A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNING STYLES, LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG THE ENGLISH MAJORS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the individual learning style, language learning strategies preferences of learners, and to know whether there is relationship amongst the two and the academic achievement among the third year English majors at three selected Ethiopian universities. A total of 70 students were selected randomly to complete two questionnaires which was used to identify students' perceptual learning style preferences and the other was used to identify students' learning strategies. In addition, an achievement test was held to determine the students' achievement level. The research findings showed that the students had major and negligible learning styles. Based on the cut off points stated in the scoring sheet of the questionnaire, it was found that it seemed that only the mean scores of visual, auditory kinesthetic, tactile, and individual learning style were fall into the major learning style preferences category. And the negligible learning style preferences was the group learning, and there was no minor learning style preferences among the learners. Furthermore, the result depicted that there are statistically significant differences between male and female in auditory with the sig. value 0.0280, and there are no statistically significant differences between male and female in visual (sig. value 0.3952), kinaesthetic (sig. value 0.4029), tactile (sig. value 0.3604), group learning (sig. value 0.4563), and individual learning styles (sig. value 0.4284). Regarding to the general tendency of strategy preferences, the most preferred strategy category was the cognitive strategies, Meta cognitive strategies, memory strategies, compensation strategies and social strategies respectively. The final and the least preferred strategies were the affective strategies. Consequently, the result depicted that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female in all realms, except social strategies towards female. Vis-à-vis to the relationship between achievement and students' learning strategies, the result showed that there

was correlation between the two among the participants. And also it was found that there was statistically significant correlation between achievement and all strategies except memory strategies and mea-cognitive strategies. Further, concerning the relationship between achievement and learning styles the result shows that there are existence of correlation between students' learning style and the academic achievement, and it was found that there is statistically significant correlation between the two. Finally, with respect to the relationship between learning styles and learning strategies the result revealed that there are no statistically significant correlation between all strategies and all style except cognitive strategies with visual positive relation, and tacticle with compensation strategies negative relation, and lastly the research provided recommendations.

Key Words: Learning Style, Language Learning Strategies, Academic Achievement, Perceptual Learning Style Preferences, Strategy Inventory for Language Learning

Introduction

1. Background of the Study

In previous years the world has been concerned with cultural, social, political and technological changes. In order to keep up with those changes, people have had to meet the needs created by all these changes. Language learning is one of the most important needs and it has become an essential component in people's lives. People all over the world are trying to learn a second, even a third language in order to cope with these changes.

Because of shortage of wide research on learning styles and learning strategies in Ethiopia in general, and higher institutions in particular in the Arba Minch University, Wollayta Sod University, and Wachamo University, there has always been poor or absence of information on the kind of learning styles and language learning strategies adopted by the Ethiopian students particularly in learning a foreign language, hence, the efforts of the educational system to identify learners' styles and strategies and therefore to employ these information in developing these strategies, failed to create a basis for a solid learning styles and strategies among our students, and consequently, affecting their academic achievement. Concerned with different research on language learning strategies, the primary concern has been on identifying what good language learners do to learn a second or foreign language. Like general learning strategies, English language learning strategies include those techniques that learners use to remember what they have learnt for their storage and retrieval of new information (Rubin, 1987, p. 19). Language Learning Strategies hear after the LLSs also include receptive strategies which deal

with receiving the message and productive strategies which relate to communication (Brown, 1994; Chamot & Kupper, 1989). LLSs have been classified into several different ways. O'Malley et al (1985, p. 582-584) categorized strategies into meta-cognitive, cognitive and socio-affective. They found that most importance was given to the meta-cognitive strategies, which is those that have planning, directing or monitoring). Oxford (1990) indicated that LLSs are steps taken by the learners in order to improve language training and develop language competence.

The researcher has been an English teacher at the Arba Minch University which is placed in Southern Ethiopia. On reviewing the training plan which has been going on for the past five years at the above mentioned universities, there was no training courses directed to introduce the students to learning strategies in one hand, and on the other hand assist the students to identify their learning style preferences and link them to the appropriate learning strategies.

Research shows that if teachers can give students instructions relevant to their learning styles, the performances are usually better (Dunn and Price 1979; O'Brien 1989; Oxford and Ehrman 1993). When the learners' learning styles are matched congenial with the instructional styles, their motivation, performances, and attainments will be enhanced (Brown 1994). This evidently shows how the learning styles would correlate with the learning strategies provided there is a significant level of involvement of the teachers in universities into generating instructions relevant to the students' learning styles. This, therefore, explains why there is no correlation between learning styles and learning strategies on this research which is attributed to the lack of interventions from the teachers side into the developing the learning strategies of the students.

From the research to date, it is evident that all language learners use language learning strategies of some kind; however, the frequency and variety of use vary between different learners and depend on a number of variables (Chamot & Kupper, 1989). In general, it is agreed that the use of language learning strategies is positively related to language proficiency. It appears that good language learners orchestrate and combine their use of particular types of strategies in effective ways (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1993). Research has indicated that more proficient learners seem to employ a variety of strategies in many situations than do less proficient learners. Rossi (1989) found that more proficient English as a foreign language students used self-management strategies such as planning, evaluation and formal practice significantly more often than less proficient students.

Investigations involving language learners often showed that the most successful learners tended to use learning strategies that are suitable to the task, material, self-objective, needs, motivation and stage of learning (Oxford, 1990). Good language learners seemed to possess abilities to

succeed while others lacked those abilities (Rubin & Thompson 1994). Good learners, according to them, can find their own way by taking charge of their learning, organizing their language information and making their own opportunities for practicing using the language. In addition, they use linguistic knowledge and contextual cues to help them in comprehension while learning a foreign language.

English as an international language has been taught in almost all countries in the world. Here in Ethiopia, English is a foreign language which is a compulsory subject to be taught in all schools from elementary to upper secondary schools. However, we have seen that the proficiency in English of secondary school as well as university graduates still creates disappointment among teachers themselves as well as parents. The unsatisfying quality of English in Ethiopia in general and in Arba Minch University, Wollayta Sod University, and Wachamo University in particular, of course is related to various different variables.

Researchers in the field have been trying to find out teaching methods, classroom techniques, and instructional materials that will promote better language learning. However, in spite of all these efforts there has been a growing concern that learners have not progressed as much as it was anticipated. Because there are considerable individual differences in language learning such as gender, age, social status, motivation, attitude, aptitude, culture, etc.; what works for one learner might not work for another. Therefore, none of the methods and techniques has proved that they can work all the time, in all classes, with all students. As a result, it might be appropriate to comply with Grenfell and Harris' (1999) statement that *"Methodology alone can never be a solution to language learning rather it is an aid and suggestion (p. 10)"*.

Having reached this conclusion some other people in the field changed the focus from the language teaching methodology to the language learner and the variables that affect language learning. This shift of the focal point has led to an increase in the number of studies carried out regarding learner characteristics and foreign or second language learning. Language Learning Strategies (LLS) and learning styles have been two of the most popular aspects researchers have focused on. However, they have not been investigated on their own. Some other variables that affect them such as gender, achievement, motivation, career orientation, national origin, aptitude, etc. have also been taken into consideration while doing research in order to reveal whether there is any relationship between the language learning strategies choice, the preferred learning styles and variables.

Oxford (1989) offers a synthesis of the studies carried out regarding the LLS and the variables that affect strategy choice. The researcher presents the results of studies carried out with respects

to LLS choice and language being learned, duration, degree of awareness, age, and gender, affective variables such as attitudes, motivational level, personality characteristics, and general personality type. Learning styles is another variable but Oxford asserts that "little research has been dedicated to the relationship between learning strategy use, learning style and academic achievement (p. 241). Furthermore, among the numerous recommendations resulting from the survey Willing (1988) as cited in Mohammed A. (2010) conducted with respect to the learning styles in adult migrant education, a similar recommendation was proposed. It is hoped that classroom practice will become geared to the developing of good and appropriate learning strategies (to a much greater degree than at present). This means:

a) Exploration of strategies which learners are already making use of, which derive from their previous education and their own cognitive individuality; this exploration can be done through questionnaire and discussion.

b) Exploration of the relation between individual learning style and the person's existing strategies. (Willing, 1988, p. 172)

Therefore, this study aims at investigating the individual learning style preferences of learners, the language learning strategies they prefer to use, and to investigate whether a relationship amongst language learning strategies, learning styles and academic achievement exists. The rational behind to this research emerges from the immature development of in depth research of learning styles and learning strategies in Ethiopia, and particularly in Arba Minch University, Wollayta Sod University, and Wachamo University, there has always been poor or absence of information on the kind of learning strategies adopted by the most Ethiopian students particularly in learning a foreign language, The absence of efforts of the educational system to identify learners' styles and strategies and therefore to employ these styles and strategies, and correlate these with the students' academic achievement created the need of such a study. Again, we need to address that the fact that there is very limited or even absence of continuing development training for students in self management strategies as planning, self evaluation and formal practice in order to make the achievement of the language learners higher.

2. Statement of the Problem

In Ethiopia, students drops English courses usually after they enter college or university except taking one or two courses as a common course. Once the students entered to the university, they seldom to have any chance to learn or use English, apart from taking the required general English course in their freshmen year. Ethiopia's government has made English an important vehicle for promoting an open and democratic society in Ethiopia. The growth in demand for

English is the result of recognition both by the Ethiopian government and individual citizens to the unique role of the language and it response to globalization and modernity.

Learning strategy refers to the method that learners used to assist their progress in developing the second or foreign language skills, such as questions during lectures, reflection after reading, etc. In studying a language learning strategy is a specific action or technique that learners use. Language learning strategies consist of six categories, according to Oxford (1990). They are memory, cognitive, compensation, meta-cognitive, affective and social strategies. The task requirements will help students to determine what strategies they should choose. Many researchers emphasized the importance of the use of language learning strategy which makes good language learners. Researchers suggested that strategies of successful language learners could provide a basis for aiding language learners. If English as Foreign Language teachers know more about effective strategies that successful learners use, they may be able to apply these effective strategies to less proficient learners to enhance their language skills (Yang, 2007). How to use learning strategies efficiently and successfully is the main concern of most English as Foreign Language teachers and learners. In Ethiopia, the importance of learning strategy is also received as a moderate consideration.

Analyzing the language learning strategies of Ethiopian students at Arba Minch University, Wollayta Sod University, and Wachamo University who are English and non-English education majors will be carried out as an effort to make a small contribution to the understanding and improvement of Ethiopian English language learning ability. As stated above the purpose of this study is to investigate both the individual learning style preferences of learners and the language learning strategies they prefer to use, and to reveal whether there is a relationship amongst language learning strategies, learning styles and the academic achievement among the third year English majors at Arba Minch University, Wollayta Sod University, and Wachamo University. In addition to these, this study aims at finding out whether there are significant differences in the perceptual learning style and language learning strategy preferences between male and female students.

3. Research Questions

The major research question is:

- Is there a relationship among learning styles, language learning strategy preferences and the academic achievement among the English majors at selected universities?

Furthermore, from this major research question other minor questions are emerged, and these are stated as follow:

1. What are the major, minor, and negligible perceptual modality preferences of the students-audio, visual, kinesthetic, tactile, group learning, and individual learning of the participants?
2. Is there a difference in the perceptual modality preferences of the students based on their sex?
3. What is the language learning strategy used by students as reported in the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning?
4. Is there a difference in the language learning strategy preferences of the students based on their sex?
5. Is there a relationship between the students' perceptual learning style preferences and their academic achievement?
6. Is there a relationship between the students' language learning strategies and their academic achievement?
7. Is there a relationship between the learning styles and language learning strategies among the English majors at selected universities?

Method

Research Design

In order to seek answers to the research questions guiding this study, a one phased within-participants research design was developed that included quantitative element. The quantitative part of the study, with the help of surveys, sought to focus on the finding out the major, minor, and negligible perceptual modalities, the learning strategies, and to investigate the relationship between the learning style and language learning strategies of the third year English majors at three selected Ethiopian universities. Furthermore, this research design was used to identify if there are correlation between the learning styles, language learning strategies and the academic achievement exists among the English majors. Therefore, a quantitative research design is appropriate for this study and enabled the researcher to answer the above research questions.

Participants and Sampling Techniques

The main focus of this study is the third year English majors at Arba Minch, Wollayta Sod, and Wachamo universities, and *85 students* out of 110 total populations from the three universities were selected using availability sampling technique to pick the desirable samples. Furthermore,

among the total 85 subjects of the study only 70 students completed the questionnaire and attended to the achievement test; from this 34 were females and 36 were males.

Data Gathering Instrument

In order to answer the research questions the researcher used three instruments. The first instrument was Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire(PLSPQ) developed by Reid (1987), and it was used to identify the major, minor, and the negligible learning style preferences of the students. It is a self-reporting questionnaire developed on the basis of existing learning style instruments with some changes suggested by non-native speaker informants and instructors consultants in the field of Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL). The questionnaire, which was designed and validated for non-native speakers, consists of five statements on each of the six learning style preferences to be measured: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group learning, and individual learning. The first four categories constitute the perceptual learning style categories and the remaining two make up the social category. The participants were asked to responded on the basis of a five point Likert scale which is ranging from strongly agrees to strongly disagree. The second was Strategy Inventory for Language Learning developed by Oxford (1990), and used to identify the language learning strategy preferences of the participants. It is a self-report, paper and pencil survey, and it was originally designed to assess the frequency of use of language learning strategies by students at the Defense Language Institute in California. Two versions of the SILL are available in Oxford's (1990) language learning strategy book for language teachers. The first one is used with foreign language learners whose native language is English and it consists of 80 items. The second one is used with learners of English as a second or foreign language, and it contains 50 items. The latter version was used in this study. Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) assert that the results of the studies regarding the reliability of the ESL/EFL SILL have shown that it is a highly reliable instrument "with ESL/EFL SILL, Cronbach alphas have been 0.94 using the Chinese translation with a sample of 590 Taiwanese University EFL learners" (p.6). They also add that when the instrument is administered in its English version, though slightly lower, the reliabilities were still acceptable. The SILL (Version 7.0) consists of six subsections and each section represents one of the six categories of LLS, which the learners do not know at the time of taking the inventory. The 50 statements in the inventory follow the general format 'I do such and such' and students respond on 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 'Never or almost never true of me' to 5 'always or almost always true of me'. To this end these questionnaires were not only proofread by other language instructors, but also piloted with second year students in order to find out any potential problems with the inventory that may arise during the data collection. A reliability analysis will be

conducted to determine the reliability of the questionnaires. Finally, achievement test was designed and used to find out students' achievement in English language.

Methods of Data Analysis

This study aims at identifying students' learning styles and language learning strategies in order to determine whether there is a relationship between them and the students' academic achievement. Another aim of the study is to identify whether there are gender differences in the preferences of learning styles and language learning strategies. Data with respect to students' learning styles was collected through the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire. Another questionnaire, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning was administrated with the purpose of identifying students' language learning strategies. The statistical analyses was conducted by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 16.00). Regarding the analysis of the results obtained from the PLSPQ descriptive statistics was used to group the students according to their major, minor, and negligible learning style preference categories. Similar statistical procedures were used to analyze the data obtained from the SILL which is used to rank order the strategy categories from the most preferred to the least preferred category. Also t–test was conducted to find whether there is difference in the preference of learning strategies and the learning style preference between males and females. Furthermore, in order to reveal whether there is a significant relationship between the learning styles and the language learning strategies the Pearson correlation was used. Finally, the data obtained from the achievement test analyzed by marking and calculating out of 100.

The procedure that was put into practice to analyze the data gathered through questionnaire and students' achievement test; SPSS 16.00 was utilized. First of all, the researcher asked permission from the universities administration to conduct this study and collect data using the tools, and to administer the achievement test. And students were informed to read the instruction of the questionnaires and the achievement test before completing and answering the test respectively. After having finished the questionnaires and the achievement test, the sheets were gathered, marked and entered into the computer for data analysis. To increase the credibility of the responses to the questionnaires, the data collectors were informed to remind students that they should be sincere in their answers, and it was agreed that for getting more valid results, the students were given the opportunity to respond to the questionnaires at home and return back. The participants were also asked to give an immediate response and that they shouldn't hesitate and change their answers. The questionnaires were collected in the other day and entered into the computer for data analysis.

Findings and Discussions

Learning style and language learning strategies as a whole is a complex issue not just an isolated part of language learning. Using a combination of complete data sources for the results and discussions helps to assemble a more comprehensive and complete picture of the topic. Therefore, in order to address the specific objectives stated in the first chapter, the data collected from all the subjects of the study were analyzed by making use of mean and standard deviation; t-tests and Pearson correlation coefficients. Therefore, in each section discussion follows the presentation of the results of the data. Firstly, students preferences of learning style, and following students' differences in the perceptual modality preferences based on sex will be presented and discussed. Then language learning strategies used by students in the strategy inventory for language learning and students' differences in the language learning strategies based on sex will be presented and discussed. At last, the relationship between language learning strategies and achievement, the relationship between language learning style and achievement, the relationship between language learning style and language learning strategies will be presented.

Students Preferences of Learning Style

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Students Preferences of Learning Style

S.No	Strategies	No. of Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
1	Visual	5	20.090	8.326	4
2	Auditory	5	21.090	7.326	1
3	Kinesthetic	5	20.100	8.475	3
4	Tactile	5	20.110	7.894	2
5	Group Learning	5	19.260	8.201	6
6	Individual	5	20.050	9.282	5
	Total	50	120.7	49.504	

As shown in the above table, the mean score learning style preferences variables visual, auditory kinesthetic, tactile, group learning, and individual were 20.090, 21.090, 20.100, 20.110, 19.260

and 20.050 respectively. Based on the cut off points stated in the scoring sheet of the questionnaire, it was found that it seemed that only the mean scores of five learning style preference categories, (visual, auditory kinesthetic, tactile, and individual were 20.090, 21.090, 20.100, 20.110, 19.260 and 20.050 respectively, fall into the major learning style preferences category, and these learning styles ranked from one to five. The sixth rank which is the (negligible learning style) preferences was for the group learning with mean score 19.260.

This result supports findings investigated by different researchers. For example, Cheng and Banya (1995) finding was somehow similar with finding, and they found that the participants in their study preferred the perceptual learning styles of kinaethetic and Tactile, and. The findings of the study seem to be compatible with the ones identified by Cheng and Banya, except for the individual learner learning, which was placed into the negligible learning category in this study. However, there are other studies which are not parallel with this research finding that is group learning is negligible, for example Reid's (1987) and Cheng and Banya (1995) found that most groups in their study showed a negative preference for individual learner learning.

Students' Differences in the Perceptual Modality Preferences Based on Sex

Table 2: Statistical significant differences in the perceptual modality preferences of the students based on their sex

S. No	Strategies	Sex	No	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	Sig. Value
1	Visual	M	36	10.530	4.070	1.093	0.3952
		F	34	9.560	4.256		
2	Auditory	M	36	11.53	3.07	1.922	0.0280
		F	34	9.56	4.256		
3	Kinesthetic	M	36	10.44	4.15	1.086	0.4029
		F	34	9.66	4.325		
4	Tactile	M	36	10.61	3.828	1.128	0.3604
		F	34	9.5	4.066		

5	Group Learning	M	36	10.00	4.14	1.039	0.4563
		F	34	9.26	4.061		
6	Individual	M	36	10.14	4.571	1.062	0.4284
		F	34	9.91	4.711		

From the above table we can see that the statistically significant differences in the perceptual modality preferences between male and female students. And the result depicted that there are statistically significant differences between male and female in auditory with the sig. value 0.0280, and there are no statistically significant differences between male and female in visual (sig. value 0.3952), kinaesthetic (sig. value 0.4029), tactile (sig. value 0.3604), group learning (sig. value 0.4563), and individual learning styles (sig. value 0.4284). Similar with this research, Reid (1987) studied in the same issue and found that there was difference in the use of the visual, auditory, and individual learning style category between males and females, but contrasted with her results that males and females being more visual and individual learning style.

Language Learning Strategies Used by Students in the SILL

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Students LLS in the SILL

S. No	Strategies	No. of Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
1	Memory Strategies	9	51.900	16.063	3
2	Cognitive Strategies	14	85.350	22.868	1
3	Compensation Strategies	6	36.800	10.675	4
4	Mea-Cognitive Strategies	10	63.260	17.286	2
5	Affective Strategies	5	29.320	8.856	6
6	Social Strategies	6	36.330	11.407	5
	Total	50	302.96	87.155	

As shown in the table above, descriptive statistics was used to identify the general tendency of strategy preferences of the participants in this study. The results of the descriptive statistics conducted to identify the general tendency of strategy preferences of the participants in this study, indicated that the most preferred strategy category of all, with a mean score of 85.350 was the one related to cognitive strategies. The second meta cognitive strategies ranked the second with an average of 63.260, and the third place in the ranking order was taken by the memory strategies with a mean score of 51.900.The other strategies placed in the fourth and fifth ranking orders were taken by the compensation strategies with a mean score 36.800, and the social strategies with a mean score 36.33 respectively. Finally, the least preferred strategies were the affective ones as their score was 29.320.

Therefore, we can perceive that cognitive strategies were the most preferred strategies among the participants. In contrast, with this research Takeuchi (2003) who conducted the use of strategy types in Japanese contexts through analyzing the strategy use reported in 67 books on "How I have learned a foreign language. And he reported that metacognitive strategies were most preferred strategies among Japanese. This current study is also similar to Xuan's (2005) who found that the Chinese graduate students of science at Qingdao Technical University were medium strategy users. They used metacognitive strategies most often even though this is ranked as the second preferred strategies, and affective strategies least often and these are similar with the finding.

Students' Differences in the Language Learning Strategies Based on Sex

Table 4: Significance of Comparison between Males and Females LLS

S.No	Strategies	Sex	No	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	Sig. Value
1	Memory Strategies	M	36	25.64	8.635	1.351	0.1900
		F	34	26.26	7.428		
2	Cognitive Strategies	M	36	42.5	11.574	1.050	0.4441
		F	34	42.85	11.294		
3	Compensation Strategies	M	36	18.39	5.364	1.020	0.4780
		F	34	18.41	5.311		

4	Mea-Cognitive Strategies	M	36	31.67	8.727	1.040	0.4559
		F	34	31.59	8.559		
5	Affective Strategies	M	36	14.67	4.343	1.080	0.4095
		F	34	14.65	4.513		
6	Social Strategies	M	36	17.36	5.894	1.143	0.3487
		F	34	18.97	5.513		

From table 4, in order to find statistical significant differences between male and female students in all strategies an independent sample t-test was conducted. The results showed that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female in all realms, except Social Strategies towards female. This is because Social strategies equip female students, who are less achiever than males, with the necessary techniques to comprehend and produce the language in spite of their limitations in their knowledge of the language.

Similar with this finding Mohammed A. (2010) found that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female in all domains of strategy use, and the total degree of the domains, except Compensation Strategies towards male. In contradict with the this findings of Ehrman and Oxford (1989), Oxford and Nykos (1989), Kaylani (1996), and Green and Oxford (1995), all of whom claim that there are differences in the use of strategies between male and female learners. On the other hand, the result seems to support the findings of Ehrman and Oxford (1990) who reported that the number and kind of strategies used by females were similar to those used by males.

The Relationship between LLS and Achievement

Table 5: Correlation between Students' LLS Preferences and Academic Achievement

S. No	Strategies	Achievement Test Result
1	Memory Strategies	0.063
2	Cognitive Strategies	0.216**

3	Compensation Strategies	0.171**
4	Mea-Cognitive Strategies	0.102
5	Affective Strategies	0.105**
6	Social Strategies	0.287**
	Total	0.944**

Regarding to the relationship between language learning strategies and academic achievement, the researcher used Pearson correlation. The results showed that there is correlation between students' language learning strategy preferences and the academic achievement among the English majors at Arba Minch University, Wollayta Sod University, and Wachamo University. It was found that there is a statistically significant correlation coefficient between achievement and all strategies except Memory strategies and Mea-Cognitive Strategies.

Researchers in the field of language learning strategies (LLS) indicated that more proficient learners seem to employ a variety of strategies in many situations than to less proficient learners. It has been repeatedly shown that there is a strong relationship between (LLS) and language performance. Chamut & Kupper (1989) said that learners might not be fully aware of the strategies they use to the most beneficial strategies to use. Furthermore, they noticed that weaker students lack a critical self –awareness (i.e. the strategies of self –monitoring and self evaluation), while successful students have adopted these in addition to skills to benefit from any learning situation. Moreover, successful learners, use all available and choose suitable follow-up activities to tackle their problems (Halbach, 1999).

The findings of this research is incompatible with the study carried out by Shmais (2003) who studied the strategy use of Arab EFL English majors in Palestine. His study showed that the participants were moderate strategy users. The most frequent used strategies were metacognitive strategies, but the least frequent used strategies were compensation strategies. Similarly to Ok (2003), he investigated the strategy use of Korean secondary school students. He found that compensation strategies were used most frequently among students, whereas affective strategies were used the least.

The Relationship between Language Learning Style and Achievement

Table 6: Correlation between Students' LS and the Academic Achievement

S. No	Strategies	Achievement Test Result
1	Visual	0.102
2	Auditory	0.231**
3	Kinesthetic	0.145
4	Tactile	-0.223
5	Group Learning	0.151
6	Individual	0.076
	Total	0.482

From the above table, we can see the relationship between students' learning style and the academic achievement, and the researcher used person correlation. The results illustrated that the existence of correlation between students' learning style and the academic achievement, and it was found that there are statistically significant correlation coefficient between the academic achievement and auditory learners. This result matches with Cheng and Banya (1998) who conducted a study on their students and the results showed that the students with the Individual preference style use more language learning strategies, and they are less tolerant of ambiguity, and this leads to more academic achievement. Similarly, Mohammed A. (2010) found that in his research the students with the auditory preference style use more language learning strategies and leads them to high academic achievement.

An important issue that has given to the growing attention in learning styles is that research points to the relationship between learning styles and teaching styles as being a factor in the success of postsecondary students (Dunn et al., 1995; Ellis, 1989; Griggs & Dunn 1996; Hall & Moseley, 2005).

The findings also showed that there are no statistically significant correlation coefficient between achievement, visual, kinaesthaetic, tactile, group learning, and individual learning. This also agreed with a research result conducted by Mohammed A. (2010).

The Relationship between Language Learning Style and Language Learning Strategies

Table 7: Correlation between Students' Learning Style and the Language Learning Strategy Preferences

S. No	Strategies	Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic	Tactile	Group Learning	Individual
1	Memory Strategies	0.067	-0.045	0.038	0.088	0.078	0.095
2	Cognitive Strategies	0.249**	0.094	0.017	0.074	-0.084	-0.052
3	Compensation Strategies	-0.175	0.142	-0.061	-0.284*	0.055	0.016
4	Mea-Cognitive Strategies	-0.034	0.097	0.033	-0.019	0.041	0.031
5	Affective Strategies	0.087	0.083	0.065	0.058	0.067	-0.079
6	Social Strategies	0.853	0.047	0.318*	0.026	0.015	0.059

In the above table Pearson correlation was used to find whether there was a statistically meaningful relationship between the learning style preferences and the language learning strategy preferences of the students. The results revealed that there are no statistically significant correlation coefficient between all strategies and all style except Cognitive Strategies with visual positive relation, and tacticle with compensation strategies negative relation. Compensation strategies are said to equip students with the necessary techniques to understand and produce the language despite the limitations in their knowledge of the language. This means that, learners are capable of guessing intelligently by making use of linguistic or other clues. They can effectively make use of strategies such as using mimes and gestures, using a synonym or a circumlocution, switching to mother tongue, or getting help from others.

The results also indicated that none of the learning styles had a statistically significant relationship with the meta cognitive strategies. This means that the students are not aware of the importance of the meta cognitive strategies and they are not using them along with the other strategies. With respect to the results of the studies mentioned earlier, the results obtained from

this study seem to be partly contradicting with the findings of the studies conducted by Oxford (1991 as cited in Oxford, 1995), Rossi-Le (1989 as cited in Oxford, 1995), and Rossi-Le (1995), in which it was revealed that there was a strong relationship between language learning strategies use and the sensory preferences of the learners. However, the findings of this study is congruent with the results obtained by Shih and Gamon (2003) as cited in Mohammed A. (2010) who concluded that learning styles did not have an impact on the use of learning strategies.

A reasonable justification behind this absence of strong correlation between language learning strategies and learning styles could be due to the immature development of in-depth research of learning styles and learning strategies in Ethiopia, and particularly in the some government universities, there has always been poor or bsence of information on the kind of learning strategies adopted by the Ethiopian students particularly in learning a foreign language, hence, the efforts of the education system to identify learners strategies and therefore to employ these information in developing these strategies, failed to create a basis for a solid learning strategies among our students, and consequently, the research failed to identify any correlations between learning styles and learning strategies.

Again, we need to address that the fact that there is very limited or even absence of continuing development training for students in self management strategies as planning, self evaluation and formal practice, and this explains once more the absence of correlation between the students' learning styles and learning strategies because there are obviously a set of learning strategies which were worked on and emphasized by the education system.

Conclusion

The researchers expected that this study can provide a valuable insight and help at foreign language learning by investigating the relationship between learning styles, language learning strategies, and the academic achievement. Based on the results of the study obtained, the following conclusions have been made.

Firstly, the results obtained from analyzing the PLSQ showed that the students had major and negligible learning styles. Based on the cut off points stated in the scoring sheet of the questionnaire, it was found that it seemed that only the mean scores of visual, auditory kinesthetic, tactile, and individual learning style were fall into the major learning style preferences category. And the negligible learning style preferences was the group learning with mean score 19.260, and there was no minor learning style preferences among the learners.

Secondly, the result from independent sample t-test of PLSQ depicted that there are statistically significant differences between male and female in auditory with the sig. value 0.0280, and there are no statistically significant differences between male and female in visual (sig. value 0.3952), kinaesthetic (sig. value 0.4029), tactile (sig. value 0.3604), group learning (sig. value 0.4563), and individual learning styles (sig. value 0.4284).

Thirdly, the general tendency of strategy preferences of the participants in this study indicated that the most preferred strategy category of all, with a mean score of 85.350 was the one related to cognitive strategies. The second strategy preferences of the participants were meta cognitive strategies, and the third place was taken by the memory strategies with. The other strategies placed in the fourth and fifth strategy preferences of the participants were compensation and social strategies. The final and the least preferred strategies were the affective strategies. Moreover, the result from independent sample t-test of strategy preferences of the participants showed that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female in all realms, except Social Strategies towards female.

Fourthly, the analysis of Pearson correlation regarding to the relationship between language learning strategies and academic achievement, the results showed that there was correlation between students' language learning strategy preferences and the academic achievement among the participants. And also it was found that there was a statistically significant correlation coefficient between achievement and all strategies except Memory strategies and Mea-Cognitive Strategies. Similarly, the relationship between students' learning style and the academic achievement depicted that the existence of correlation between students' learning style and the academic achievement, and it was found that there are statistically significant correlation coefficient between the academic achievement and auditory learners.

Finally, the result depicted that there was a statistically meaningful relationship between the learning style preferences and the language learning strategy preferences of the students. The results revealed that there are no statistically significant correlation coefficient between all strategies and all style except Cognitive Strategies with visual positive relation, and tactile with compensation strategies negative relation.

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