

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE LEARNING PREFERENCES AND IRANIAN EFL LEARNER'S ETHNICITY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of Ethnicity as a crucial factor in determining language learning preferences. Recent researches provide important support to claim that when students have the opportunity to clarify and assess their preferences in regard to definition of objectives in general and awareness of leaning preferences, their motivation, performances, and achievements will be increased and better. Since students are increasingly diverse, ethnicity has been considered as a crucial factor in determining language learning preferences. In our country, Iran, there are various ethnicities; nonetheless, English language is taught almost in the same manner for learners with different ethnical background.

This study examined the impact of ethnicity (Kurd, Turk, Fars) on language learning preferences of Iranian EFL learners in order to understand weather there was any meaningful relationship between learning preferences and EFL learner's ethnicity. To accomplish the research, a language learning preferences questionnaire with 10 items was administered to Iranian EFL learners. Subjects have been chosen according to the cluster sampling from EFL Institutes in Tehran, (Iran Mehr language institute), Tabriz and Kermanshah (Kish **institute**).

Key Words: Ethnicity, Learning preferences, Auditory / Verbal Learning Style, Tactile / Kinesthetic Learning Style.

INTRODUCTION

During the last decade , educators and researcher have noticed that some students prefer certain methods of learning .These traits that are known as “learning preferences”, from the student's unique preferences for learning and aid teachers in the planning of individual and group instruction. Oxford (1990:8) defines learning strategies as the specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more transferrable and more effective to new situation.

Mackinnon (1978) has noted the implications of differing student learning preferences. He states, the wide range of individual differences surely must mean that there is no single method for nurturing creativity; ideally the experiences we provide should be tailor – made, if not for individual students, at least for different types of students.

Many ESL teachers experience students' resistance when they introduce an instructional activity in the classroom. Some of them want more opportunities to practice in free conversation, on the other hand there are those who would prefer more emphasize on grammar teaching.

Bada and Okan (2000), state that many EFL teachers experience student resistance when they introduce an instructional activity in the classroom. Some students want more opportunities to participate in free conversation, expressing their wish towards a more communicatively oriented approach. On the other hand, there are those who would prefer more emphasis on teaching. Teacher in making decision regarding the type of activities to conduct in a language classroom should take into account such learners diversities. So, learners are more conscious of their learning preferences and when they are matched with appropriate method in teaching, learner's motivation, performance, and achievements will be enhanced.

The more important failure of contemporary education has been precisely its inefficiency to help teachers understand the ethnic complexity of learners, in such a way as to enable them to make well decision about the activities and materials in the classroom and provide students more chance to learn. This study focuses on the need for the answer of teachers regard to the diversity of students in EFL classes. Ethnicity also plays a part in shaping student's language learning preferences. Students from different ethnicities may bring along a variety anxieties to prove themselves in a mainstream environment. Knowledge about the influence of ethnicity on student's language learning preferences is seriously useful in today's multicultural EFL classrooms, because most of the classes include different learners with different cultural background. This study suggests programmatic and institutional practices that will design learning activities in order to meet the student's learning preferences in EFL classes.

Negeow (1999), claims that learners who are more conscious of their learning preferences make better use of learning opportunities. He mentions that a key to keep students actively involved in learning lies in understanding learning preferences, which can positively or negatively affect the students' performance. If we truly believe that considering individual learning preferences are crucial for effective language learning, the some kind of negotiation is needed between teachers and students. Information has to be exchanged about roles and expectations of the two parties. Regarding the vastly different teaching responsibilities with diverse learners, teachers must be able to recognize and be sensitive to individual students with the various learning preferences in different ethnic group.

The aim of this study was to find the language learning preferences of Iranian EFL learners from different ethnical background and to identify similarities as well as differences among these ethnic groups in order to help educational practitioners and teacher educators with their instructional and curricular delivery and teacher training.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Tactile / Kinesthetic Learning Style

The tactile / kinesthetic learner learns the best when physically engaged in a "hands on" activity. In the classroom, learner benefits from a lab setting where he can manipulate materials to learn new data. He benefits from trainer who promote in-class demonstrations, "hands on" student learning occurrence, and field work outside the classroom.

The Auditory / Verbal Learning Style

The auditory / verbal learner learns best when information is accessible auditory in an oral language format. In a classroom setting, he profit from listening to lecture and participating in group negotiations. He also profit from gain information of audio tapes. When trying to remember something, he can offer "hear" the way he earlier repeated it out loud. He learns more when cooperating with others in a listening / speaking exchange.

Ethnicity

Language has regularly been considered the marker average excellence of ethnic identity since the beginning of evidenced history.

The link language and ethnicity was especially promoted by the development of patriotism in 18th century, during which there appeared notions such as “linguistic nationalism”. “Linguistic patriotism and linguistic purity”. The study of ethnicity is complicated by the relationship of genetic and cultural diffusion. In some countries, ethnic labels are attributable by a person’s features, but ethnicity is more than a set of physical facial appearance. Ethnicity also shows a collection of shared values, history, language and experiences that interact with genetic characteristics to influence each person’s sense of identity.

Language use and ethnicity

According to Leung et al. (1997) there is a neat one to one correspondence between ethnicity and language. This perspective has tended to conceptualize L2 learners as a linguistically diverse group (from non-English speaking backgrounds) but with similar language learning needs. Language use and notions of ethnicity and social identity are linked inextricably. Because of this, specific attention must be paid to the way that many bilingual learners actively construct their own samples of language use, ethnicity, and social identity. Instructors need to address the actual rather than the supposed language use, ethnicity, and culture of the bilingual learner.

METHOD

This chapter provides some clarifications on the characteristic features of this study. As mentioned before, this study attempts to examine and determine whether there was a relationship between language learning preferences and the ethnicity of EFL learners. In other words, the purpose is to set up whether learner’s ethnicity had any influence on their preferences in the process of language learning or not. In the following section, the steps taken to the end are established. The subject’s section details of the population from which the researcher selected the samples are presented. The instrumentation part deals with the instruments or data gathering plans used to describe subject’s learning preferences. The procedure part outlines the research plan. It describes what has been done, how it has been done, what information was needed, etc.

Subjects

The subjects who contribute in this research were 75 EFL female learners studying English at the intermediate level in English language institutes. This level of language proficiency was chosen by researcher, because the number of students was more than other levels; and items of the questionnaire were understandable for them. All the subjects were between the ages of 16 to 21 years old. Out of the 75 subjects 31 were Fars and were selected from Iran Mehr English Institutes in Sadeghiyeh branch, 24 were Kurd and were selected from Kish Institutes in Mostafa emami Branch and finally, 20 were Turk and were selected from Kish institutes in bolvare Shahriyar branch. All the subjects were selected randomly through cluster sampling.

Instrumentation

Questionnaire is an important instrument for determining different learning characteristics and of gathering other relevant data about students. Such an instrument can expose information valuable both to the teachers and students. For a teacher, information gathered from these instruments is mostly useful in designing assignments that meet different student learning preferences. If optimal student learning is dependent on learner preferences, then teachers should be aware of these differences and modify their preparation and instructional methods accordingly.

Students can also profit from these instruments by determining their preferred learning mode, and by determining the types of learning situations in which they would be most successful, given their particular learning preferences. The information for this research was composed through a self-reporting questionnaire of language learning preferences, assumed from Brindley (1984). Since the research was concerned with perceptual learning preferences, Brindley's instrument was appropriate for the study. This questionnaire was taken from Esmat Kooshki thesis (student of Islamic Azad University Research and science campus).

Research that identifies and measures perceptual learning preference relies primarily on self-reporting styles (Kolb, 1984; Reid, 1987). The questionnaire used in this study of 10 items, that each item in the questionnaire explored a particular L2 topic. This questionnaire had response items (Yes/NO choices) and subjects were asked to mark the choices based on their preferences. The time allowance for filling out the questionnaire was 20 minutes, but if the students needed more time. This opportunity had given to them.

Procedures

The data was gathered by the researcher during five weeks. For this goal, one institute in Tehran, one institute in Kermanshah and one in Tabriz were selected. Also, subjects were informed that the questionnaire contained questions about their language learning preferences. They were guaranteed that nobody, except the researcher, would have access to their answers and their names would not be used in reporting the results. Then the questionnaire and directions were given to them and subjects were told that they should ask for any explanation they might need and any other extra time as they filled out the questionnaire.

Most of them had no problem in understanding the questionnaire. After collecting the questionnaires, the researcher classified and prearranged the data. In this step the aim was to find out whether the language learning preferences marked by the subjects is extensively related to their ethnical background. This was done through manipulating and comparing the number of yes/no answers.

Design

Due to the nature of the research question and formerly stated null hypothesis: "There is no major relationship between ethnicity and language learning preferences of Iranian EFL learners", descriptive design was considered appropriate for the study.

The discussion of design of the study requires a reference to the quantitative approaches to research, as the researcher supposed that the design of this research valuable for both approaches.

Concerning the role of quantification in qualitative research, Lazaraton (1995) maintains that some scholars believe that quantification of qualitative data is not only possible but also necessary in order to make generalizable claims to and about other contexts.

However, she states that the data presented in these studies are usually in the form of descriptive statistics (frequency, counts, percentage).

The qualitative aspect of this research, as supposed by the researcher, was the self-reporting questionnaire. The quantification carried out on this qualitative field of the study was in the form of descriptive statics.

The type of this research is survey study, which focuses on a group's attitudes, opinions, and characteristics.

In this research, the ethnicity was measured as the independent variable and learning preferences was considered as the dependent variable.

The research was performed with the participation of 75 EFL learners at intermediate level, with different ethnical backgrounds (Fars, Kurd and Turk) selected from English Language Institutes in Tehran (Iran mehr), Kermanshah and Tabriz (Kish). The subjects were given a language learning preference questionnaire with 10 items.

They were asked to mark their learning preferences and if they needed any explanation, the researcher was there to answer them.

The statistical procedures to answer the research question were as follows: Descriptive statistics such as means, frequency and Chi-square that were obtained for data analyzing.

All data are processes using Microsoft SPSS Version 11.01. The chi-square frequency analysis was carried out in order to define significance of dispersion of the yes/no choices ($p < 0.05$).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned earlier, the main focus of this study was to find out whether ethnicity had any effect on the language learning preferences of the EFL learners or not.

Data Analysis

Result concerning each item in the questionnaire will be obtainable in a tabular form. The resultant statistics for each question are presented here, beginning with item 1.

In the questionnaire, learners were asked to convey whether they preferred working **A)** individually, **B)** in pairs or **C)** in groups. Results for this item are presented in the table below:

Table 1: Working Styles

1. How do you like learning?			Individually			In Pairs			In Groups		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	22	9	31	19	12	31	11	20	31
		%	70.9	29.1	100.0	61.3	38.7	100.0	35.4	64.6	100.0
	Kurd	Count	10	14	24	16	8	24	15	9	24
		%	41.7	58.3	100.0	66.7	33.3	100.0	62.5	37.5	100.0
	Turk	Count	14	6	20	13	7	20	6	14	20
		%	70.0	30.0	100.0	65.0	35.0	100.0	30.0	70.0	100.0
Chi-square			Individually			In Pairs			In Groups		
Pearson Chi-square			29.237			1.242			44.633		

Df	2	2	2
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)	.000*	.534	.000*
N of Valid Cases	232	232	232

The results for this item advocate that Fars learners prefer to work in groups (**64.6%**), more than working individually or in pairs. equally, Turk learners have preferred working in groups (**70%**). While Kurd learners preferred working individually most of the all (**58.3%**).

This is an obvious message to the teachers that Kurd students feel more comfortable, creative and relaxed by working individually, where their voices would be heard, and views listened to and valued.

Also the Chi-Square table shows the importance of individually and in groups (**p<0.05**), but in pairs option is not important (**p.0.05**). So, there was a relationship between ethnicity and the tendency to work individually and in groups. With item 2, students were asked whether they like learning by **A)** reading, **B)** listening, **C)** problem solving, **D)** copying from the board, **E)** listening and taking notes, **F)** reading and making notes, and **G)** repeating what you hear.

The results for this question are presented in the table 2:

Table 2: Ways of Learning

2. Do you like learning by?			Reading			Listening			Problem-solving		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	12	19	31	20	11	31	12	19	31
		%	38.7	61.3	100.0	64.5	35.5	100.0	38.7	61.3	100.0
	Kurd	Count	10	14	24	9	15	24	10	14	24
		%	41.7	58.3	100.0	37.5	62.5	100.0	41.7	58.3	100.0
	Turk	Count	9	11	20	6	14	20	8	12	20
		%	45.0	55.0	100.0	30.0	70.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0

Copying from the board			Listening and taking notes			Reading and making notes			Repeating what you hear		
No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
21	10	31	9	22	31	10	21	31	23	8	31
67.7	32.3	100.0	29.0	71.0	100.0	32.2	67.8	100.0	74.2	25.8	100.0
15	9	24	8	16	24	9	15	24	7	17	24
62.5	37.5	100.0	33.3	66.7	100.0	37.5	62.5	100.0	29.2	70.8	100.0
15	5	20	7	13	20	8	12	20	14	6	20
75.0	25.0	100.0	35.0	65.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0	70.0	30.0	100.0

Chi-square	Reading	Listening	Problem solving	Copy from the board	Listening & taking notes	Reading & making notes	Repeat what you hear
Pearson Chi-square	8.104	45.332	.174	7.603	20.524	11.230	3.348
Df	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)	.017*	.000*	.916	.022*	.000*	.004*	.189
N of Valid Cases	232	232	232	232	232	232	232

As table 2 shows, Fars and Kurd learners have chosen reading more than other ways of learning, (**61.3%** for Fars and **58.3%** for Kurds); while, Turk learners preferred. Most of the listening, (**70%**). For problem-solving all the groups are almost equal, (Fars **55.6%**, Kurd **37.8%**, Turk **18.6%**). For listening and taking notes and reading and making notes all groups are again equal, but for repeating what you hear Kurd learners have chosen more than other groups with **63.5%**. In general, the result indicates that learners do not want to assume a totally passive role in the learning process. Also, the Chi-square table indicates that there was no relationship between subject's ethnicity and their tendency towards problem solving and repeating what they hear ($p > 0.05$).

As in any other field, errors in language teaching, learning, perception and production are unavoidable. What is important thought is coping with them in such a way that they do not aggravate, discourage language learners. With item 3, learners were asked how they would prefer to be corrected by their instructors. Options were: **A)** immediately, in front of everyone **B)** later, at the end of activity, in front of everyone and **C)** later in private. Results concerning this item are cited in the table below:

Table 3: Error Correction

3. When you speak, do you want to be corrected?			Immediately, in front of everyone			Later, at the end, in front of everyone			Later in private		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	10	21	31	22	9	31	8	23	31
		%	32.2	67.8	100.0	70.9	29.1	100.0	25.8	74.2	100.0
	Kurd	Count	9	15	24	16	8	24	7	17	24
		%	37.5	62.5	100.0	66.7	33.3	100.0	29.1	70.9	100.0
		Count	6	14	20	13	7	20	14	6	20
	Turk	%	30.0	70.0	100.0	65.0	35.0	100.0	70.0	30.0	100.0

Chi-square	Immediately in front of everyone	Later, at the end, in front of everyone	Later in private
Pearson Chi-square	5.906	2.174	32.000
df	2	2	2
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)	.052*	.337	.000*
N of Valid Cases	232	232	232

As it is shown, **(74.2%)** of Fars learners would like to be corrected by their instructors in private. For Kurd learners this percentage is **(70.9%)**, but it seems Turk learners don't care having their instructors correct them in public, because only **(30%)** of Turks have chosen to be correct in private.

The chi-square table shows that there was a relationship between ethnicity and the preference for being corrected directly in front of everyone and later in private (**p<0.05**).

With item 4, learners were asked whether they like learning from **A)** television/video/films, **B)** radio/tapes/cassettes, **C)** written materials, **D)** the blackboard, or **E)** pictures/posters.

The results established for this item is given in the table below:

Table 4: Media Preference

4. Do you like learning from?			TV/Video/Movie			Radio/Tape/Cassette			Written materials		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	8	23	31	10	21	31	15	16	31
		%	25.8	74.2	100.0	32.2	67.8	100.0	48.4	51.6	100.0
	Kurd	Count	6	18	24	10	14	24	17	7	24
		%	25.0	75.0	100.0	41.6	58.4	100.0	70.8	29.2	100.0
		Count	8	12	20	8	12	20	12	8	20
	Turk	%	40.0	60.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0	60.0	40.0	100.0
The blackboard						Pictures/Posters					
No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
23	8	31	10	21	31	10	21	31	10	21	31
74.2	25.8	100.0	32.2	67.8	100.0	32.2	67.8	100.0	32.2	67.8	100.0
16	8	24	10	14	24	10	14	24	10	14	24
66.6	33.4	100.0	41.6	58.4	100.0	41.6	58.4	100.0	41.6	58.4	100.0
12	8	20	8	12	20	8	12	20	8	12	20
60.0	40.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0
Chi-Square	TV/Video/Movie		Radio/Tape/Cassette			Written materials		Blackboard	Pictures/Posters		
Person chi-square	11.351		7.467			.794		10.451	6.922		
Df	2		2			2		2	2		
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)	.045*		0.24*			.672		.040	.031*		
N of Valid Cases	232		232			232		232	232		

Television, Video and Films, being powerful media, receive a high proportion of preference among all the groups (Fars **74.2%**, Kurd **75.0%**, and Turk learners **60.0%**). Also, the last option, pictures/posters received relatively similar percentages of preference (Fars **67.8%**, Kurd **58.4%**, and Turk learners **60.0%**). The blackboard option, received the lowest percentages among other options (Fars **25.8%**, Kurd **33.4%**, and Turk learners **40.0%**). All the groups have selected option radio/tape/cassette with almost similar percentages (Fars **67.8%**, Kurd **58.4%**, Turk **60.0%**). In chi-square table statistics disclose that there was a relationship between ethnicity and subject's tendency towards media preference ($p < 0.05$). The next item was about "Topic preference", the table below shows the results:

Table 5: Topic Preference

5. In your English class, what topics do you like to study?			About you: your feelings, attitudes, beliefs			From popular culture: music, film, art		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	22	9	31	8	23	31
		%	70.9	29.1	100.0	25.8	74.2	100.0
	Kurd	Count	16	8	24	7	17	24
		%	66.7	33.3	100.0	29.2	70.8	100.0
		Count	13	7	20	14	6	20
	Turk	%	65.0	35.0	100.0	70.0	30.0	100.0
Chi-square		About you: your feelings, attitudes, beliefs				From popular culture: music, film, art		
Pearson Chi-square		11.230				9.118		
Df		2				2		
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)		.004*				.038*		
N of Valid Cases		232				232		

As shown here, a major number of learners in all groups liked to study the topics from popular culture like: music, film and art (Fars **74.2%**, Kurd **70.8%**, Turk **30.0%**). The topic about learners: feelings, attitudes, and beliefs received these percentages (Fars **29.1%**, Kurd **33.1%** and Turk **35.0%**). The chi-square table shows ($p < 0.05$), so, there was a relationship between ethnicity and subject's topic preference.

Learning may usually be disposed to finish a task in the classroom, and spend their outside classroom time working on new topics. Homework concerning future topics, with new insights and views added to ask more to EFL learners.

For item 6, learners were asked to state how they like to spend their time out of the classroom. The results are shown in table below:

Table 6: Learning out of the class

6. Out of the class, do you like to....?			Practice English with my friends			Have conversations with English native speakers			Collect examples of English that I find interesting		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	8	23	31	10	21	31	16	15	31
		%	25.8	74.2	100.0	32.2	67.8	100.0	51.6	48.4	100.0
	Kurd	Count	8	16	24	8	16	24	7	17	24
		%	33.4	66.6	100.0	33.3	66.7	100.0	29.1	70.9	100.0
		Count	7	13	20	5	15	20	9	11	20
	Turk	%	35.0	65.0	100.0	25.0	75.0	100.0	45.0	55.0	100.0

Chi-square	Practice English with my friends	Have conversations with English native speakers	Collect examples of English that I find interesting
Pearson Chi-square	10.765	12.113	7.464
Df	2	2	2
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)	.041*	.048*	.024*
N of Valid Cases	232	232	232

As it was estimate, almost a high proportion of learners in the 3 groups chosen to have conversations with English native speakers out of the class (Fars **67.8%**, Kurd **66.7%**, Turk **75.0%**). Although, the option English with my friends have received high percentages (Fats **74.2%**, Kurd **66.6** and Turk **865.0**).

But for the last option gather examples of English that we find interesting Kurd learners have the highest proportions (**48.4%**), and then Turk learners with (**70.9%**), while only (**5.50%**) of Fars learners have chosen it. In chi-square table all the options are significant and (**p<0.05**), as a result, there was a relationship between ethnicity and subject's tendency towards learning out of the class.

Item 7 investigate into what learners find every useful in the classroom: **A) songs, B) role play, C) language games, D) talking with and listening to other students, and E) memorizing conversations/dialogues.** Pertaining results are shown in the table below:

Table 7: Learning Activities

7. Do you find these activities useful?			Song			Role play			Language games		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	23	8	31	17	14	31	8	23	31
		%	74.2	25.8	100.0	54.8	45.2	100.0	25.8	74.2	100.0
	Kurd	Count	17	7	24	15	9	24	7	17	24
		%	70.9	29.1	100.0	62.5	37.5	100.0	29.1	70.9	100.0
	Turk	Count	6	14	20	8	12	20	6	14	20
		%	30.0	70.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0	30.0	70.0	100.0
Talking with & listening to other students						Memorizing conversations/dialogues					
No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
8	23	31	21	10	31	21	10	31	21	10	31
25.8	74.2	100.0	67.8	32.2	100.0	67.8	32.2	100.0	67.8	32.2	100.0
8	16	24	9	15	24	9	15	24	9	15	24
33.3	66.7	100.0	37.5	62.5	100.0	37.5	62.5	100.0	37.5	62.5	100.0
8	12	20	12	8	20	12	8	20	12	8	20
40.0	60.0	100.0	60.0	40.0	100.0	60.0	40.0	100.0	60.0	40.0	100.0

Chi-Square	Song	Role play	Language Games	Talking with & listening to other students	Memorizing conversations/dialogues
Person chi-square	17.378	34.152	22.866	8.343	33.831
Df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)	.000*	.020*	.000*	.011*	.000*
N of Valid Cases	232	232	232	232	232

The outstanding point about results is that learners believe that student-to-student interaction is most useful among the options cited here. Fars learners state this by **(74.2%)**, Kurd learners **(66.7%)** and Turk learners **(60.0%)**.

Also it has shown that Turk learners established songs and role play more useful than the other groups with **(70.0%)** for songs and **(60.0%)** for role play.

Additionally, language games have received high proportions among the groups too, with **(74.2%)** for Fars learners, **(70.9%)** for Kurd learners and **(70.0%)** for Turks.

Memorizing conversations/dialogues, although, has the smallest amount proportions among other options, Kurd learners have chosen it more than other groups with **(62.5%)**.

As in chi-square table all the options are important ($p < 0.05$) so, a relationship exists between ethnicity and subject's preference for learning activities.

With item 8, learners were asked about measurements: how would learners like their achievements to be assessed.

Their choices were: **A)** written tasks set by the teacher, **B)** oral language samples taken and assessed by the teacher, **C)** checking your own progress by making tapes, **D)** by using the language you have learnt in real-life situations, and **E)** being told that you have made progress.

Results are illustrated in the table below:

Table 8: Assessment of Language Performance

8. How do you like to find out how much your English is Improved?			Written tasks set by the teacher			Oral language samples taken and assessed by the teacher			Checking your own progress by making tapes		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	14	17	31	21	10	31	23	8	31
		%	45.16	54.84	100.0	67.7	32.3	100.0	74.2	25.8	100.0
	Kurd	Count	6	18	24	10	14	24	8	16	24
		%	25.0	75.0	100.0	41.6	58.4	100.0	33.3	66.7	100.0
	Turk	Count	12	8	20	8	12	20	12	8	20
		%	60.0	40.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0	60.0	40.0	100.0
By using the language you have learnt in real-life situations					Being told that you have made progress						
No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
10	21	31	23	8	31	23	8	31	23	8	31
32.2	67.8	100.0	74.2	25.8	100.0	74.2	25.8	100.0	74.2	25.8	100.0
10	14	24	8	16	24	8	16	24	8	16	24
41.7	58.3	100.0	33.3	66.7	100.0	33.3	66.7	100.0	33.3	66.7	100.0
8	12	20	12	8	20	12	8	20	12	8	20
40.0	60.0	100.0	100.0	40.0	100.0	100.0	40.0	100.0	100.0	40.0	100.0
Chi-Square	Written tasks set by the teacher	Oral language samples taken and assessed by the teacher	Checking your own progress by making tapes	Using the language you have learnt in real situation	Being told that you have made progress						
Person chi-square	8.628	5.019	6.924	8.103	20.52						

Df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)	.013*	.081*	.031*	.017*	.000*
N of Valid Cases	232	232	232	232	232

An overpowering majority of Fars and Turk learners state that they preferred to use the language in real life situations in order to understand how much they made development (**67.8%** of Fars and **60.0%** of Turk learners), but Kurds would like to be told they have made good improvement with (**69%**).

The option checking your own development by making tapes has received the lowest proportions among other options (Fars **25.8%**, Kurd **66.7%**, and Turk learners **40.0%**).

For option written tasks set by the teacher the maximum percentage belongs to Kurds with (**75.0%**), and oral language samples taken and evaluated by the teacher has received the maximum percentage among Turk learners with (**60.0%**); although, this option in chi-square table is not important ($p > 0.05$).

The other options are important ($p < 0.05$), therefore, there was a relationship between ethnicity and subject's tendency towards assessment of language performance.

In item 9, learners were asked if they like these activities in the class or not. The options were: **A)** practicing paragraph writing, **B)** practicing drills for pronunciation, **C)** memorizing vocabulary lists, **D)** giving oral presentation, and **E)** doing translation exercises.

The results are illustrated in the table below:

Table 9: Exercises Preference

9. Do you like these activities in the class?			Practicing paragraph writing			Practicing drills for pronunciation			Memorizing vocabulary lists		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	9	22	31	10	21	31	8	23	31
		%	29.1	70.9	100.0	32.3	67.7	100.0	25.8	74.2	100.0
	Kurd	Count	8	16	24	9	15	24	7	17	24
		%	33.3	66.7	100.0	37.5	62.5	100.0	29.1	70.9	100.0
	Turk	Count	7	13	20	8	12	20	6	14	20
		%	35.0	65.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0	30.0	70.0	100.0

Giving oral presentation			Doing translation exercises		
No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
8	23	31	10	21	31
25.8	74.2	100.0	32.2	67.8	100.0
6	18	24	10	14	24
25.0	75.0	100.0	41.7	58.3	100.0
8	12	20	8	12	20
40.0	60.0	100.0	40.0	60.0	100.0
Chi-Square	Practicing paragraph writing	Practicing drills for pronunciation	Memorizing vocabulary lists	Giving oral presentation	Doing translation Exercises
Person chi-square	2.434	9.514	1.342	4.241	9.06
Df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)					
N of Valid Cases	232	232	232	232	232

The table shows interesting results. Fars learners have chosen translation exercises as the most chosen with **(67.8%)**, and memorizing vocabulary lists as the least preferred with **(74.2%)**; whereas, Kurd learners have preferred translation exercises as the most preferred with **(58.3%)** and oral presentation as the least preferred with **(75.0%)**.

Item 10, tried to find out how much time learners prefer to spend I English classes.

Their options were: **A)** one or two hours per week, **B)** more than two hours per week.

The results received for this item are shown in the table below:

Table 10: Time Allocated for Learning

10. How much time do you like to spend in English class?			One or two hours per week			More than two hours per week		
			No	Yes	Total	No	Yes	Total
Ethnicity	Fars	Count	22	9	31	8	23	31
		%	70.9	29.1	100.0	25.8	74.2	100.0
	Kurd	Count	16	8	24	7	17	24
		%	66.7	33.3	100.0	29.2	70.8	100.0
		Count	13	7	20	14	6	20
	Turk	%	65.0	35.0	100.0	70.0	30.0	100.0

Chi-square	One or two hours per week	More than two hours per week
Pearson Chi-square	35.803	49.465
Df	2	2
Asymp.sig. (2-sided)	.000*	.000*
N of Valid Cases	232	232

Amongst Fars learners (**74.2%**), preferred more than 2 hours per week, in the same way, Kurds have preferred it with (**66.7%**), but Turks did not prefer to spend their time more than 2 hours per week, instead they preferred 1 or 2 hours per week with (**35.0%**).

The chi-square table shown there was relation between ethnicity and hours of instruction per week (**p<0.05**).

CONCLUSION

The consequential statistics pointed out that there were considerable differences in learning preferences among Fars, Kurd and Turk English learners due to their various ethnical backgrounds. Consequently, the results showed very strong associations between ethnicity and shared learning preferences, and ignored the null hypothesis proposed in this research. For effective language learning and teaching both learner skills and the learner suppositions should be given due attention. In prompting these idea students should be make available with chance to clarify and asses their preferences particularly in references to description of objectives in general and awareness of strategies in learning.

Here, several essential findings were made that the conclusions based on the major ones are as follows:

- Kurd learners preferred to learn language individually, whereas Fars and Turk learner's tendency was towards working in groups.
- A significant number of students in all three ethnic groups articulated their views in favor of more outside-classroom activities that would help them gain proficiency in English.
- Being corrected by the teacher in front of other students does not seem to inconvenience Turk learners, but Fars learners have preferred to be corrected in private.
- In classroom sessions, learners in three ethnic groups prefer to see more instructive television programs shown to them, rather than wide-ranging use of blackboard or tape recorders or written materials.
- The results obtained here call for a step just before teacher-student cooperation in designing syllabuses, doing weekly course planning, and classroom management.

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