

*In the Name of God*



**University of Sistan and Baluchestan  
Faculty of Humanities  
Department of English Language and Literature**

**Investigating the Relationship of Multiple Intelligences with  
Learning Styles and Listening Strategies among Iranian EFL  
learners**

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Language

**Supervisor:**

**Dr. Farrokhlagha Heidari**

**Advisor:**

**Dr. Esmaeel Nourmohammadi**

**By**

**Essa Panahandeh**

**Zahedan, Iran**

**June, 2013**



**University of Sistan and Baluchestan**  
**Faculty of Humanities**  
**Department of English Language and Literature**

We hereby approve that this thesis by Essa Panahandeh entitled:

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**Committee on the Oral Examination:**

*Supervisor:* Dr. Farrokhlagha Heidari

.....

*Advisor:* Dr. Esmael Nourmohammadi

.....

*First Internal examiner:* Dr. Abdullah Sarani

.....

*Second Internal examiner:* Dr. Giti Mousapour Negari

.....

*Head of the Department of English Language and Literature:*

Dr. Yahya Keikhai

.....

**Zahedan, Iran**

**June, 2013**

## DEDICATION

*To my dear mother, the endless sea of  
sacrificing and love, for whom my being is  
all pain and for me her being is all affection*

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Every beginning has an end and every journey has a destination. Science is the only journey which has neither end nor destination. During this journey there are some stations in which we should recover ourselves to be able to continue our way. Levels of education are stations and writing a thesis is the means of recovering to take step to reach the next and the higher levels. During this recovery, some people were with me without whose invaluable assistance and encouragement the completion of this process would not have been possible. I would like to express my deepest and sincerest gratitude to them.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purposes of the present study were three-folded. The first objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' different types of multiple intelligences (MIs) and their learning styles in particular and the relationship between their MIs and learning styles (LSs) as whole factors. The study also intended to find out the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' different types of MIs and their listening strategies in particular and the relationship between their MIs and listening strategies as whole factors. Finally, the study aimed to identify the effect of gender on the use of different types of MIs in particular and MIs as a whole factor. To achieve these ends, a 90-item multiple intelligences questionnaire, a 24-item learning styles questionnaire, and a 23-item listening strategies questionnaire were distributed among 120 Iranian EFL learners (60 male learners and 60 female learners) during their class time in the universities of Sistan and Baluchestan, Iranshahr, and Yasuj. Pearson correlation analyses showed that there were some significant positive relationships between the different types of MIs and LSs in particular and a significant positive relationship between MIs and LSs as general factors. The data analyses also revealed that there were some significant positive relationships between different types of MIs and listening strategies in particular and a significant positive correlation between MIs and listening strategies as whole factors. Finally, the obtained results of the independent-samples t-test analyses demonstrated that there were significant differences between Iranian male and female EFL learners in using bodily, interpersonal, and existential intelligences. In a similar vein, the findings indicated a

significant difference between male and female learners in their use of MIs as a whole factor. In other words, female learners were stronger in these types of intelligences than male learners.

**Keywords:** Multiple Intelligences; Intelligence; Learning Styles; Listening Strategies; Gender; EFL Learners



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
IDs	Individual Differences
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
LS	Learning Style
MI	Multiple Intelligence
MIT	Multiple Intelligence Theory
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a brief description of the study and is composed of seven sections. In the first section, the background of the current study is presented. The second section starts with the statement of the problem and purpose of the study. In the next section, the significance of the study is introduced. Then, research questions are stated. In the fifth section the research hypotheses are presented. In the sixth section the definitions of key terms are provided, and finally in the last section the limitations of the study are mentioned.

### **1.1 Background of the study**

It is necessary for individuals to adjust their skills to every condition in a world which is always subjected to change. Thus, in every country individuals should be trained to make use of information correctly, to be able to overcome the problems and find solutions to the problems in a short time, and to have a great power of thinking (Tekin & Tasgin, 2008). Therefore, it is an important issue for every country to recognize the level of intelligences of the educators, learners, and managers who, in a way, have a significant role in

educating an intelligent generation, in understanding individuals in their thinking, perception, and ability to solve problems (Campbell, 1996). "The psychology of individual differences involves the study of psychological constructs, their interaction with environmental stimuli and also include the resulting observable behaviour" (Boyle & Saklofske, 2004; cited in Kelly, 2005, P. 13). Cooper (2002) divided these psychological constructs into two groups: traits and states. Traits are those personality characteristics or temperament that individuals usually show in their behaviors over a long period of time. States or individual moods are those transient feelings that can occur so short that individuals may not be aware of their occurrence, for example, the joy of doing well in an examination. Nowadays, a large majority of scholars and researchers have come to an agreement that individual differences are one of the effective factors to better achieve the goal of second language learning. Intelligences and learning styles are classified into these differences (Ellis, 1985). Sir Francis Galton was the first person who used statistical methods to work on individual differences and proposed the idea of intelligence for the first time in 1885. He was interested to know whether there is a relationship between heredity and being talent (Chaplin & Krawiec, 1974).

Howard Gardner, professor of education at Harvard University, in 1983 proposed Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT) which was based on the cognitive approach (Motah, 2007). The theory is based on scientific research such as psychology, anthropology, and biology (Fathi Abdulhamid & Mourad, 2008). Traditionally it was thought that people are born with a fixed intelligence and that this intelligence level does not change during one's lifetime. Thus, students' abilities were assessed on the basis of logic and language tests based on which

weak performance on the part of the students was labelled as disability (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Gardner (1983) defines intelligence as "the ability to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued within one or more cultural settings"(p. 81). By the same token, Gardner (1999) redefines the concept of intelligence as "a biopsychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture" (pp. 33–34). From the view point of MIT, these definitions of intelligence put intelligence in real-world problem solving and product making and consider the cultural dimension of intelligence. In contrast to the traditional view of intelligence quotient (IQ) tests, MIT is based on the comprehension of the way that individual's intelligences work (Baum, Viens, & Slatin, 2005). The theory motivates learners to have a sense of responsibility for their own learning and helps educators to present materials in a way that enhances the degree of learning (Denig, 2004). Indeed, with the emergence of MIT, a significant change which occurred in English language instruction was the shifting from the teacher-centered approach to student-centered approach (Snider, 2001). The theory proposes different and independent intelligence profiles that make learners look at the world in many different ways and have a better understanding of it (Gardner, 1993).

Gardner (1983) originally identified seven distinct intelligences. A dozen years later, he added an eighth and later on he has proposed there exists a ninth intelligence that enables people to see and to understand the world around. The intelligences that need to be taken into account are: Verbal/Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Visual/Spatial, Bodily/Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal,

Musical/Rhythmical, Naturalistic, and Existential intelligence (Nelson, 1998). Nobody can claim that one of these intelligences is better or more correct than the other. Individuals use these types of intelligences in ways in which they are strong (Checkley, 1997).

In addition to multiple intelligences, the other factor of individual differences which is influential and effective in language acquisition is Learning Styles (LSs). These two factors have sometimes been confused with one another. Yet they are quite different concepts, and the psychological construct of MI theory is fundamentally different from that of learning styles. Intelligence refers to our psychobiological potential in which information processing occurs in certain kinds of ways. This is a kind of capacity that exists in each person, and each intelligence type can be used in different domains, but the concept of style determines a general approach which enables individuals to use it equally for every meaningful content. In fact, learning styles refer to the way individuals perceive information (Krechevsky & Seidel, 1998). Therefore, different students learn differently because of their biological and psychological differences. Some students like to see and others like to hear. Some others prefer to learn individually, independent of others, while others enjoy interaction and relationship with their peers (Riazi & Riasati, 2006). From the view point of Dunn and Dunn (1978), learning styles are defined as “a term that describes the variations among learners in using one or more senses to understand, organize, and retain experience” (p. 44).

Strategies are a series of events and because of the heavy cognitive demand of the task they might not be completely observable in the listening process (Anderson, 1991; cited in Zhang, 2008). In fact, strategies are the thoughts and behaviors used by learners to