



Research Article

Appraisal of the Relationship between Iranian Medical Students' Learning Styles and Their Preferences for English Language Learning Software Activities

Marziyeh Sabzevari¹, Azar Bagheri Masoudzade^{2,*}, Mahdiah Azizian^{3,4}

^{1,2,3} Department of General Educations, Afzalipour School of Medicine, Kerman University of Medical Sciences, Kerman, Iran

⁴ Modeling in Health Research Center, Institute for Futures Studies in Health, Kerman University of Medical Sciences, Kerman, Iran

*Corresponding author: Azar.bagheri000@gmail.com

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to explore the relationship between medical students' learning styles and their preferences towards "Tell Me More" language learning software activities among Iranian Medical Students. The study involved 57 intermediate students, comprising 39 males and 18 females, over a three-month period. Kolb Learning Style Inventory (KLSI) was utilized as a tool to examine the learning styles of the participants. A questionnaire assessing preferences for "Tell Me More" activities was given to determine the preferences of 40 out of the 57 participants (10 participants representing each learning style). Using Microsoft Excel 2010 software, the data from this questionnaire was analyzed based on their learning styles. The findings indicated that the majority of the participants who were accommodators, convergers, and divergers preferred the dialogue type "Tell Me More" activities. In addition, the same number of participants who were divergers also liked "fill in the blanks" activities. On the other hand, majority of the participants who were assimilators had a preference for the "the right word" activities. This study has significant contribution to recent findings on teaching and learning using technology.

Keywords: EFL Context; Learning style; Learners' preferences; Technology; "Tell Me More" software

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1. Introduction

English language acquisition is essential in today's society as there is a significant rise in the number of individuals learning the language. In this era of learner-centered education, English educators are focused on developing materials, tasks, and activities that align with various learning styles and preferences. Furthermore, acquiring

English as a foreign language presents a complex challenge for learners. At this stage, it is important for a learner to identify the most effective learning approach, style, and strategy that cater to their unique needs. Numerous external factors influence individual learning experiences. Elements such as the learning environment, the demeanor and personality of the teacher, as well as the resources and facilities available, contribute to the

effectiveness of the learning process. Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is a multifaceted endeavor.

In recent times, the utilization of computers as a tool for enhancing the learning experience of language learners has increased, providing students with an unparalleled opportunity to engage in online classes for improved learning outcomes. Experiences in technology-enhanced learning have become standard in contemporary language acquisition. In a society driven by technology, the generation and alteration of information are no longer limited to published materials but rather accessible to anyone equipped with fundamental technological resources (Bagheri Masoudzade & Shekarian Behzadi, 2025). Language learning applications serve as a modern technological resource that promotes the acquisition of foreign or second languages. The introduction of language learning programs as a medium in Digital Language Laboratories has been implemented at several universities and institutes to support self-directed English language learning. While instructional technology has enabled researchers to reassess teaching methodologies, a pertinent question arises regarding the effective design of software for English language learning. By leveraging rapidly advancing technologies and examining the needs of English language learners, instructors can effectively integrate technology to address student requirements. A vital approach to identifying students' needs is by taking their learning styles into account. Currently, medical students utilize a software program called "Tell Me More." This program is part of a self-access initiative that medical students are required to complete weekly. Within this software, there are nineteen different types of activities, each with distinct pedagogical goals. These activities aim to enhance all aspects of the students' English proficiency skills.

In contemporary society, the English language holds significant importance alongside our native languages. Within ESL and EFL classrooms, there is a strong emphasis on teaching and learning strategies to facilitate effective education. ESL/EFL educators must possess an understanding of the diverse learning styles of their students, select suitable teaching methods, and consider learners' preferences while also choosing appropriate instructional materials tailored to the needs of the learners in the educational context. Furthermore, there is considerable attention given to teaching and learning styles within academic settings. The advent of technology is also viewed as a promising alternative to engage students' interest. Online learning via innovative resources fosters a learner-centered atmosphere where students have the autonomy to dictate their own learning pace, and activities can be adapted to align with individual learning preferences. This approach also facilitates active learning opportunities (Bagheri Masoudzade et al., 2026). Certain

English language learners encounter challenges in grasping the concepts and materials presented in their courses conducted in English once they commence their studies as master's or Ph.D. students. This issue appears to be a common hurdle for international students in various countries. Moreover, students must possess the ability to produce high-quality research and deliver acceptable presentations in English. Additionally, numerous learners do not fully participate in the self-access program, and attendance in the digital language lab among students is notably low. Some medical students participating in the English language lab do not approach the activities with the seriousness they require, resulting in incomplete "Tell Me More" tasks by the semester's conclusion. These learners often miss sessions or leave numerous activities unfinished. The difficulty level of the activities varies, with some students finding them challenging while others consider them straightforward. In light of these issues, this study aims to investigate the learning styles and assess the preferences of Iranian medical students regarding activities in the digital language lab. To address the identified research gaps, the following questions have been formulated;

What are the Iranian medical students' learning styles at medical sciences university?

What are the Iranian medical students' preferences for English language learning activities in the "Tell Me More"?

What is the relationship between medical students' learning styles and their preferences for English language learning activities in "Tell Me More"?

2. Literature Review

In a more recent study, Sajjadi and Elahi (2025) conducted a study examining the correlation between language learning styles and academic success among 40 Iranian high school EFL students. The VARK Learning Style Index was utilized to determine the preferred learning styles of the students, while their final exam scores served as a measure of academic performance. Descriptive statistics were applied to analyze the collected data. The findings revealed that most students identified as auditory learners, followed by kinesthetic and reading/writing learners, with visual learners representing the smallest group. Significantly, auditory learners attained the highest average test scores, suggesting a possible connection between auditory learning preferences and academic achievement. These results imply that acknowledging and accommodating individual learning styles, especially auditory preferences, may improve student engagement and academic performance.

In another recent study, Karimian and Zolfaghari (2024) analyzed the preferences of medical students regarding virtual education and their learning styles. A

total of 180 questionnaires were distributed, with 155 respondents completing the questions. All students demonstrated a unimodal learning style, predominantly favoring reading/writing. Each educational method received scores exceeding the established cut-off point. There was no significant variation in students' preferences for virtual education based on their learning styles. Although e-students possess diverse learning styles, their educational preferences are primarily shaped by their circumstances. Consequently, the incorporation of multimedia and independent learning is crucial for them. It can be asserted that the three key preferences of e-students, which should be taken into account in educational planning, are "flexibility," "personalization," and "independence."

Ebadi and Goodarzi (2022) examined the preferences for perceptual learning styles among non-gainers in English language within a computerized dynamic reading assessment, involving 24 advanced English language learners. The findings revealed certain prevalent tendencies related to field-independency, impulsivity/reflectivity, and metaphoric/literal style preferences, as corroborated by interviews with the learners. This study suggests that the learners' style preferences may significantly influence the reporting of their performance; thus, it is recommended to take into account students' learning styles when making assessments regarding their capabilities and challenges in computerized dynamic reading comprehension tests.

Naimie et al. (2010) investigated the influence of teaching style on learning style preferences and how teaching methods can fit learners' needs. They applied a survey method by using Learning Styles Index (LSI) as the instrument and triangulated survey results with observation and interviews. The participants were four lecturers and 310 English major students from the Foreign Languages Faculty of a University, Iran. In this study, learners are randomly selected from different majors whose instructions are in English. As the results of this study indicated, the major students' learning styles were Global, Active, Visual and Sensing. Moreover, results show that in EFL classes, aligning teaching methods with learning styles can help the students to be more successful. Based on the studies mentioned earlier, if teaching styles can be aligned with student's learning styles, learners may achieve better results. Hence, ESL/EFL students may improve their English Language skills in higher education if instructors have consideration about their learning style. In the same year, Zacharis (2010) investigated learning styles among two groups, the first group consists of first year on-campus undergraduate Computer Science majors and the second group was freshman Computer Science students who received online instruction. This study aims to investigate the relationship between the course delivery format and students' academic achievements. The results

of this study indicated that there are no remarkable statistical variations between students' learning styles and academic performance among these two groups, one group instructed virtually and the other one received instruction traditionally. This study concluded that there is a relationship between learning style and educational performance. It suggested that online instruction is less effective for the students with Converging and Assimilating learning style who are likely to gain knowledge through Abstract Conceptualization. As there are different results from previous studies regarding the learners' preferences, it seems more research on the reaction of learners in virtual environments is needed.

3. Materials and Method

3.1. Research Design

Research design pertains to the comprehensive plan or strategy employed by a researcher to carry out a study aimed at collecting information to resolve a research problem or question (Fatehi et al., 2023). This study used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in order to explore students' learning styles and their preferences in "Tell Me More" activities. The researchers used intact group because, the participants were the students who attended the writing academic courses at university and used "Tell Me More" language software in a digital language lab.

3.2. Instruments

72 students of Kerman university of medical sciences were selected by the researchers. In order to have homogenized samples, Cambridge Placement Test was administered to them. According to the results, 57 students of both genders between the ages of 20 and 25 selected to participate in this study. Then, they were divided into three classes. The instruments were questionnaires, interview, and "Tell Me More" language learning software. For finding the students' learning style, the researchers used learning style questionnaire which was adapted from KLSI version 3.1. In addition, one part of the interview consisted of some questions regarding students' learning styles. To investigate the students' preference for "Tell Me More" activities, the researcher designed a questionnaire based on "Tell Me More" activities which used the Likert Scale. The other instrument for this question was the second part of the interview that was about student's preference for "Tell Me More" activities.

"Tell Me More" education software offers different types of activities which correspond to specific pedagogical objectives. It offers a variety of activities and skill levels such as Complete Beginner, Beginner,

Intermediate, Intermediate and Advanced, to reach fluency in a language. The program centers on growing the particular skills needed to succeed in language learning which includes listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and culture. Learners are free to choose from the guided program or free-to-roam mode. In free-to-roam, learners are free to choose their own program and focus only on those areas that they need help. “Tell Me More” has the potential to develop all English skills. The software combines state-of-the-art technology such as digital imaging and speech recognition with proven methods like repetition and the use of visual, aural and participation teaching techniques. It links the fundamentals of English to produce a powerful learning system.

3.3. Procedure

During the study, sixteen respondents were selected randomly for the interview. The researchers selected two males and two females randomly from each learning style. The interview has been conducted during the course in the digital language lab when the medical students have used “Tell Me More” software. In other words, they are familiar with different activities and exercises of “Tell Me More”. This part was conducted after collecting data from two different questionnaires. The main purpose of having the interview was to validate some quantitative data collected in the survey. The interview consists of two parts, the first part includes a few questions regarding the students’ learning styles and the second part is related to respondents’ views on “Tell Me More” language learning activities.

The first stage of the research process involved distributing the questionnaire to gather background information on each student and it also involved the Learning Style Questionnaire which was adapted from KLSI. One page of KLSI instruction has been added to the questionnaire. One of the classes was given KLSI and Demographic questionnaire on week 6 and these questionnaires were distributed in the other two classes during week 7. In total, 57 students responded to the learning style questionnaire. At the second stage, during week 8, the researcher gave all the participants a briefing about “Tell Me More” activities and how they should answer the second questionnaire. The “Tell Me More” activity preference questionnaire was distributed during week 9 of the course in the digital language lab. A total of 49 questionnaires has been distributed to the target samples who took writing academic course at the intermediate level as the rest were absent at that time. The third stage was distributing the questionnaire on the students’ rating in terms of preference in “Tell Me More” activities. The researcher also helped to explain the questionnaire statements to the students whenever they

had any difficulty in interpreting the questionnaire correctly. This was to ensure that the students were able to complete the questionnaire by providing accurate feedback required by the researcher. In the last stage, the researcher interviewed 16 participants about both their learning styles and preferences for “Tell Me More” activities during the course. It was impossible to interview all the participants. The interviews took around two sessions and it was one week after distributing the second questionnaire which were weeks 10 and 11. Sixteen interviewees were chosen after they were willing to participate in the interview. They were interviewed individually and face-to-face and the data were transcribed manually.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data gained through the questionnaires were tabulated using Microsoft Excel 2010. Frequency and percentage are two generic analytical techniques to have primitive description about results. These two techniques were used in this research to describe participants’ learning style based on correspondent demographic data. The different variables were later cross-tabulated to find out whether there was any pattern or any relationship between the data from learners’ learning styles and learners’ preferences for “Tell Me More” activities. Cross tabulation was used to identify the relationship between learning styles and students’ preference for different activities. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed manually and the results were triangulated with the results of the two questionnaires of this study. The interview had two sections: the first part’s data was triangulated with the results of the learning style questionnaire and the data from the second part was triangulated with learners’ preference for “Tell Me More” activities.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Analysis of the Learning Style based on Kolb’s Learning Style Inventory (KLSI)

The KLSI is a 12-item sentence completion instrument asking participants to rank the order of their preferences for learning styles. Scoring of this instrument results in the classification of the individual learning styles as an assimilator, accommodator, converger or diverger. The participants’ learning styles are presented in Table 1. Data analysis illustrated that assimilator (33.33%) had the highest percentage.

According to Kolb’s (2005) perception, assimilators are interested in researching and higher education more than people from other learning styles. As shown in Table 1, 24.56% of the students were convergers. Kolb (2005) suggested that, convergers prefer to use technology and

experience new ideas. Hence, they like academic environment.

These findings support Kolb's (2005) suggestions that students in technology and information science fields are commonly grouped in these two learning styles. Most of participants of the research were students studying technology related courses. As expected, majority of them fell into one of the foretold learning styles. Accommodators and divergers had the smallest percentage among the sample which is 21.05 percent. Divergers prefer to be involved in art and entertainment environment rather than higher education (Kolb, 2005). People with accommodating learning style like sales and marketing in business areas more than research and higher education (Kolb, 1984).

With reference to Table 2, majority of the male participants (33.33%) were assimilators. This could be due to the logical characteristic of men whereby they are mostly less focused on people and more interested in abstract ideas. 28.20% of the male students were convergers, 20.51% of them had diverging learning style. In addition, minority of the male participants were accommodators (17.95%) who are able to lead, inspire and motivate other people and also, they can be good teachers or trainers (Kolb, 2005). On the other hand, the percentage of accommodator, assimilator and diverger were the same (27.78%) among female participants. The

lowest percentage in this group was for the converging (16.67%) learning style. Since convergers are not sensitive and emotional people, majority of the women did not appear in this category. Oskay et al. (2010) suggested that mostly females are likely to have diverging learning style and on the other hand, males are mostly accommodators.

From Table 3, most of the Master (41.67%) and B.A (28.89%) students were assimilators. This could be because assimilators enjoy doing research and studying in high level education as well as possess well-developed thinking skills and are good at organizing information (Kolb, 1984).

Furthermore, the minority of Master students were accommodator (8.33%), as they were not interested in higher education and prefer to do business (Kolb, 2005). The percentage of diverging and converging learning styles were 33.33% and 16.67% respectively among Master students.

On the other hand, converging, accommodating and diverging learning style were 26.67%, 24.44% and 20% among the B.A students. Students with diverging learning styles were the smallest category among Master students. Divergers were in favor of art and entertainment, so they did not like doing higher education in academic environment.

Table 1. Learning Style Distribution

Learning Style	Frequency	Percentage
Diverging	12	21.05%
Accommodating	12	21.05%
Assimilating	19	33.33%
Converging	14	24.56%
Total	57	100%

Table 2. Participants' Learning Styles According to Their Gender

Gender	Accommodating/ Percentage	Assimilating/ Percentage	Converging/ Percentage	Diverging/ Percentage
Male	7(17.95%)	13(33.33%)	11(28.21%)	8(20.51%)
Total	39			
Female	5 (27.78%)	5(27.78)	3(16.67%)	5(27.78%)
Total	18			

Table 3. Participants' Learning Style According to Their Level of Education

Level of Study	Accommodating/ Percentage	Assimilating/ Percentage	Converging/ Percentage	Diverging/ Percentage
Master	1 (8.33%)	5 (41.67%)	2 (16.67%)	4 (33.33%)
Total	12			
B.A	11 (24.44%)	13 (28.89%)	12 (26.67%)	9 (20.00%)
Total	45			

Table 4. Learning Style Distribution According to the Participants' Major of studies

Major	Accommodating/ Percentage	Assimilating/ Percentage	Converging/ Percentage	Diverging/ Percentage
Biotechnology	3(60.00%)	2(40.00%)	0(00.00%)	0(00.00%)
Civil Eng	1(11.11%)	7(77.78%)	0(00.00%)	0(00.00%)
Electrical Eng	0(00.00%)	1(33.33%)	1(33.33%)	0(00.00%)
Industrial Eng	0(00.00%)	0(00.00%)	3(100.00%)	0(00.00%)
Mechanical Eng	1(11.11%)	2(22.22%)	3(33.33%)	3(33.33%)
Petroleum Eng	2(66.67%)	0(00.00%)	0(00.00%)	1(33.33%)
Management	1(20.00%)	1(20.00%)	1(50.00%)	0(00.00%)
Chemistry Eng	0(00.00%)	1(50.00%)	1(50.00%)	0(00.00%)
Architecture	0(00.00%)	1(33.33%)	0(00.00%)	0(00.00%)
Computer Science	0(00.00%)	2(28.57%)	4(57.14%)	1(14.29%)
IT Education	4(50.00%)	2(25.00%)	1(12.50%)	1(12.50%)

Table 4 shows the distribution of the participants' learning styles according to their field of study. As the participants' majors were different, they had various learning styles. For instance, all the students who were studying industrial engineering have converging (100%) learning style. That is a good example of Kolb's (1984) perception in which most convergers are interested in the practical application of ideas and they prefer dealing with technical tasks. Furthermore, majority of the civil engineering students are assimilators (77.78%). Carifio (2018) believed that assimilators prefer to perceive information in a systematic and organized way. It can be the relation between civil engineering and assimilating learning style.

However, Kolb (2005) mentioned that civil engineers are likely to be convergers because most of the convergers prefer engineering majors. More than half of the Computer Science students in this study have converging (57.14%) learning style and 28.57% of them are assimilators. This result supported Kolb's (2005) statement that most of the Computer Science students are convergers. Terrell's (2002) study also proved that converger and assimilator with Abstract Conceptualization (AC) preference are likely to prefer e-learning and were more successful rather than students with other learning styles. Another study by Buerck et al. (2003) on Computer Science students indicated that they were mostly convergers and assimilators. The students when divided into two groups, the convergers preferred online learning whereas the assimilators preferred face-to-face learning.

Chemical engineers of this study are either convergers (50.00%) or assimilators (50.00%). The result is similar to Oskay et al.'s (2010) research result in which most of the chemistry teachers had converging and assimilating learning style. Since chemical students like doing practical exercises in the laboratory, they have these learning styles. In addition, half of the IT education students are accommodators (50.00%). One of Kolb's

(2005) suggestions for accommodator's career is teaching as they are practical people and able to work directly with others and motivate them. Furthermore, Kolb (1984) mentioned that one of the suitable fields of study for divergers is management. This is proven in this study as the number of management students with diverging learning style (40%) is more than other learning styles. This study also supported another appropriate field of study for divergers as suggested by Kolb (1984) which is architecture because they are interested in arts. More than half (66.67%) of the architecture participants have diverging learning style. The researcher chose four people from each learning style (two males and two females) at random and interviewed them. According to Kolb (2005) people from different learning styles have different personalities. For instance, accommodators are sociable, risk taker and practical. Based on the interview data, all of the accommodators were sociable and preferred group work rather than working individually. 50% of them were risk takers and 75% were practical and like technical tasks. For example, three of the accommodators said:

Student A: "I am sociable person and try being kind with people." (Accommodator)

Student B: "I am not afraid of facing new situation; actually, I'm an adventurous person." (Accommodator)

Student C: "I enjoy doing technical task, because I like doing things with my hands." (Accommodator)

People with assimilating learning style should be logical, not very sociable, but helpful. They can learn a new topic by various ways such as listening to a lecture and writing materials.

According to the interview, 75% of the assimilators were not sociable and they did not like group work tasks. 50% of them were logical and helpful and all of them liked arts. 75% of them believed that they learn better by listening to lectures and they solve the problems by analyzing the situation. For instance;

Student D: "it takes time to communicate with other people." (Assimilator)

Student E: "Not really, if I am in group of same people, I like equality. No one say I am boss now." (Assimilator)

Student F: "I solve the problems by analyzing the situation." (Assimilator)

Students G: "I am helpful, I love human and respect humanity not just human, I also respect to animal and plants." (Assimilator)

Kolb (2005) stated that convergers are not sociable and they are practical and logical. The interview indicated that all of the convergers were not sociable and did not like group work. Moreover, 75% of them were logical people and 100% were risk-takers. All of them liked technical tasks and 75% of them were not interested in writing different materials, so only 25% of convergers learn a new topic by writing.

The following sentences are from converger interviewees:

Student H: "I do not talk a lot, not sociable a lot." (Converger)

Student I: "Working in-group is so hard to me, but after some time I am comfort with group so I prefer work individually." (Converger)

Student J: "I think I am logical and practical and a little emotional." (Converger)

Based on Kolb (2005), people with diverging learning styles are sociable, sensitive and interested in arts and writing materials. As the interviews showed, 75% of the divergers were sociable and preferred group work rather than working individually. 75% of them learnt a new topic better by writing and were interested in writing different materials. In addition, 75% of them were sensitive and liked art.

Student K: "I think I am sociable person and logical person. Also, I prefer to work in group to learn from others." (Diverger)

Student L: "yes, I love arts, I do painting." (Diverger)

Student M: "I prefer initially read about the topic and then do it." (Diverger)

The results of the first question and scoring of KLSI is consistent with Kolb (1984) that each learning style is equally represented in the adult population. It reveals that there are individual differences among the students in academic environment which lead to the selection of

various fields of study. Furthermore, if the students know their learning style, they are able to enhance their knowledge and skills especially during self-access learning.

4.2. Analysis of Learning Preferences for "Tell Me More" Activities

57 intermediate students participated in the first survey. The researchers found that a few of the participants were absent for the second questionnaire and only 49 students answered the second survey. The minimum number of students for each learning style was at least ten in the second questionnaire. As the number of the participants from all learning styles should be equal, ten students from each learning style were chosen randomly to find the answer to the second research question.

In Table 5, the number of students who participated in the first and second survey is shown. This part investigates the medical students' preferences for "Tell Me More" language software activities. Likert scale was used in the learning preferences' questionnaire. The percentage of the students' preferences for each activity was measured. This part is the answer to the second research question. The second survey indicated the students' preferences for "Tell Me More" activities.

The results indicated the participants' preferred oral activity such as "dialogue". As shown in Table 6, the activity most preferred and with the highest number of "like" by the students is "dialogue" (31). As 11 of 16 interviewees like "dialogue" activities, results of the interview data supported the questionnaire data. For example, Student I said, "Actually I think I am weak at listening and dialogue is a good practice for me". They enjoyed doing this activity, as they experienced real English environment through dialogue.

While the most influential part of learning English language is communicating with people, the medical students preferred dialogue. While "dialogue" consists of some scenarios taken from daily life and helps the students to develop their listening and speaking skills, it is the most attractive activity.

Table 5. Participants Distribution of Two Surveys

Questionnaire	Frequency of Accommodating	Frequency of Assimilating	Frequency of Converging	Frequency of Diverging
First Questionnaire (Learning Styles)	12	19	14	12
Total	57			
Second Questionnaire (Learning Preferences)	10	16	12	11
Total	49			

Table 6. Learners' Preferences for "Tell Me More"Activities

Activities	Like	Not Sure	Dislike
Dialogue	31	7	2
Sentence Pronunciation	19	15	6
Word Pronunciation	19	19	2
Picture/Word Association	26	13	1
Word Association	17	20	3
The Right Word	26	12	2
Fill in The Blanks	26	9	5
Grammar Practice	25	7	8
Word Order	21	16	3
Sentence Practice	21	14	5
Dictation	17	16	7
Text Transformation	19	10	11

As shown in Table 6, majority of the students did not like "text transformation" (11) as much as other activities, so it had the highest amount of "dislike". During the interview, ten of sixteen students did not like "text transformation" activity. For example, Student E said, "I don't like writing exercises that I have to write long sentences." This activity consists of rewriting a short essay according to a specific set of instructions. As most of the students are weak at writing skill and writing exercises are boring, the students did not enjoy doing this activity. It revealed that, the participants are not interested in written exercises in comparison to others. From the analysis, the students probably had problem with writing skill, as half of the interviewees were not good at this skill. There were two questions among the interview questions that were not in the questionnaire. One of them referred to easiest activity and six interviewees believed that the "fill in the blanks" activity was the easiest and the most favorite activities for the participants. Another question referred to the most difficult activity and Six interviewees believed that "sentence pronunciation" activity is the most difficult one, as they are used to the American accent which differs from "Tell Me More" guided mode that uses the British accent.

4.3. Relationship between Learning Style and Learners' Preferences for "Tell Me More"

Learners' preference for "Tell Me More"Activities is the extent of relationship between the students' learning style and their preferences for the language activities in "Tell Me More". 10 students from each learning style were selected and as shown in table 7, the students' preferences for the activities were compared according to their learning styles. In each table, the preference of 10 students from each learning style is shown and analyzed separately. Table 7 indicates that the activity most liked by accommodators was "dialogue" (90%), which is an oral exercise. This activity emphasizes on listening and speaking skills and helps the students in communication. As accommodators are sociable people, they like to

improve their communication skills even in English. In addition, students with this learning style learn more efficiently through simulations and case study (Manochehr, 2006). This activity uses pictures and videos to show real life communication scenarios. As "dialogue" is an imitation of real communication among native people, accommodators enjoyed this activity. For example, Student A said, "I like dialogue because I want to improve my speaking and accent" (Accommodator). Furthermore, they did not like "dictation" as much as other activities. In this activity, the students need to rearrange the jumbled-up sentences in the right order. This activity drills students' grammar. It indicates that the accommodator participants may have problem with grammar that led them not to be interested in "dictation" activity. Based on the interview, three of students liked the "fill in the blanks" activity in "Tell Me More" as this activity was easy for them. Moreover, this exercise was the second most preferred activity by accommodators in the questionnaire. As three of these students mentioned in the interview they needed more practice in writing, they believed that written exercises such as "sentence practice" and "grammar practice" were most practical for them. This is supported by what Student B said, "All of activities are good but sentence practice is very practical for me" (Accommodator). Furthermore, seven of the ten students who were accommodators agreed that they liked "grammar practice" and six of them liked "sentence practice" activities. Table 8 shows that majority of the assimilators liked "the right word" (9) more than other activities. Also, half of the assimilators interviewed believed that they liked this activity. This activity consists of completing a sentence with word (s) and it aims to enhance learners' writing skill. For example, Student F said, "I like writing activity because they are easy such as "the right word" (Assimilator). Based on the interview, the assimilators (3) were mostly good at writing skill but weak at writing skill. For example, Student E said, "I don't like writing exercises that I have to write long sentence" (Assimilator). They probably enjoy doing writing exercises as they are easy for this group. According to

Bostrom et al. (2009), assimilator students showed better performance on comprehension test rather than learner with other learning styles. The results of this study showed that assimilators were interested in writing which is in accordance with Bostrom et al.'s (2009) research findings. Assimilators are mostly interested in exercises involving the use of gathering information as well as investigating and researching so, they need to practice writing more than other skills. In spite of that, they did not like “text transformation” as much as other activities as they are not good at writing skill. This activity made them feels bored and unmotivated as they had to sit and write. Half of the

assimilators interviewed and most of the assimilator participants who responded to the preference for “Tell Me More” questionnaire liked “the right word” activity. As they were not good at writing exercises, this test which consists of completing a sentence with one of the words or groups of words proposed as the solution may be easy for them because they can find the solution easily. Three of them mentioned “dialogue” activity was difficult. This may be because they are not very sociable people and communication is difficult for them. Hence, dialogue may not be easy for this group.

Table 7. “Tell Me More” Activities Preferences among Accommodators

Activities	Like/ Percentage	Not Sure/ Percentage	Dislike/ Percentage
Dialogue	9 (90.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Sentence Pronunciation	6 (60.00%)	4 (40.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Word Pronunciation	5 (50.00%)	5 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Picture/Word Association	7 (70.00%)	2 (20.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Word Association	5 (50.00%)	5 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)
The Right Word	6 (60.00%)	4 (40.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Fill in the Blanks	7 (70.00%)	3 (30.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Grammar Practice	7 (70.00%)	2 (20.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Word Order	7 (70.00%)	3 (30.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Sentence Practice	6 (60.00%)	3 (30.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Dictation	5 (50.00%)	3 (30.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Text Transformation	6 (60.00%)	3 (30.00%)	1 (10.00%)

Table 8. “Tell Me More” Activities Preferences among Assimilators

Activities	Like/ Percentage	Not Sure/Percentage	Dislike/Percentage
Dialogue	6 (60.00%)	4 (40.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Sentence Pronunciation	6 (60.00%)	2 (20.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Word Pronunciation	7 (70.00%)	3 (30.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Picture/ Word Association	6 (60.00%)	4 (40.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Word Association	5 (50.00%)	4 (40.00%)	1 (10.00%)
The Right Word	9 (90.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Fill in the Blanks	6 (60.00%)	2 (20.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Grammar Practice	7 (70.00%)	1 (10.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Word Order	5 (50.00%)	4 (40.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Sentence Practice	6 (60.00%)	3 (30.00%)	1(10.00%)
Dictation	5(50.00%)	4 (40.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Text Transformation	5 (50.00%)	2 (20.00%)	3 (30.00%)

Table 9. “Tell Me More” Activities Preferences among Convergers

Activities	Like/Percentage	Not Sure/Percentage	Dislike/Percentage
Dialogue	9 (90.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Sentence Pronunciation	2 (20.00%)	5 (50.00%)	3 (30.00%)
Word Pronunciation	2 (20.00%)	6 (60.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Picture/ Word Association	7 (70.00%)	3 (30.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Word Association	4 (40.00%)	5 (50.00%)	1 (10.00%)
The Right Word	5 (50.00%)	4 (40.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Fill in the Blanks	6 (60.00%)	3 (30.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Grammar Practice	5 (50.00%)	3 (30.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Word Order	5 (50.00%)	4 (40.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Sentence Practice	5 (50.00%)	3 (30.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Dictation	4 (40.00%)	5 (50.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Text Transformation	6 (60.00%)	2 (20.00%)	2 (20.00%)

Based on Table 9, the converging participants like “dialogue” (9) type of exercises. However, they did not like “sentence pronunciation” exercise. As convergers are mostly unsociable, they hesitate to communicate with others specifically in another language, so they are weak at listening and speaking skills. Student I said, “Actually I think I am weak at listening and dialogue is a good practice for me” (Converger). The “dialogue” activity consists of listening to and pronouncing a list of sentences and aims to improve learners’ listening and speaking skills. Regarding the interview with participants who had converging learning style, three of them mentioned that they need more practice in listening skill and are good at writing skill. Therefore, the pronunciation activity was difficult for them and they did not enjoy doing it. Half of the interviewees like “sentence practice” which is a written exercise and three of them believed that “fill in the blank” is the easiest activity. As student J said, “I think fill-in-the-blank is the easiest activity, it just simple to write a word. It does not have listening and speaking” (Converger). It is obvious that, as convergers are good at writing exercises so they preferred this type of activities. Currie’s (1995) research findings suggest that converger learners have better performance in environments using narration method. While writing is a form of narration, learners with this learning style are expected to have interest in writing as the result of this study revealed. For three of the convergers, “dialogue” was the most difficult activity and also the most practical one as they were weak at listening skill. According to the results of both interview and questionnaire, dialogue was difficult for convergers but they liked it. Besides that, three of them disliked the pronunciation activity which was the least preferred activity in the results of the questionnaire. As

Table 10 indicates, the diverging participants mostly liked “dialogue” (7) and “fill in the blanks” (7) among the “Tell Me More” activities. They liked “dialogue” probably due to two reasons. The first reason is they want to know how to communicate with people from other nationalities as they are sociable people and like to gather information from various sources (Kolb, 2005). Another reason is they want to improve their listening skill which they are weak at. Divergers mostly have vast cultural knowledge and like collecting information. Among the remarkable strengths of divergers are creativity, understanding others, being aware of problems and developing a large perspective about an event by brainstorming (Kolb, 1993, Yilmaz-Soylu & Akkoyunlu, 2009). Accordingly, divergers are mostly sociable people and enjoy communicating with others to collect information, so they are good at speaking language skill. Besides that, divergers are not interested in “text transformation” (4) so they did not enjoy doing writing exercises. Based on interview with divergers, three of them needed more practice in listening skill and were good at writing skill. The easiest activity for divergers were “fill in the blank” (3) as it does not need a lot of writing and is a short activity. They disliked written exercises such as “dictation” and “grammar practice” (2). These results supported the results of the second questionnaire which shows that divergers did not like “dictation”. Student L: “Dialogue is practical because it is mixed of listening and speaking practices.” (Diverger). Student M: “Writing exercises are boring for me; I don’t like text transformation.” (Diverger). A summary of activities in “Tell Me More” software that participants “like” and “dislike” is shown in Table 11.

Table 10. “Tell Me More” Activities Preferences among Divergers

Activities	Like/Percentage	Not Sure/Percentage	Dislike/Percentage
Dialogue	7 (70.00%)	3 (30.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Sentence Pronunciation	5 (50.00%)	4 (40.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Word Pronunciation	5 (50.00%)	5 (50.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Picture/ Word Association	6 (60.00%)	4 (40.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Word Association	3 (30.00%)	6 (60.00%)	1 (10.00%)
The Right Word	6 (60.00%)	4 (40.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Fill in the Blanks	7 (70.00%)	1 (10.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Grammar Practice	6 (60.00%)	2 (20.00%)	2 (20.00%)
Word Order	4 (40.00%)	5 (50.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Sentence Practice	4 (40.00%)	5 (50.00%)	1 (10.00%)
Dictation	3 (30.00%)	4 (40.00%)	3 (30.00%)
Text Transformation	2 (20.00%)	4 (40.00%)	4 (40.00%)

Table 11. The Participants’ Preferences for “Tell Me More” Activities

Learning Styles	Activities Which Students “Like”	Activities Which Students “Dislike”	Learning Style Characteristic
Accommodating	Dialogue	Dictation	Sociable/Leader/Manager/Taking Action
Assimilating	The Right Word	Text Transformation	Unsociable/Searching/Analyzing
Converging	Dialogue	Sentence Pronunciation	Unsociable/Logical/Experiencing
Diverging	Dialogue	Text Transformation	Sociable/ Imaginative/Sensitive

The researchers used cross tabulation for analyzing the data from two questionnaires to find the relationship between learning styles and learners' preferences for "Tell Me More" activities. Table 11 shows that the participants from all the learning styles had almost the same preferences for "Tell Me More" activities. For instance, accommodators, convergers and divergers had similar preferences because they mostly learn by experiencing and doing. The results of cross tabulation indicated that the accommodators, convergers and divergers had somehow similar preferences for activities. These three groups preferred "dialogue" among the "Tell Me More" activities as they are interested in communicating with others and would like to improve their speaking skill. Unlike participants with other learning styles, assimilators preferred "the right word" activity in "Tell Me More" language software. This activity focuses on the writing skill. According to Kolb (2005), assimilators require good clear explanation rather than practical opportunity.

Furthermore, they are not sociable people and they need time to think things through on their way to learn a topic. Hence, these are probably why they did not like "dialogue" as much as other learning activities. The activities which most of assimilators and divergers dislike were similar while they learn by reflecting. They did not like "text transformation" activity as it is boring for them. Both groups of people mostly view things from different perspectives and look for different possible meanings and interpretations in the theories. Among all the learning styles, most of convergers disliked "sentence pronunciation", because they are unsociable and shy so they do not feel comfortable pronouncing sentences with British accent in front of other students in the digital lab.

As they should repeat the sentence more than once till the software accept it, they did not like this activity. Majority of the accommodators, however, disliked "dictation" activity because they are active and energetic people so they did not enjoy doing writing exercises. Therefore, this activity is boring and not exciting for accommodator students.

"Tell Me More" language software's activities are multitasking and each activity focus on more than one skill. It leads to somewhat similar preferences for these activities among the students. For instance, "dialogue" was a very attractive activity for most of the students, as they experienced the real English environment. As a result, there is some form of relationship between students learning styles and their preferences.

5. Conclusion

The results from first questionnaire indicated that medical students have various learning styles and learn in different ways as they studied in several academic majors. The minimum number of students for each learning style was

at least ten in the second questionnaire. As the number of the participants from all learning styles should be equal, ten students from each learning style were chosen randomly.

Furthermore, data from the second questionnaire and interviews showed that these students have somewhat the same preferences for "Tell Me More" activities but their ability in English skills was diverse. In short, accommodators, convergers and divergers preferred somewhat the same type of activities, but assimilators preferred a different activity as they had different views in learning.

Therefore, there is some form of relationship between intermediate medical students' learning styles and their preferences for "Tell Me More" activities. An overall view of the findings related to learning styles showed that majority of the participants had assimilating and converging learning styles which involved abstract conceptualization. As most of them were studying in engineering majors, it was obvious that they should have strong abstract conceptualization.

A parallel finding existed in Zacharis's (2010) research in which most of the participants were assimilators and convergers. The most consistent relationship was evidenced between learning styles and learners' academic majors. As a result, the medical students had different learning styles and through cross-tabulation there was some form of relationship between learning styles regarding their preferences for "Tell Me More" language learning software activities.

Majority of the students had similar preferences for "Tell Me More" activities because this software's activities are multi-task and include all pedagogical skills so it covered all the students' needs. For instance, most of the medical students liked "dialogue" more than other activities.

Comprehending students' views on their learning styles is essential for language software developers, as it offers valuable opportunities to enhance students' educational experiences and their engagement with technology. In essence, effective pedagogy consistently takes into account the diverse learning styles of language learners, recognizing that each student has a unique approach to learning. Regardless of the teaching tools selected, it is crucial to factor in learning styles when making those decisions.

The participants in the current research indicated that the notion of learning style preferences within their EFL context is quite novel. Many educators are surprised by the understanding that students have diverse learning methods and that instructors can modify their teaching approaches accordingly. Nevertheless, the findings of this study showed that students expressed a favorable response to having their needs addressed through the use of various teaching styles by their lecturers.

Authors' Contribution

All the authors have participated sufficiently in the intellectual content, conception, and design of this work or the analysis and interpretation of the data (when applicable), as well as the writing of the manuscript.

Availability of data and materials

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflict of interest

The author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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