 the first group performed noticeably higher than the second groups on both short and extended discourses. Students with high motivation and positive attitude obtained the mean scores of 21.47 on short test and 32.03 on extended tests, while the learners with low mitivation and negative attitude scored 13.71 on short tests and 18.64 on extended tests which are lowers than those scores of HM/PA group.

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Table 11- Results of Independent Samples Test on extended and short extracts

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
short	Equal variances assumed	2.352	.131	-1.645	56	.005	-2.248	1.366	-4.984	.489
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.623	46.080	.009	-2.248	1.385	-5.036	.541
extended	Equal variances assumed	.577	.451	7.063	56	.001	13.390	1.896	9.592	17.189
	Equal variances not assumed			7.112	55.054	.001	13.390	1.883	9.618	17.163

Based on the table above, in the independent-samples t-test output box, the results of Levene's test for the equality of variances are presented (Table 11). Levene's test shows whether the variance of scores for the two groups is the same. The Sig. value of Levene's test for short linguistic discourse is .131, which is larger than .05, so, in this Table, the first row of the table which refers to Equal variances assumed should be used. Under the section labeled t-test for equality of means, the column labeled Sig. (2-tailed), shows the value of .005. It means that there were significant differences in the listening performances of the students in understanding short linguistic discourse in term of their inferencing ability. Therefore, the first research hypothesis was rejected.

Levene's test shows whether the variance of scores for the two groups is the same. The Sig. value of Levene's test for extended linguistic discourse is .451, which is larger than .05, so, in Table (11), the first row of the table which refers to Equal variances assumed should be used. Under the section labeled t-test for equality of means, the column labeled Sig. (2-tailed), shows the value of .001. It means that there were significant differences in the listening performance of the students in understanding extended linguistic discourse in term of their inferencing ability. Therefore, the first research hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the possible relationship between EFL learners' Motivation and Attitudes towards English Learning and Their Inferencing Ability in Listening Comprehension. Since the relationship between EFL learners' Motivation and Attitudes towards English Learning and Their Inferencing Ability in listening test performance is deemed to be intuitive, only few

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empirical studies have investigated their dynamic relationships to date. As the results indicated, a significant direct relationship was observed between motivation and attitudes and learners' inferencing ability and listening performance. That is, as the results showed, the higher the level of motivation and attitudes were, the higher listening test performance scores were; which revealed when learners' motivation and attitudes increased, their comprehension of listening tasks increased. The findings of the current study as examined by the first and second research question provide empirical support for the prediction that motivation and attitudes and listening test performance are directly related.

Discussion of the First Reseach Question

According to the results of data analysis, significant relations were found between achievement at the pre-test and post-test time in those students who the results revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between their motivation and attitudes towards English learning and their Inferencing ability in listening comprehension. To identify the interrelationship between EFL learners' motivation and attitudes and their Inferencing ability in listening comprehension, a statistically significant difference was found between EFL learners' motivation and attitudes and their Inferencing ability in listening comprehension. This means that the learners with high level of motivation and positive attitude toward the non-native language turned to perform higher on both aural comprehension tests in comparison to those learners with low level of motivation and negative attitude toward English language; this finding is indicative of the fact that learners' levels of motivation and attitude would greatly influence their language performance.

The results obtained from this study has clarified that motivation and attitude have brilliant roles in raising inferencing ability of listening comprehension. Naiman (1987) believes that the most successful learners are not necessarily those to whom a language comes very easily; they are those who display certain charactristics, most of them clearly associated with motivation, like positive task orientation, ego involvement, need for achievement, high aspirations, goal orientation, perseverance and tolerance of ambiguity. Therefore, from this information brought here it is clear that the motivation and attitude to learn a language should be largely high.

Neglecting of attitude and motivation factors can trouble students in language learning, specifically in listening comprehension. Even brilliant and talent learners with low attitude and motivation would achieve a little progress. So the teachers and educators should handle the techniques and strategies applied in their classes in a way that can immerse learners in listening comprehension.

In the same Munoz & Tragan (2001) obtained similar results in their study in which they analyzed the answers to a questionnaire in which learners of different groups and different proficiency levels were asked about their attitudes and motivation of EFL learners towards listening performance.

The significant statistical relations of above study were shown between positive attitude towards language learning and achievement in some language tests, but not all. Still, recognizing the importance of student attitudes and motivation, several surveys have been conducted in Japan concerning this topic. Berwick and Ross' (1989) longitudinal study of Japanese college freshmen examined the correlation between learners' positive attitude and motivation with proficiency in English. The results of the study showed that motivation to "learn English" peaked in the last year of high school and then dropped upon entering college. However, they also found that positive attitude and high motivation contributes to the task of second foreign language acquisition to a great deal.

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The obtained results of this study is also in line with the obtained findings of the study carried out by Sadighi & Zarafshan (2006) in which they explored the fact that learners with positive attitude used language learning strategies more frequently than those with negative attitude.

Discussion of the Second Research Question

The results revealed a statistically significant difference between the listening performances of two groups in understanding short and extended linguistic discourse in terms of their inferencing ability. The results showed that the group one because of having high motivation and positive attitude had better listen performance in understanding short and extended linguistic discourse in terms of their inferencing ability than the other group.

Conclusion

The present study set out to investigate whether there existed a statistically significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' motivation and attitudes and their Inferencing ability in listening comprehension and listening test performance. The findings revealed there was a significant positive relationship between motivation and attitudes and listening test performance, suggesting that in order to improve students' listening test performance, the level of motivation and attitudes needs to be increased to certain extent of course. The results also revealed a significant in the listening performance of learners with high motivation and positive attitude increase in understanding short and extended linguistic discourses.

Pedagogical Implications

From the evidence of the present study, some implications may be drawn. Since it has been found that amount of motivation and attitudes has significant positive relationship with listening test performance, it can be concluded that the utilization methods and ways of increasing motivation and positive attitude, would help learners improve their listening test performance and their inferencing ability. Therefore, it is deemed essential for teachers to encourage learners to improve motivation and attitude and nourish them with challenging opportunities to use extended linguistic discourse, whenever the need arises for example, when taking listening comprehension tests in general and in taking high-stakes exams such as IELTS and TOEFL in particular (Xyehua & Zhenmei, 2013)

The results of the present study have led to the following pedagogical implications (Oroujlu, Vahedi, 2011., MacIntyre, Blackie, 2012):

1) Teachers should promote the students' positive attitude toward academic English learning. They should create a lively, challenging and non-threatening atmosphere in the classroom where the affective barriers are kept at minimum.

2) Language teachers have an important role in maintaining and enhancing the students' motivation and attitude.

3) Teachers should use the best of the students' high motivation in order to contribute to the success in language learning.

4) Since attitude and motivation are interwoven, any kind of boost in attitude will increase students' motivation in learning English.

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Suggestion for Further Research

This study aimed to answer a limited number of questions raised previously. This is while many other questions may be raised as the following in relation with the findings of this study:

1) This study investigated the impact of attitude and motivation on listening in a foreign language. Other studies can focus on the impacts of motivation and attitude on other skills including speaking, reading and writing.

2) The present study focused on the impact of attitude and motivation on listening in a foreign language. Similar studies can be conducted to examine the impacts of other personality factors, namely, anxiety, self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, empathy, extroversion, introversion on listening.

3) Further studies can investigate the impacts of the mentioned personality factors anxiety, self-esteemss, inhibition, risk-taking, empathy, extroversion, and introversion, on other skills such as speaking, reading and writing.

Limitation of the Study

This study faced some limitations throughout the accomplishment of different phases: The first limitation of this study seems to be its limited number of participants. If more paticipants had taken part in the study, the results would have been more reliable and closer to reality. The second limitation that restricts the generalizability of the findings is that although the participants were supposed to answer the questions quite carefully and honestly, while answering the questions, they might not have taken the study seriously and they may have answered without thinking thoroughly, which may also have influenced the results. The last point to be mentioned here is the difficulty of evaluation along with generalization of findings in human issues. One can hardly claim that all the variables have been controlled throughout the study, since some uncontrolled variables like fatigue, unwillingness to participate, and the affective mood may have affected the obtained result.

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