

## On the Relationship between Language Learning Strategies and Personality Types among Iranian EFL Learners

Jahanbakhsh Nikoopour

Islamic Azad University, North Tehran Branch

Mohammad Amini Farsani

University of Teacher Education

---

**ABSTRACT:** In recent years, language-learning research has been more concerned with factors that may affect the choice of learning strategies among learners. In studies conducted by Cohen (1990), Ehrman and Oxford (1995), MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) and Reid (1987), these factors have been identified as motivation, gender, learning style, previous experience, and personality type. This study attempts to find out the kinds of language learning strategies that Iranian EFL learners mostly utilize. In addition, the language learning strategies preferred by Iranian extrovert/introvert, sensing/intuitive, thinking/feeling, and judging/perceiving language learners are also considered. The sample of the study included 137 Iranian EFL learners at MA level, studying at different branches of the Islamic Azad University and University of Teacher Education, who were randomly selected for the purpose of this study. The instruments utilized in this study were (a) Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to identify the kind of personality type language learners have, and (b) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) to assess the learners' strategy-use-frequency in language learning. The results of the study showed that learners with *extrovert* and *introvert* personality types did not show any significant difference regarding the use of language learning strategies. Both sensing and intuitive learners preferred to use affective strategies. The findings also indicated that *thinking*, as well as *feeling* learners, used memory and social strategies. *Perceiving* learners used two categories of strategies, cognitive and compensation, whereas *judging* learners employed only the *compensation* strategy.

**Keywords:** language-learning strategies, personality types, EFL learners, extroverts vs. introverts.

---

Over the last few decades, a gradual but significant shift has taken place within the field of education, resulting in less emphasis on teachers and teaching and greater stress on learners and learning. It seems reasonable for language teachers to make their students less dependent on the teachers and

reach a level of autonomy (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Reiss, 1985; Tamada, 1996; Wenden, 1991). At the same time, a shift of attention has taken place in second language acquisition research from the products of language learning to the processes through which learning takes place (Oxford, 1990). As a result of this change in emphasis, language-learning strategies (LLSs) have emerged not only as integral components of various theoretical models of language proficiency (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Bialystok, 1978; Canale & Swain, 1980; Ellis, 1985) but also as a means of achieving learner autonomy in the process of language learning (Benson & Voller, 1997; Oxford, 1990).

Extensive investigation has shown the importance of language learning strategies in making language learning more efficient and in producing a positive effect on learners' language use (Cohen & Weaver, 1998; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1996; Wenden & Rubin, 1987). Nevertheless, research in this area has shown that not all learners use LLSs in the same fashion. A number of factors may affect the choice of language learning strategies among the learners. In studies conducted by Cohen (1990), Ehrman and Oxford (1989), MacIntyre and Gardner (1989), and Reid (1987), these factors have been identified as motivation, gender, learning style and previous experience, and personality types.

However, the existing research on LLSs has heavily relied on learners' strategy use in second language contexts. In English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts, on the other hand, research on LLSs has mostly been conducted in South East Asia where the context of language learning is quite different from that of some other Asian countries, such as the context of this study, Iran (Naimie & Naimie, 2007; Rahimi, 2005). For the past two decades, due to a variety of social and political reasons, Iranian EFL learners have had little or no contact with native speakers of English. In fact, one can rarely find English-speaking nationals teaching English in Iranian schools or universities, public or private. The use of the internet and other media such as satellite TV is neither widespread nor easily accessible to all language learners. Moreover, "language teaching is mostly grammar-based with no attention paid to language use during high school years" (Rahimi, 2005, p.27).

This study investigated the relationship between personality types and language learning strategies. The rationale behind the study was that the personality of learners constitutes a major factor contributing to success or failure in language learning. Learners also consider personality factors important. Naiman, Frohlich, Stern, and Todesco (1978) investigated learners' personality factors and found out that in "good language learners," extroversion is helpful in acquiring oral skills. It is somewhat surprising to find that the research that has investigated personality variables and L2 learning is quite scanty and, in many ways, unsatisfactory (Ellis, 2008).

That is why further research into the language-learning strategy use of EFL learners is needed. Three topics related to LLSs bear on this study: the definition of LLSs, the taxonomy of LLSs, and the definition and strands of personality types. These issues will be addressed in some detail in the following sections.

### **Language Learning Strategies**

Learning strategies have been in the center of attention, and they have gained great importance in the teaching-learning process. As Wenden (1986) reminds us, an old proverb states, “give a man a fish and he eats for a day; Teach him how to fish and he eats for a life time” (p.188). Having been applied to the fields of language teaching and learning, this proverb might be interpreted to mean that if students are provided with answers, the immediate problem is solved. However, if they are taught the strategies to work out the answers for themselves, they are empowered to manage their own learning.

#### ***Definition of Strategies***

Ellis (2008) states that “the actions that learners perform in order to learn a language have been variously labeled behaviors, tactics, techniques, and strategies” (p.703). However, the term most commonly used is *learning strategies*, defined as “behaviors or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed, and enjoyable.”(Oxford, 1989, p.236). A language learning strategy is an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language like memorization, initiation of conversation with native speakers, and inferencing. Tarone (1980) distinguishes between language learning strategies and skills learning strategies. The former are concerned with learners’ attempt to master new linguistic and sociolinguistic information about the target language, while the latter are concerned with the learners’ attempts to become skilled listeners, speakers, readers, or writers. The literature on learning strategies does not distinguish clearly between these two types. Due to the controversies and different distinctions among scholars regarding learning strategies (e.g., Cohen, 1990; Macaro, 2006; Seliger, 1984; Stern, 1983; Tarone, 1980), some widely used definitions are chronologically listed in the following table:

**Table1.** *Definition of Learning Strategies by various scholars*

1978	<b>Bialystok</b>	Language learning strategies are optional means for exploiting available information to improve competence in a second language (p.71).
1987	<b>Wenden &amp; Robin</b>	Language learning strategies are those which contribute to the development of the language system that the learner constructs and affects learning directly (p.23).
1987	<b>Chamot</b>	Learning strategies are techniques, approaches, or deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content area information (p.71).
1990	<b>O'Malley &amp; Chamot</b>	Learning strategies are the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to comprehend, learn, or retain new information (p.1).
1990	<b>Oxford</b>	Learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (p.8).
2001	<b>Hall</b>	Learning strategies are goal-directed actions that are used by learners to mediate their own learning (p.92).

### ***Classification of Language Learning Strategies***

Considerable effort has gone into classifying the strategies that learners use. Two of the most commonly cited classifications are O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) and Oxford's (1990). The former is based on a three-way distinction between cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective learning strategies, whereas the latter is hierarchical, with a general distinction made between direct and indirect strategies, each of which is then broken down into a number of subcategories.

Moreover, Oxford (1990) has developed versions of the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) to measure learners' self-reported strategy use in both second and foreign language settings. Oxford classified strategies into two major categories: direct and indirect strategies. "Direct strategies directly involve the target language learners in the sense that they acquire mental processing of the language" (Oxford, 1990, p. 37). She classified direct learning strategies into three main groups. Each of these groups approach language differently with various functions:

1. *Memory strategies* are used for entering new information into memory storage and for retrieving it when needed for communication (e.g., grouping, representing sounds in memory, structured reviewing, and using physical responses).
2. *Cognitive strategies* are used for linking new information with existing schemata and for analyzing and classifying it. Cognitive strategies are responsible for deep processing, forming and revising

internal mental models, and receiving and producing messages in the target language (e.g., repeating, getting the idea quickly, analyzing, and taking notes).

3. *Compensation strategies* include such strategies as guessing and using gestures. Such strategies are needed to fill any gaps in the knowledge of the language (e.g., switching to the mother tongue, using other clues, getting help, and using synonyms).

In addition, indirect strategies are classified into three subcategories:

1. *Metacognitive strategies* are techniques used for organizing, planning, focusing, and evaluating one's own learning (e.g., linking new information with an already-known one, seeking practice opportunities, and self-monitoring).

2. *Affective strategies* are used for handling feelings, attitudes and motivation (e.g., lowering anxiety by the use of music, encouraging oneself, and discussing feelings with others).

3. *Social strategies* are used for facilitating interaction by asking questions and cooperating with others in the learning process (e.g., asking for clarification, cooperating with others, and developing cultural understanding).

## **Personality Types**

Personality can be defined as those characteristics of a person that account for consistent patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving (Pervin & John, 2001). It is generally conceived of as composed of a series of traits such as extraversion/introversion, neuroticism/stability, and it is typically measured by means of some kind of self-report questionnaire (Ely, 1986; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964; Myers & Briggs, 1976). These have been used to measure certain dimensions of personality such as risk-taking, tolerance of ambiguity, etc. among L2 learners. Each dimension of personality types represents a continuum; that is, individuals can be screened on the spectrum to be less or more, say, extroverted, but it is also possible to identify their idealized personality type.

A brief summary of the four dimensions of personality types based on Myers-Briggs' Type Indicator (MBTI) is given below:

Extraversion (E) -Introversion (I): An extrovert is said to receive energy from outside sources, whereas an introvert is more concerned with the inner world of ideas and is more likely to be involved with solitary activities. This trait does not just describe whether a person is outgoing or shy, but it considers

whether a person prefers working alone or feels energized and at home, working in a team (Eysenck & Chan, 1982, p.157).

**Sensing (S) - Intuitive (N).** A sensing person relies on gathering information through the five senses, attending to concrete, practical facts. Sensors are less likely to see the 'bigger picture' and more likely to follow a step-by-step approach. An intuitive thinker is more likely to be drawn by abstract possibilities, meanings and relationships and will be drawn by the innovative and theoretical aspects (Dewaele & Furnham, 1999, p.287).

**Thinking (T) - Feeling (F).** A thinking person is more likely to prefer decisions made in an impersonal, logical, objective manner. A feeling person will make decisions based more on personal values, relationships, and the feelings of others. Women are more likely to be feelers (Strong, 1983, p.248).

**Judging (J) - Perceiving (P).** This personality preference describes how a person deals with the outside world. The judger is more likely to look for a planned and controlled life, seeking closure, preferring planning, and regulation. The perceiver deals with the outside world through sensing or intuition, but he prefers spontaneity, flexibility, freedom, and autonomy (Johnston & Orwig, 1999).

### **Language Learning and Strategy Use**

Within the area of foreign language research, a number of studies indicate that learning strategies play a significant role in successful language learning. Politzer and McGroarty (1985) claimed that language strategies are associated with language acquisition. They may improve learners' learning of the forms and functions, which are required for comprehension and production. Moreover, learners utilize strategies to aid the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information.

In the 1970s, researchers first noticed the significance of individual variations in language learning. Different researchers have studied factors related to choice of language learning strategies (e.g., Ehrman, 1990; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989). These factors include the degree of metacognitive awareness, gender, level of language learning, the language being learned, affective variables (e.g., attitudes, motivation, and language learning goals), personality type, learning style, career choice, aptitude, number of years of language study, and language teaching methods. Some researchers tend to distinguish successful learners from less successful learners based on the metacognitive strategies (Oxford, 1993). Yang (1999) found that Taiwanese university students' self-efficacy beliefs were strongly related to

the reported use of learning strategies, especially functional practice strategies. Cohen (1990) referred to learning strategies directed at the language skill of vocabulary learning, although this is clearly an aspect of linguistic knowledge. There are also a number of other problems. For instance, there is uncertainty about the precise nature of the behaviors as learning strategies due to different researchers (Seliger, 1984; Stern, 1983). Still arguments continue as how to define learning strategies. Macaro (2006), for example, defined learning strategies as cognitive and rejected the view that they can also be considered in terms of overt behavior.

The MBTI is one of the most popular and most well- researched personality tests used today. Around the world, 2-3 million people take the test every year. Therefore, it has been translated into at least 16 languages, and it has its own on-line academic journal devoted exclusively to it. Currently, the most promising application of MBTI research is in education.

Some researchers have investigated the effects of personality types measured by the MBTI on strategy use. Ehrman and Oxford (1989), for example, conducted a survey exploring the relationships between personality types and strategy use on the SILL. Extroverts were found to use two categories of strategies (affective and visualization) more frequently than introverts. Introverts, on the contrary, made a greater use of strategies for searching /communicating meaning than did the extroverts. They also indicated that (a) intuitive people used four strategy categories (affective, formal model building, authentic language use, and searching for /communicating meaning) more frequently than sensing people, and (b) feeling-type people, compared with thinkers showed a greater use of general study strategies. Wakamoto (2000), in a study conducted on 254 Japanese college students, also found that extraversion on the MBTI was significantly correlated with functional practice strategies and social-affective strategies, while, introversion was not correlated with any preferred use of SILL strategies.

## **Research Questions**

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. What kinds of language learning strategies do Iranian EFL learners mostly utilize?
2. What are the learning strategies preferred by Iranian extrovert and introvert language learners?
3. What are the learning strategies preferred by Iranian sensing and intuitive language learners?
4. What are the learning strategies preferred by Iranian thinking and feeling language learners?

5. What are the learning strategies preferred by Iranian judging and perceiving language learners?

## **Method**

### ***Participants***

The subjects of this study consist of 137 EFL learners randomly selected from five universities in Iran, namely, University of Teacher Education, and four different branches of Islamic Azad University. The subjects were male and female learners majoring in applied linguistics at the M.A. level. Their age ranged from 23 to 27. They were all native speakers of Persian and studied English as a foreign language for some years. Two questionnaires were administered to the participants as the instruments of the study.

### ***Instrumentation***

***SILL (strategy inventory for language learning)***. One of the common ways to assess language-learning strategies is using Oxford's SILL questionnaire (1990). It was Strategy Inventory for Language Learning. SILL questionnaire, ESL/EFL version 7.0, contains 50 items organized according to a six-subset strategy taxonomy (memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies). The instrument measures the type and the frequency of strategy use. The instrument consists of 50 statements. Items 1-9 concern the effectiveness of memory (memory strategies); items 10-23 concern the use of mental processes (cognitive strategies); items 24-29 are the compensation for missing knowledge (compensation strategies); items 30-38 deal with the organization and evaluation of learning (metacognitive strategies); items 39-44 concern emotion management (affective strategies); and items 45-50 deal with learning with others (social strategies). Students answered each item statement using a 5-point likert-scale that ranged from one (never true of me) through five (Always or almost true of me). It is worth noting that for the ease of understanding and accuracy of the data, the questionnaire was translated into Persian (Zareie & Hadi, 2004).

***MBTI (Mayers-Briggs type indicator)***. The MBTI is one of the most popular and most well researched personality tests used. (Myers, McCauley, Quenck, & Hammer, 2003). It was developed from Carl Jung's theory of psychological type and was considered to reveal differences within and across cultures. Kirby and Barger (1998) have reported on a wide range of studies which they consider providing "significant evidence for the reliability and validity of the MBTI in a variety of groups with different cultural characteristics" (p.34). They cite hundreds of studies, which have reported on the high validity in

different cultural settings, including Korea, Nigeria, Mexico, and Brazil. The MBTI model consists of four bipolar personality dimensions including extraversion vs. introversion, intuition vs. sensing, thinking vs. feeling, and judging vs. perceiving. It is a reliable and valid questionnaire ( $r=0.75$ ).

### ***Procedure***

The SILL and MBTI questionnaires were administered to 137 EFL students at the University of Teacher Education and four different branches of the Islamic Azad University. Each questionnaire was administered in separate sessions so that students could answer the items within 40 minutes with more precision. The purpose of the survey was to discover the type of strategy the students used and the relationships between personality types and language learning strategies. In doing so, the students were requested to select the most appropriate answers to the questions. The questionnaire administration procedure took approximately two weeks to accomplish. Having collected the two completed questionnaires, the researchers analyzed the data and extracted the results.

### ***Data Analysis***

The data were collected over a period of two weeks in winter 2010 using two different instruments, namely the SILL (Oxford, 1990) and the MBTI (Mayers-Briggs, 2003) questionnaires. Subsequently, the data were subjected to statistical analyses. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Microsoft Windows version 16 was applied for this purpose. The descriptive statistics was calculated primarily to determine what kinds of language learning strategies Iranian EFL learners use. Since the authors meant to predict the personality types through language learning strategies, the Multiple Regression Analysis was used. Finally, a number of One-Way Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) were used to determine whether any significant relationship exists among the Iranian EFL learners' personality types regarding their language learning strategies. Moreover, the 0.05 level of statistical significance was set for all statistical tests in the present study.

### ***Results***

To examine the first research question, descriptive statistics was employed to investigate the overall language learning strategies that Iranian EFL students utilized. According to Oxford's (1990) classification, learners with a mean of 2.5 and under are low strategy users; learners with a mean of 2.5-3.5 are moderate strategy users; and the mean for high users is more than 3.5. Therefore, the findings revealed that, in terms of overall strategy use, Iranian EFL learners are, in general, moderate strategy users. This

finding is in line with the results of studies conducted in EFL contexts (Noguchi, 1991; Oh, 1992; Rahimi, 2005).

As it is indicated in Figure 1, the Iranian EFL students reported using metacognitive strategies as the most frequently used strategies (M=3.67), followed by affective (M=3.52), compensation (M=3.43), cognitive (M=3.26), social (M=3.04), and memory strategies (M=2.93). The results showed that Iranian EFL learners preferred to use metacognitive strategy as the most frequently used language-learning strategy and memory as the least frequently used one. These results confirm the findings of Rahimi (2005).

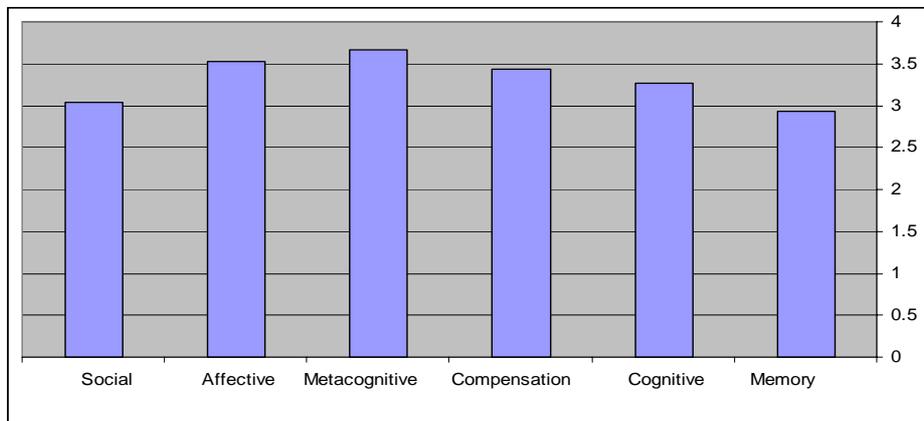


Figure 1. Means profile of SILL categories

To address the second research question, a multiple regression analysis was used. The results showed that extrovert and introvert, as two cognitive styles, did not show any significant difference regarding the use of language learning strategies. The results of the ANOVA are illustrated in Table 2. Therefore, based on the ANOVA, significant differences were not found between extrovert/introvert and language learning strategies.

Table 2. Summary of One-Way ANOVA

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	47.352	6	7.892	.643	<b>.696</b>
Residual	1596.517	130	12.281		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1643.869</b>	<b>136</b>			

- a. Predictors: (constant), memory, affective, metacognitive, compensation, social, cognitive
- b. Dependent Variable: Extrovert

**Table 3. Summary of Coefficients\***

Model	B	Std.Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(constant)	5.108	3.151		1.621	<b>.107</b>
Social	-.068	.099	.067	-.693	<b>.490</b>
Affective	-.038	.077	.045	-.491	<b>.624</b>
Metacognitive	.064	.079	.091	.818	<b>.415</b>
Compensation	.020	.078	.024	.256	<b>.799</b>
Cognitive	-.029	.046	.071	-.638	<b>.525</b>
<b>Memory</b>	<b>.096</b>	<b>.064</b>	<b>.151</b>	<b>1.494</b>	<b>.138</b>

\*p<.05

\* Dependent Variable: Extrovert

Note. See Appendix A for the summary of statistical analyses for introvert learners.

Regarding the third research question, the results from the multiple regression analysis showed that intuitive, as well as sensing learners, indicate a significant relationship with the overall language learning strategies on the one hand. These two cognitive styles, on the other hand, showed a significant relationship with affective strategy. As it can be seen in Table 4, both intuitive and sensing learners preferred the affective language learning strategies.

**Table 4. Summary of One-Way ANOVA**

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	114.703	6	19.117	2.162	<b>.041*</b>
Residual	1149.356	130	8.841		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1264.058</b>	<b>136</b>			

a. Predictors: (constant), memory, affective, metacognitive, compensation, social, cognitive

b. Dependent Variable: Intuitive

**Table 5. Summary of Coefficients\***

Model	B	Std.Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(constant)	8.546	2.673		3.197	<b>.002*</b>
Social	-.143	.084	-.160	-1.701	<b>.091</b>
Affective	-.153	.065	-.211	-2.355	<b>.020*</b>
Metacognitive	-.032	.067	-.051	-.477	<b>.634</b>
Compensation	.073	.066	.101	1.098	<b>.274</b>
Cognitive	.022	.039	.062	.572	<b>.568</b>
<b>Memory</b>	<b>.063</b>	<b>.054</b>	<b>.114</b>	<b>1.168</b>	<b>.245</b>

\*p<.05

\* Dependent Variable: Intuitive

Note. See Appendix B for the summary of statistical analyses for sensing learners)

In line with the fourth research question, as it can be observed in Table 6, there is a significant relationship between predictors LLSs, and feeling as a personality type. The results showed that feeling learners used memory and social strategies. Thinking learners, on the other hand, preferred to use memory and social strategies as well. Therefore, this strand of personality type has the preference toward the least frequently LLSs, that is, memory as well as social strategies.

**Table 6. Summary of One-Way ANOVA**

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	356.266	7	50.895	4.858	.000*
Residual	1351.574	129	10.477		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1707.839</b>	<b>136</b>			

- a. Predictors: (constant), memory, affective, metacognitive, compensation, social, cognitive  
 b. Dependent Variable: Feeling

**Table 7. Summary of Coefficients\***

Model	B	Std.Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(constant)	8.439	2.939		2.871	.005*
Social	-.295	.091	-.285	-3.232	.002*
Affective	-.077	.071	-.091	-1.084	.280
Metacognitive	-.063	.073	-.087	-.863	.390
Compensation	.053	.072	.064	.739	.461
Cognitive	.005	.042	.012	.114	.909
<b>Memory</b>	<b>.133</b>	<b>.060</b>	<b>.206</b>	<b>2.229</b>	<b>.028*</b>

\*p<.05

\* Dependent Variable: Feeling

*Note. See Appendix C for the summary of statistical analyses for thinking learners.*

Regarding the fifth research question, and based on the results, perceiving, as well as judging learners employed some language learning strategies. As it is shown in Table 8, perceiving learners showed a significant relationship with the overall predictors, but they preferred to use only two categories of strategies, that is, cognitive and compensation, whereas judges employed only the compensation strategy.

**Table 8. Summary of One-Way ANOVA**

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	680.596	7	97.228	6.087	<b>.000*</b>
Residual	2060.470	129	15.973		
<b>Total</b>	<b>2741.066</b>	<b>136</b>			

a. Predictors: (constant), memory, affective, metacognitive, compensation, social, cognitive

b. Dependent Variable: Perceiving

**Table 9. Summary of Coefficients\***

Model	B	Std.Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(constant)	10.300	3.629		2.838	<b>.005*</b>
Social	-.022	.113	-.017	-.192	<b>.848</b>
Affective	-.072	.088	-.067	-.818	<b>.415</b>
Metacognitive	-.053	.090	-.057	-.583	<b>.561</b>
Compensation	.419	.089	.396	4.708	<b>.000*</b>
Cognitive	-.172	.052	-.325	-3.293	<b>.001*</b>
<b>Memory</b>	<b>.038</b>	<b>.074</b>	<b>.046</b>	<b>.510</b>	<b>.611</b>

\*p<.05

\* Dependent Variable: Perceiving

Note. See Appendix D for the summary of statistical analyses for judges.

## Conclusion and Discussion

The results of this study provide a deeper understanding of strategy use among EFL learners in Iran. As it was predicted, strategy use is a complicated phenomenon which depends on a number of factors. What strategies EFL learners use in general, and which strategies they prefer to use more, are very important points to be taken into account.

Following similar studies carried out (e.g., Ehrman, 1990; Carrell, Prince, & Asstika, 1996; Robson, 1992), the researchers of the present study tried to consider the personality types as the dependent variable and language learning strategy use as the independent variable of the study. Regarding the overall use of language learning strategy, the researchers found out that Iranian EFL learners are mostly moderate language learning strategy users. From among the six categories, metacognitive strategies were used mostly, and EFL learners minimally used memory strategies.

As for the personality types, it was expected that extroverts use social strategies more and introverts use cognitive strategies more. However, these two binary categories of personality type did not show a significant difference in this respect. The sensing and intuitive personality types proved a significant difference in their strategy use. They preferred affective strategies to other types of strategies. The thinking personality-type subjects, in contrast to the feeling-type ones, preferred to use memory and social strategies to other types of strategies. The judging and perceiving personality-types both used cognitive strategies significantly. In addition, judging-type subjects preferred to use compensation strategies more.

This study approached the issue from another perspective too. So far, it was found that different personality types use certain language learning strategies. Due to the multiple-regression analysis of the data, the researchers considered the language learning strategies, as predictors, which can predict the personality types of the EFL learners. That is, depending on the types of language learning strategies used by EFL learners, we can predict to which personality type they belong. This way of approaching the personality type will be more accurate because in the previous approach, EFL learners might not show their characteristics quite explicitly through answering the items in the questionnaire. Therefore, considering the language learning strategies EFL learners employ, their personality type can be predicted.

The strong link between personality types and language learning strategy use shows that, in the context of language teaching and learning, it should be seriously taken into account. Language learners can be screened before starting to learn a language in terms of their personality type; hence, due to their preferences, the most appropriate language learning strategies are to be utilized for them. This issue is to be considered by syllabus designers, materials developers, teacher educators, teachers, and students. Effective use of strategies is likely to influence language achievement and lead to the improvement of second language proficiency.

On the other hand, while the students use a variety of language learning strategies, and they prefer to use certain types of strategies depending on the context of language learning, it can be helpful for language teachers to predict their personality types and do understand their characteristics more and more. Therefore, it is suggested that EFL learners should be exposed to a complete inventory of language learning strategies to be able to use the strategies they prefer depending on their personality type.

Since Iranian EFL learners showed that, in general, they are moderate language learning strategy users, and, in particular, they used metacognitive strategies mostly and memory strategies in the lowest degree, it is reasonable to insert metacognitive strategies in their

educational curriculum right from the beginning. Therefore, through their educational levels at different stages, students learn how to become strategic learners since learning how to use strategies happens over a long period. Richards and Renandya (2002) stated that blind training, in which students are led to use certain strategies without realizing it, is less successful particularly in the transfer of strategies to new tasks; therefore, strategy use succeeds best when it is along with regular class activities on a normal basis.

## References

- Bachman, L.F., & Palmer A.S. (1996). *Language testing in practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Benson, P., & Voller, P. (Eds.). (1997). *Autonomy and independence in language learning*. London: Longman Group Ltd.
- Bialystok, E. (1978). A theoretical model of second language learning. *Language Learning*, 28, 69-83.
- Canale, M. & Swain M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 10-47.
- Carrell, P., Prince, M., & Asstika, J. (1996). Personality types and language learning in an EFL context. *Language Learning*, 46, 75-99.
- Chamot, A. (1987). The learning strategies of ESL students. In A. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategy in language learning* (pp. 71-83). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Cohen, A. D. (1990). Studying second language learning strategies: How do we get the information? *Applied Linguistics*, 5 (2), 101-111.
- Cohen, A. D., & Weaver, S. J. (1998). Strategies-based instructions for second language learners. In W.A. Renandya & G. M. Jacobs (Eds.), *Learners and language learning* (pp. 1-25). Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.
- Dewaele, J., & Furnham, A. (1999). Extraversion: The unloved variable in applied linguistic research. *Language Learning*, 49, 283-98.
- Ehrman, M. (1990). The role of personality type in adult language learning: An ongoing investigation. In T. Parry & C. Stansfield (Eds.), *Language aptitude reconsidered* (pp. 126-178) Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Ehrman, M., & Oxford, R. (1989). Effects of sex differences, career choice, and psychological type on adult language learning strategies. *The Modern Language Journal*, 73, 1-13.
- Ehrman, M., & Oxford, R. (1995). Cognition plus: Correlates of language learning success. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79, 67-89.
- Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ely, C. (1986). An analysis of discomfort, risk taking, sociability, and motivation in the L2 classroom. *Language Learning*, 36, 1-25.
- Eysenck, S., & Chan, J. (1982). A comparative study of personality in adults and children: Hong Kong vs. England. *Personality and individual differences*, 3, 153-60.
- Eysenck, H., & Eysenck, S. (1964). *Manual of the Eysenck personality inventory*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Hall, J. K. (2001). *Methods for teaching foreign languages*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.
- Johnston, C., & Orwig, C. J. (1999). Your learning style and language learning. Lingualink. *SIL International*. Retrieved April 25, 2010 from [www.sil.org/LinguaLinks/LanguageLearning/OtherResources/YorLrnngStylAndLnggLrnng/contents.html](http://www.sil.org/LinguaLinks/LanguageLearning/OtherResources/YorLrnngStylAndLnggLrnng/contents.html)
- Kirby, B., & Barger, A. (1998). *Personality: Theory and research*. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychology press.
- Macaro, E. (2006). Strategies for language learning and for language use: Revising the theoretical framework. *The Modern Language Journal*, 90, 320-37.
- MacIntyre, P., & Gardner, R. (1989). Anxiety and second language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification. *Language Learning*, 39, 251-275.
- Myers, I. B., McCauley, M. H., Quenck, N.L., & Hammer, A. L. (2003). *MBTI manual*. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologist Press.
- Myers, K., & Briggs, I. (1976). *The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. California: Consulting Psychology Press.
- Naiman, N., Frohlich, M., Stern, H. H., & Todesco, A. (1978). *The good language learner: Research in education*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Institute for Studies in Education.
- Naimie, Z., & Naimie, A. (2007). *Field dependent students' language learning strategies preference*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Education, Universiti Brunei, Darussalam.
- Noguchi, C.T. (1991). *Questionnaire for learners*. Japan: Tottori University Press.
- Oh, J. (1992). Learning strategies used by university EFL students in Korea. *Language Teaching*, 1, 3-53.
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A.U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L. (1989). Use of language learning strategies: A synthesis of studies with implications for strategy training. *System*, 17, 235-247.

- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House Publishers.
- Oxford, R. L. (1993). Gender differences in styles and strategies for language learning. What do they mean? Should we pay attention? In J. Alatis (Ed.), *Strategic interaction and language acquisition: Theory, practice, and research* (pp. 541-557). Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- Oxford, R. L. (1996). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Cairo, Egypt: Anglo-Egyptian.
- Oxford, R. L., & Nyikos, M. (1989). Variables affecting the choice of LLSs by university students. *The Modern Language Journal*, 73, 291-300.
- Pervin, L., & John, O. (2001). *Personality: Theory and research* (8th ed.). New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Politzer, R. L., & McGroarty, M. (1985). An exploratory study of learning behavior and their relation to gains in linguistic and communicative competence. *TESOL Quarterly* 19, 103-23.
- Rahimi, M. (2005). *An investigation into the factors affecting the use of language learning strategies by Persian EFL learners*. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Shiraz University.
- Reid, J. (1987). The learning style preferences of ESL students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21, 87-111.
- Reiss, M.A. (1985). The good language learner: Another look. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 41, 511-523.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W.A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Robson, G. (1992). *Individual learner differences and classroom participation: A pilot study*. Unpublished paper, Temple University, Japan.
- Seliger, H. (1984). Processing universals in second language acquisition. In F. Eckman, L. Bell, & D. Nelson (Eds.), *Universals of second language acquisition* (pp. 36-47). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Stern, H. H. (1983). *Fundamental concepts of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Strong, M. (1983). Social styles and second language acquisition of Spanish-speaking kindergarteners. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17, 241-58.
- Tamada, Y. (1996). *The review of studies related to language learning strategies*. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 404857. Washington, DC: Department of Education.
- Tarone, E. (1980). Communication strategies, foreigner talk, and repair in interlanguage. *Language learning*, 30, 417-31.

- Wakamoto, N. (2000). Language learning strategy and personality variables: Focusing on extroversion and introversion. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 38 (1), 71-81.
- Wenden, A. (1986). What do second-language learners know about their language learning? A second look at retrospective accounts. *Applied Linguistics*, 7, 186-205.
- Wenden, A. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Wenden, A., & Rubin, J. (1987). *Learner strategies in language learning*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall.
- Yang, N. (1999). The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. *System*, 27, 515-35.
- Zareie, G., & Hadi, F. (2004). *The effect of metacognitive awareness on EFL reading comprehension and recall*. Unpublished MA thesis, Islamic Azad University, Najaf Abad Branch, Najaf Abad, Iran.

## **AUTHORS**

**Jahanbakhsh Nikoopour** is an assistant professor in applied linguistics. His research interests include language assessment, foreign language learning, factors influencing language learning, and material development. He has published articles on a variety of domestic and international academic journals and presented some papers in both international and domestic conferences. He teaches courses in applied linguistics, TESOL, and academic writing at Islamic Azad University, Tehran-North Branch, in Iran.  
Email Address: j\_nikoopour@iau-tnb.ac.ir

**Mohammad Amini Farsani** is an MA student in applied linguistics at University for Teacher Education, Tehran, Iran. His teaching and research interests include language testing, washback, reading in a foreign language, CALL, and language learning strategies. He has published articles and has participated in some international and domestic conferences.  
Email Address: m\_amini.farsani@yahoo.com

**APPENDIX A**  
**Statistical Analysis of Introvert learners**

**Table 10.** *Summary of One-Way ANOVA*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	47.352	6	7.892	.643	<b>.696</b>
Residual	1596.517	130	12.281		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1643.869</b>	<b>136</b>			

a. predictors: (constant), memory, affective, metacognitive, compensation, social, cognitive  
 b. Dependent Variable: introvert

**Table 11.** *Summary of Coefficients\**

<b>Model</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Std.Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
(constant)	9.892	3.151		3.140	<b>.002*</b>
Social	.068	.099	.067	.693	<b>.490</b>
Affective	.038	.077	.045	.491	<b>.624</b>
Metacognitive	-.064	.079	-.091	-.818	<b>.415</b>
Compensation	-.020	.078	-.024	-.256	<b>.799</b>
Cognitive	.029	.046	.071	.638	<b>.525</b>
<b>Memory</b>	<b>-.096</b>	<b>.064</b>	<b>-.151</b>	<b>-1.494</b>	<b>.138</b>

\*p<.05 Dependent Variable: introvert

**APPENDIX B**  
**Statistical Analysis of Sensing Learners**

**Table 12.** *Summary of One-Way ANOVA*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	114.703	6	19.117	2.162	<b>.047*</b>
Residual	1149.356	130	8.841		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1264.058</b>	<b>136</b>			

a. predictors: (constant), memory, affective, metacognitive, compensation, social, cognitive  
 b. Dependent Variable: sensing

**Table 13. Summary of Coefficients\***

<b>Model</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Std.Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
(constant)	6.454	2.673		2.414	<b>.017*</b>
Social	.143	.084	.160	1.701	<b>.091</b>
Affective	.153	.065	.211	2.355	<b>.020*</b>
Metacognitive	.032	.067	.051	.477	<b>.634</b>
Compensation	-.073	.066	-.101	-1.098	<b>.274</b>
Cognitive	-.022	.039	-.062	-.572	<b>.568</b>
<b>Memory</b>	<b>-.063</b>	<b>.054</b>	<b>-.114</b>	<b>-1.168</b>	<b>.254</b>

\*p<.05

\* Dependent Variable: sensing

## APPENDIX C

### Statistical Analysis of Thinking learners

**Table 14. Summary of One-Way ANOVA**

<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	237.881	6	39.647	3.506	<b>.003*</b>
Residual	1469.959	130	11.307		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1707.839</b>	<b>136</b>			

a. predictors: (constant), memory, affective, metacognitive, compensation, social, cognitive

b. Dependent Variable: thinking

**Table 15. Summary of Coefficients\***

<b>Model</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Std.Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
(constant)	5.170	3.023		1.710	<b>.090</b>
Social	.314	.095	.303	3.313	<b>.001*</b>
Affective	.087	.074	.103	1.184	<b>.239</b>
Metacognitive	.045	.076	.063	.601	<b>.549</b>
Compensation	-.059	.075	-.070	-.784	<b>.435</b>
Cognitive	.003	.044	.007	.071	<b>.944</b>
<b>Memory</b>	<b>-.159</b>	<b>.061</b>	<b>-.246</b>	<b>-2.587</b>	<b>-.011*</b>

\*p<.05

\* Dependent Variable: thinking

**APPENDIX D**  
**Statistical Analysis of Judging learners**

**Table 16.** *Summary of One-Way ANOVA*

<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	194.235	7	27.748	2.007	<b>.049*</b>
Residual	1783.502	129	13.836		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1977.737</b>	<b>136</b>			

a. predictors: (constant), memory, affective, metacognitive, compensation, social, cognitive  
 b. Dependent Variable: judging

**Table 17.** *Summary of Coefficients\**

<b>Model</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Std.Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
(constant)	2.379	3.377		.705	<b>.482</b>
Social	.048	.105	.044	.462	<b>.643</b>
Affective	.122	.082	.134	1.497	<b>.137</b>
Metacognitive	.036	.084	.046	.426	<b>.671</b>
Compensation	-.189	.083	-.210	-2.275	<b>.025*</b>
Cognitive	.000	.049	-.001	-.011	<b>.991</b>
<b>Memory</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>.069</b>	<b>.164</b>	<b>1.669</b>	<b>.097</b>

\*p<.05

\* Dependent Variable: judging