

An Investigation of the Relationship between EFL University Students' Reading and Listening Comprehension skills and their Autonomy

A Research extracted from a Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the M.A Degree in Education In Curriculum and EFL Instruction

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed at investigating the relationship between EFL University Students' reading and listening comprehension skills and their autonomy. In this research, sixty-four (N=64) of EFL second year Nahda University students in Beni-suef were involved. In this research, the data was collected by conducting three instruments, which prepared by the researcher. Firstly, a reading comprehension test was prepared to assess the participants' reading comprehension skills. Secondly, a listening comprehension test was prepared to assess the participants' listening comprehension skills. Thirdly, a learner



autonomy scale was prepared to identify the learner's autonomy degree of the research participants. The findings of this research indicated that there is a statistical significant positive relationship between EFL university students' reading comprehension, listening comprehension skills and their autonomy. The current research suggested modernizing and combining reading comprehension activities with listening comprehension activities. In addition, the current research suggested designing more language learning activities which depend on EFL university students' perceptual preferences to foster autonomy among them.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension Skills – Listening Comprehension skills- Learner autonomy

1. The problem and its Significance

1.1. Introduction

Reading comprehension is a fundamental and required skill for EFL learners. It plays an important role in learning and developing English language skills. It helps EFL learners to develop and enhance their vocabulary, spelling, and their communication skills. Reading comprehension is their ability to construct the meaning of the written language depending on their prior-knowledge, cognitive and metacognitive strategies. According to Chatman (2015) as cited in (Almutairi, 2018) reading comprehension is not only considered as an important skill for learning English language but it is an interaction skill which learners need in their daily life as they need it to understand different types of authentic written materials such as job application forms, labels, newspapers, and directions.

Furthermore, Knudsen (2001) stated that the ability to construct a clear, complete, and integrated representation of the reading comprehension text is the most identified difference between a good reader and a poor reader at the university level. As the higher ability to construct a complete and integrated presentation, the better reading comprehension skills are.

Additionally, Castillo & Bonilla (2014) assumed that EFL learners to be successful and good readers need to be engaged in the English learning process and take the responsibility for their own learning. Moreover, their interests, needs, age, motivation, English level, and choice of reading topics should be taken into consideration when teachers working on developing and enhancing EFL learners' reading comprehension skills. EFL learners need to deal with reading skills as a tool of exploring real life situations.

Therefore, EFL university students need to increase and develop their reading comprehension skills and work to enhance their reading comprehension skills and be good readers not only for the situation of learning English language at their university but also at their daily life outside the university campus. EFL university students need to take their responsibility towards their learning in general and developing and enhancing their reading comprehension skills in particular.

Thus, learning autonomy, which is defined by many researchers as the ability of learners to manage and take responsibility for their own learning, can play a crucial role in predicting with good EFL readers and poor EFL readers. It can also help in enhancing the context of developing EFL reading comprehension skills. Therefore, it is important to investigate the relationship between EFL university students' reading comprehension and their autonomy.

Moreover, many researchers (e.g., Hoover & Gough, 1991; Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Cutting & Scarborough, 2006) as cited in Cutting & Scarborough (2006) pointed out that one of the best predictors of good or poor EFL readers is their listening comprehension, which is described as a complex skill involving many cognitive and linguistic processes. In addition, Hogan & et al (2014) stated that inadequate word recognition and weak listening comprehension are the most remarkable elements of poor readers. Also Palmer, (1997) stated that young learners who do well in reading are also good listening comprehenders and she also asked for more investigation of the relationship between reading and listening comprehension especially in the older learners to maximize their potential.

Furthermore, both of listening and reading comprehension entail almost the same comprehension skills such as identifying the main idea and essential

details, identifying the relationship between causes effects, distinguishing between literal and implied meaning, inferring meaning of unfamiliar words, inferring the writer's or speaker's attitude, thought, and purpose, identifying the difference between facts and opinions, summarizing the message or information and making assumptions and conclusions about the written or spoken text. Therefore, it is important to investigate the relationship between EFL university students' reading comprehension and listening comprehension.

1.2. Statement of the problem:

Most conducted researches about reading comprehension focused on strategies to increase the reading comprehension skills among students whereas a few studies especially in our Arabian and Egyptian context shed the light on the relationship between students 'reading comprehension and their learning autonomy or the relationship between students' listening comprehension and their learning autonomy especially among EFL university students. Thus, it is obvious from the previous introduction that there is a real need to investigate the relationship between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills and their autonomy. Based on this, the current research major question is?

What is the correlational relationship between EFL University students' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills and their autonomy?

Based on this main question, there are three sub-set questions:

- 1- What is the correlational relationship between EFL University students' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy?

- 2- What is the correlational relationship between EFL University students' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy?
- 3- What is the correlational relationship between EFL University students' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills?

1.3. Research Objectives:

This research aimed to investigate:

1. The relationship between EFL University students' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy.
2. The relationship between EFL University students' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy.
3. The relationship between EFL University students' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills.

1.4. Research Hypotheses:

The research aimed at testing the following hypotheses:

- There is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy.
- There is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy.

There is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills.

1.5. Research Delimitations:

The current research was delimited to:

1- Sixty-four (64) second year EFL university students who were randomly chosen from English language classes at Nahda University in Beni-suef in the second term of the academic year 2018-2019

2- The following reading comprehension skills:

- Identify the main idea and the essential information of a reading comprehension passage.
- Identify the cause and effect relationships of a reading comprehension passage.
- Distinguish between literal and implied meaning.
- Infer meaning of unfamiliar words in a reading comprehension passage.
- Infer the writer's attitude, thought, and purpose.
- Identify a referent word in a reading comprehension passage
- Identify and transfer information from pictures, maps, tables, or diagrams
- Identify the difference between facts and opinions.
- Summarize a message or information
- Make assumptions and conclusions about a reading comprehension passage

3- The following listening comprehension skills

- Identify the main idea and the essential information of the listening text.
- Identify the cause and effect relationships of the listening text.
- Activate student's prior knowledge.
- Distinguish between literal and implied meaning.
- Infer the speaker's attitude, intentions, thought, motivation, and purpose.
- Infer meaning of unfamiliar words in the listening context.
- Predict what the speaker will say next.
- Identify the difference between facts and opinions.
- Discuss and criticize the speakers' point of views.
- Make assumptions and evaluations about the listening material.

- Handle verbal and non-verbal communication (i.e. body language, facial expression, eye contact, etc.)
- Relate the message of listening to the listener's own life.

4- **The following learning autonomy dimensions**

- **First:** Technical dimension that consists of three sub dimensions, which are (planning) ,(management) and (evaluation)
- **Second:** Psychological dimension which consists of three sub dimensions, which are (motivation), (taking decision) and (independence)
- **Third: Socio-cultural autonomy** which consists of two sub dimensions, which are (cooperation) and (culture)

1.6. Significance of the research:

The current research might be useful in:

- 1- Providing EFL teachers and researchers with reading comprehension test, listening comprehension test and learner autonomy scale which can be used in assessing EFL university students' reading comprehension skills, listening comprehension skills and their autonomy.
- 2- Clarifying the correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy.
- 3- Clarifying the correlation between EFL university students' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy.
- 4- Clarifying the correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills.
- 5- Shedding the light on the importance of enhancing the EFL university students' reading and listening comprehension skills and their autonomy.
- 6- Opening the way for new research studies discussing other dimensions relate directly or indirectly to the subject of the research.

1.7. Definition of terms:

The current research used the following terms:

- Reading Comprehension
- Listening comprehension
- Learner autonomy

1- Reading Comprehension

Lems & et al (2010) defined reading comprehension as “the ability to construct meaning from a given written text. Reading comprehension is not a static competency; it varies according to the purposes for reading and the text that is involved”.

Landi (2010) defined reading comprehension as “a complex process that requires the coordination of bottom up word level skills and top down meaning processing skills”.

In the light of the previous definitions, the current research operationally defined reading comprehension as: - the reader’s ability to understand, infer, evaluate, and criticize the message of the written text.

2- Listening comprehension

Vandergrift (1999, p. 168) defined listening comprehension as "a complex, active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above, and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger sociocultural context of the utterance".

Rost (2005, p. 503) defined listening comprehension as "a complex cognitive process that allows a person to understand spoken language". Later, Rost (2011, p. 54) defined listening comprehension as “the experience of

understanding what the language heard refers to in one's experience or in the outside world, and sensing how any incoming burst of language enhances or suppresses one's current understanding".

In the light of the previous definitions, the current research operationally defined listening comprehension as: - the listener's ability to understand, infer, evaluate, criticize, and respond to the spoken speech.

3- Learner autonomy

Holec (1981,p.3) defined as “ the ability to take charge of one's own learning and this ability is not inborn but must be acquired either by ‘natural’ means or (as most often happens) by formal learning so take charge of one's learning is to have the responsibility for all decisions concerning all aspects of this learning”.

Vázquez (2016, p. 93) defined autonomy as “learners' responsibility for and control over the learning process and everything it encompasses (e.g. goal-setting, decision-making, assessment, problem-solving, etc.), with the fundamental aim of enabling them to participate and function effectively in a particular culture and society.”

In the light of previous definitions, the current research operationally defined learner autonomy as: - learners' ability to take charge of their own learning independently and this ability is learnt through providing learners with suitable chances to practice different parts of learning process such as planning, taking decision, management, motivation, evaluation, participation and performing effectively in a particular culture and society.

2. Literature review

Many studies and researches have been conducted on reading comprehension skills focused on the nature of reading, the most important reading comprehension strategies, the awareness of metacognitive reading

strategies, the simplicity and complexity of reading comprehension, intensive reading, problems of reading comprehension and how to enhance reading comprehension skills.

In 1986 Gough and Tunmer presented the simple view of reading formula as following “ Reading = decoding \times comprehension language” to clarify the role of decoding and comprehension in reading. Furthermore, Farrell & et al (2020) stated that the simple view of reading demonstrated the components of effective reading instruction and stated that students must have sufficient content knowledge and higher order thinking skills to understand what they read. In addition, Farrell asked for providing students early with reading instruction to help them to become strong decoders because once decoding is strong, the only limit to reading comprehension is the student’s knowledge of the subject he is reading about and his ability to synthesize the information.

Moreover, Ahmadi, Ismail, & Abdullah (2013) conducted a study to find out whether metacognitive reading strategies awareness enhances EFL reading comprehension. The findings of this study indicated that proficient readers make use of metacognitive reading strategy while reading texts whereas less proficient readers do not. It also pointed out that good readers think more deeply than poor readers to recognize and comprehend the texts.

Furthermore, Gilakjani & Sabouri’s study (2016) showed that students are not just passive receivers of information, but they are active makers of meaning.

The study also indicated that successful readers try to apply numerous skills to grasp meaning from the texts and readers should be involved in the reading process by using different strategies to monitor their meaning.

Besides, Abdallah & Dawina (2016) conducted a study to demonstrate the contribution of wide reading and listening comprehension to written

language. The findings of the study showed that listening is prerequisite to other language skills, speaking, reading, writing. The findings also indicated that motivation and attitude are important in developing EFL learners reading comprehension skill and encourage them to read outside the classroom. Also, effective use of audio-visual aids substitutes monotonous learning environments.

Additionally, Hogan & et al (2014) conducted a research to review evidence showing that listening comprehension becomes the dominating influence on reading comprehension starting even in the elementary grades.

Another study was conducted by Schenker & Petrill (2015) to examine the genetic and environmental influences on observed associations between listening comprehension, reading motivation, and reading comprehension. The findings of the study indicated that

both of listening and reading comprehension appear to be primarily related due to genetic factors whereas motivation appears to affect reading via child-specific, no shared environmental effects. The findings also supported that reading motivation relates to reading comprehension above and beyond the contributions of listening comprehension.

In addition, Dafei (2007) as cited in Zarei (2010) stated that effective learning is strongly affected by independent self-directed learning. Furthermore, Little (2007) stated that all of us were born as autonomous learners and we are asked to explore and respond to our environment and to achieve our own goals. In addition, being autonomous learner means to have ability to choose your aims, purposes and sets goals of your own learning independently. (Holec, 1981) Also, Shaalan (2018), conducted a research to examine the Effect of Game-based Feedback on Improving EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension and Raising Autonomy. The findings of this research showed that Game-based

Feedback has a positive effect on improving EFL learner's reading comprehension skills and making students get involved in their learning process which raised their autonomy and independency.

3. Method

3.1. The Research design

A correlational design was used in the research to investigate the correlational relationship between EFL University students' reading comprehension skills, listening comprehension skills and their autonomy. In this design, (64) second year EFL university students who were enrolled in English language classes at Nahda university in Beni-Suef were randomly selected to present the research participants.

4. The research Variables:

- Second year university students' **reading comprehension skills**.
- Second year university students' **learning autonomy**.
- Second year university students' **listening comprehension skills**.

5. The Research participants:

The participants of the present research were (64) second year EFL university students who were enrolled in English language classes from different colleges at Nahda university in Beni-Suef in the second term of the academic year 2018- 2019. They were randomly selected to present the research participants and their ages ranged from 19 to 20 years old.

6. The Research instruments:

The current research made use of the following tools and materials:

- Reading comprehension Test
- Listening comprehension Test
- Learner autonomy scale

6.1. Reading comprehension Test

6.1.1. The purpose of the test

The test aimed at measuring EFL university students' performance in reading comprehension skills.

6.1.2. Design of the Reading comprehension test:

The framework of the test was adopted from the Longman preparation of the TOEFL Test and the Barron's TOEIC test of English for international communication, which concern with Reading comprehension skills and discusses appropriate questions to be given in order to assess the reading comprehension skills. The test consists of six passages, four short passages and two long passages. The first passage was a schedule entitled “ *Meeting : Conference Room D*” which followed by two questions and four options for each question. The second passage was a piece of a magazine article which followed by two questions and four options for each question. The third passage was a chart entitled“ Top Ten Companies In Total Sales” which followed by three questions and four options for each question. The fourth passage was a calendar entitled“ January” which followed by four questions and four options for each question. The fifth and sixth passages were longer and presented academic and historical topics. The fifth passage followed by ten questions and four options for each question. The sixth passage followed by nine questions and four options for each question. Totally, the test consists of 30 multiple choice questions and four choices (a, b,c,d) for each question. Students were asked to read and choose one option for each question.

6.1.3. The Validity of the Reading Comprehension Test

The researcher submitted the initial version of the test to specialized jury members in the field of EFL curricula and instruction to be read and judged in the light of the following:

- Suitability of the test items to students' level.
- Clarity and linguistics correctness of the test items.
- Suitability of the test items for their intended purposes.

6.1.4. Reliability of the reading comprehension Test

To examine the reliability of the test, it was administered to a group of (80) second year university students who were enrolled in English classes from different colleges at NahdaUniversity as a pilot study. Cronbach's Alpha analysis in the SPSS 22 program was used in order to estimate the reliability of the test. Cronbach's Alpha result yielded (0.76) which is an acceptable level of reliability.

6.1.5. Time of the reading comprehension Test

To get the average time needed for answering the test, the researcher calculated the time taken by each student of the pilot study in the reading comprehension test and divided them by their numbers. The time accredited for answering the test was (45) minutes.

6.1.6. The reading comprehension Test Scoring

The reading comprehension test consisted of (30) multiple-choice questions. The researcher used zero/one system in correction for the (30) multiple-choice questions. One mark was given for the right answer while zero mark was given for wrong, double, or left answers.

6.2. Listening comprehension Test

6.2.1. The purpose of the test

The test aimed at measuring EFL university students' performance in listening comprehension skills

6.2.2. Design of the Listening comprehension test:

The framework of the test was adopted from the Barron's TOEIC test of English for international communication and the Longman preparation of the TOEFL Test which concern with listening comprehension skills and discusses appropriate questions to be given in order to assess the listening comprehension skills. The test contains four parts. In the first part, students listen to an audio file consisted of twenty-four statements, which described six photos in the students' test paper. In this part, students were asked to look at the six photos in their test paper and listen to four statements, which describe each single photo. Then students were asked to choose the best statement, which describes the photo. The aim of this part of the test was assessing students' ability to make assumptions which based on what they can infer in the photo, understand from the non-verbal communication signs used in the photo. Furthermore, how students activate their prior knowledge about what they see in the photo. The second part of the test presented two types of listening comprehension questions. The first type was a question and a response. It presents fifteen mcq questions and three possible answers for each question. Students were asked to listen to each question and the three possible answers then choose the answer that most closely answers the question. The second type consists of five short conversations which followed by nine multiple questions. Students were asked to listen to the conversation, questions and the possible answers then choose the right answer for the

questions. The third part of the test was a long conversation between two speakers followed by ten multiple questions and two open/ended questions. The fourth part presents a part of a spoken academic lecture which followed by six multiple questions and three open/ended questions. Totally, the test aimed at assessing students' ability to identify the main idea and essential information, distinguish between literal meaning and implied meaning, predict what the speaker will say next, differentiate between facts and opinions, infer meaning of unfamiliar words, infer the speaker's attitude, thoughts and purpose, identify the cause and effect relationships, discuss speaker's point of view, discuss and criticize the speaker's point of view, make assumption and evaluations about the listening message, and relate the message of listening to their own life.

6.2.3. The Validity of the listening Comprehension Test

The researcher submitted the initial version of the test to specialized jury members in the field of EFL curricula and instruction to be read and judged in the light of the following:

- Suitability of the test items to students' level.
- Clarity and linguistics correctness of the test items.
- Suitability of the test items for their intended purposes.

6.2.4. Reliability of the listening comprehension Test

To examine the reliability of the test, it was administered to a group of (30) second-year university students, who were enrolled in English language classes from different colleges at Nahda University in the second term of the academic year (2018-2019), as a pilot study. Cronbach's Alpha analysis in the

SPSS 22 program was used in order to estimate the reliability of the test. Cronbach's Alpha result yielded (0.82), an acceptable level of reliability. In addition, the researcher estimated the inter-rater reliability of the five open-ended questions of the test and evaluated the answer of the participants of the pilot study by three raters. Then the researcher made use of the SPSS program to estimate the inter-rater reliability using Cronbach's Alpha with Intra-class correlation coefficient statistics. Reliability yielded (0.96), which is a strong level of reliability and consistency at (0.01) level of significance.

6.2.5. Time of the listening comprehension Test

To get the average time needed for answering the test, the researcher calculated the time taken by each student of the pilot study in the listening comprehension test and divided them by their numbers. The time accredited for answering the test was (45) minutes.

6.2.6. The listening comprehension Test Scoring

The listening comprehension test consisted of (50) items; (45) items were multiple-choice questions, and (5) items were open-ended questions. The researcher used zero/one system in correction and the total score of the test was (50) marks which were distributed as (1) mark for each correct answer while zero mark was given for wrong, double, or left answers.

6.3. Learner Autonomy Scale

6.3.1. The aim of the learner Autonomy Scale

This scale aimed at identifying the level of learner's autonomy of EFL second year Nahda university students.

6.3.2. The design of the learner Autonomy Scale

The researcher designed this scale after reviewing the literature reviews and a number of related studies which concern with enhancing students' ability of taking their own responsibility about their learning and developing their autonomy. The scale was based on the framework of instruments proposed by Murase, (2010) and Gholami, (2016). The researcher designed the learner autonomy scale taking into consideration the following points:

- 1- Simplicity of the scale's directions.
- 2- Suitability of sub-items to the general ones.
- 3- Using items that are negatively and positively worded.
- 4- Representation of the statements of the items and sub-items under consideration.
- 5- Using simple, clear, and direct items.
- 6- The overall suitability of the scale for assessing the learner autonomy.

6.3.3. Content of the learner Autonomy Scale

This scale consisted of 34 items that presented three major dimensions, which are as following:

- **First:** Technical dimension that consists of three sub dimensions which are planning (five statements), management (four statements) and evaluation (four statements).
- **Second:** Psychological dimension which consists of three sub dimensions which are motivation (four statements), taking decision (four statements), independence (four statements),
- **Third: Socio-cultural autonomy** which consists of two sub dimensions which are cooperation (five statements), culture (four statements).

The items of the scale were presented in a 5- point Likert scale, which presented (1) = Never True for me, (2) = Usually not true for me, (3) =

Sometimes True for me, (4) = Usually true for me, and (5) = Always True for me.

6.3.4. Validity of the learner Autonomy

The scale was submitted to specialized jury members in the field of curriculum and instruction (TEFL) to ensure the validity of the scale. The jury members were asked to judge it regarding to the following:

- 1- Simplicity of the scale's directions.
- 2- Suitability of sub-items to the general ones.
- 3- Using items that are negatively and positively worded.
- 4- Representation of the statements of the items and sub-items under consideration.
- 5- Using simple, clear, and direct items.
- 6- The overall suitability of the scale for assessing the learner autonomy

6.3.5. The internal Consistency

The internal consistency was tested by calculating the correlation between the scores given to the statements of the scale and the total scores given to the 8 sub-dimensions under which these statements were categorized. In addition, the correlation between the scores given to each of the 8 sub- dimensions (planning, management, evaluation, motivation, taking decision, independence, cooperation and culture) and the total scores of the 3 main dimensions of the scale was calculated. In addition, the correlation between the scores given to each of the 3 main dimensions (Technical dimension, psychological dimension, and socio culture dimension) and the total score of the scale was calculated. The first draft of the scale consisted of 40 items but after the internal consistency was tested, the items of the scale reduced to be

34 items in the final version of the scale. The researcher made use of the SPSS program to estimate the correlation coefficient of the scale.

Table (1): The Correlation between the total scores of the 34 questionnaire statements and the total scores of its 8 Sub- dimensions

Sub Dimensions	No	Statements	Correlation value
Planning	1	I usually set goals for my English study and work towards them.	0.772**
	2	I create a prioritized To-Do list that forms the basis of what I do.	0.708**
	3	Besides my teacher's assignments, I have a clear plan for studying on my own.	0.663**
	4	I usually set a studying schedule to listen to English Language.	0.506**
	5	I know my weak points in learning English and I usually plan to go for them.	0.648**
Management	6	I usually set a suitable studying environment before I start studying.	0.608**
	7	I usually set time to listen to English such as songs or movies every day.	0.522**
	8	When I have many study tasks, I just focus on the most important one to do first.	0.485**
	9	Sometimes when I study, I get distracted by things that I feel do not matter.	0.363 ⁺
Evaluation	10	I monitor what I do when I listen to the listening material.	0.486**
	11	I never overestimate or underestimate my abilities and skills in dealing with learning English Language.	0.569**
	12	After handling a listening comprehension assignment, I look up the dictionary for the meaning of unknown words.	0.453 ⁺
	13	I usually correct my mistakes and learn from them.	0.494**
Motivation	14	I relate the topic of the listening material with what I know before to motivate myself.	0.523**
	15	I believe that if I study hard and apply my abilities and talents, I will be successful.	0.492**
	16	I usually tell myself that learning English is very important to my future.	0.659**

		job.	
	17	I use rewards to keep myself motivated. For example, if I finish my study on time, I reward myself.	0.621**
Taking Decision	18	Before taking any decision about my study, I work out all the pros and cons.	0.757**
	19	I can easily decide if I need more time to study or not.	0.747**
	20	I quickly decide to find another suitable learning method, if I realize that my method of study is unworkable.	0.738**
	21	I always devote a lot of time to evaluate options fully before taking important decisions.	0.720**
Independence	22	It is easy for me to find and select appropriate learning materials.	0.660**
	23	My teacher is not the only resource of my learning English.	0.561**
	24	I usually use my intellectual strengths to overcome the difficulty of listening comprehension.	0.672**
	25	Whether I can learn English well or not depends on my teacher.	0.575**
Cooperation	26	I like to study with my friends to exchange our learning experience.	0.575**
	27	If I know a new method in learning English, I share it with my friends.	0.610**
	28	I do not mind give my successful experience in learning English to the others.	0.541**
	29	When I help my friends in learning English, I feel practicing my English language skills.	0.628**
	30	I feel happy when I help other students in learning English.	0.751**
Culture	31	I believe that when we learn different languages, we understand other cultures.	0.468**
	32	I find watching English movies is a useful way to know about the culture of English language.	0.776**
	33	I try to understand the idioms and proverbs of the English language.	0.633**
	34	I try to understand the jokes and riddles of the English language.	0.477**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table (2): The Correlation between the total scores of questionnaire 8 Sub- dimensions and the total scores of its 3 Main dimensions

3 Main Dimensions	No	8 Sub-Dimensions	Correlation value
Technical	1	Planning	0.783**
	2	Management	0.703**
	3	Evaluation	0.686**
Psychological	4	Motivation	0.768**
	5	Taking Decision	0.863**
	6	Independence	0.733**
Socio Culture	7	Cooperation	0.887**
	8	Culture	0.896**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table (3): The Correlation between the total score of questionnaire 3 Main dimensions and the total score of the Questionnaire

No	3 Main- Dimensions	Correlation value
1	Technical	0.835**
2	Psychological	0.832**
3	Socio Culture	0.788**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

6.3.6. Reliability of the scale

To examine the reliability of the scale, it was administered to a group of (30) second year university students, who were enrolled in English language classes from different colleges at NahdaUniversity, as a pilot study. The

Cronbach Alpha method was used to establish the reliability of the scale. The reliability level of the scale as a whole was (0.90) which is a high level of reliability. The reliability values of the dimensions of the scale ranged from (0.77) to (0.91) these values of reliability were all significant at 0.01 level

6.3.7. Scoring of the scale

The items of the scale were presented in a 5- point Likert scale from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always) and participants were given a mark out of “5” according to their response. The scale consisted of 34 items, which presented 3 main dimensions.

7. Research Procedures

- 1- Reviewing literature and previous related studies to:
 - Reading Comprehension Skills
 - Listening comprehension skills
 - Learning autonomy
- 2- Preparing a list of reading comprehension skills and another one of listening comprehension skills and judging them by experts and jury members in the field of EFL curricula and instruction to determine its validity for implementation.
- 3- Modifying the lists according to the experts and jury members' opinions, suggestions, and recommendations.
- 4- Preparing a reading comprehension test and a listening comprehension test and judging them by experts and jury members in the field of EFL curricula and instruction to determine its validity for implementation.
- 5- Modifying the reading and listening comprehension tests according to the experts and jury members' opinions, suggestions, and recommendations.

- 6- Ensuring the reliability and specifying the time of the reading comprehension test and the listening comprehension test.
- 7- Preparing a learner autonomy scale and judging it by experts and jury members in the field of EFL curricula and instruction to determine its validity for implementation.
- 8- Modifying the learner autonomy scale according to the experts and jury members' opinions, suggestions, and recommendations.
- 9- Establishing the reliability of the learner autonomy scale
- 10- Choosing randomly participants of second year Nahda university students to present the research's participants.
- 11- Administrating the reading and listening comprehension tests on the research participants as well as analyzing results statistically.
- 12- Administrating the learner autonomy scale on the research participants as well as analyzing results statistically.

8. Results

• Testing the first hypothesis of the research

- The first hypothesis stated that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy. To test the first hypothesis, the researcher calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient and P-value of the participants' scores in their reading comprehension test and their learner autonomy scale. The results are shown below in table (4):

Table (4)
Pearson correlation coefficient of the participants' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy

		Reading	Autonomy
Reading	Pearson Correlation	1	.606**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64
Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	.606**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	64	64

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table (4) shows that the Pearson Correlation between the participants' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy is (0.606**), which is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), and the P-value is (0.000). This indicates that correlation between the participants' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy is statistically significant positive which means the higher reading comprehension skills of the participants were, the more their autonomy degree was and vice-versa. Thus, the first hypothesis, which states "there is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy", was accepted.

- **Testing the second hypothesis of the research**

There is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy. To test the second hypothesis, the researcher calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient and P-value of the participants' scores in their listening

comprehension test and their learner autonomy scale. The results are shown below in table (5):

Table (5)
Pearson correlation coefficient of the participants' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy

		Listening	Autonomy
Listening	Pearson Correlation	1	.358**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	64	64
Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	.358**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	64	64

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table (5) shows that the Pearson Correlation between the participants' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy is (0.358**), which is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), and the P-value is (0.004). This indicates that correlation between the participants' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy is statistically significant positive which means the higher listening comprehension skills of the participants were, the more their autonomy degree was and vice-versa. Thus, the second hypothesis, which states "there is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy", was accepted.

- **Testing the third hypothesis of the research**

There is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills. To test the third hypothesis, the researcher calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient and P-value of the participants' scores in their reading

comprehension test and listening comprehension test. The results are shown below in table (6):

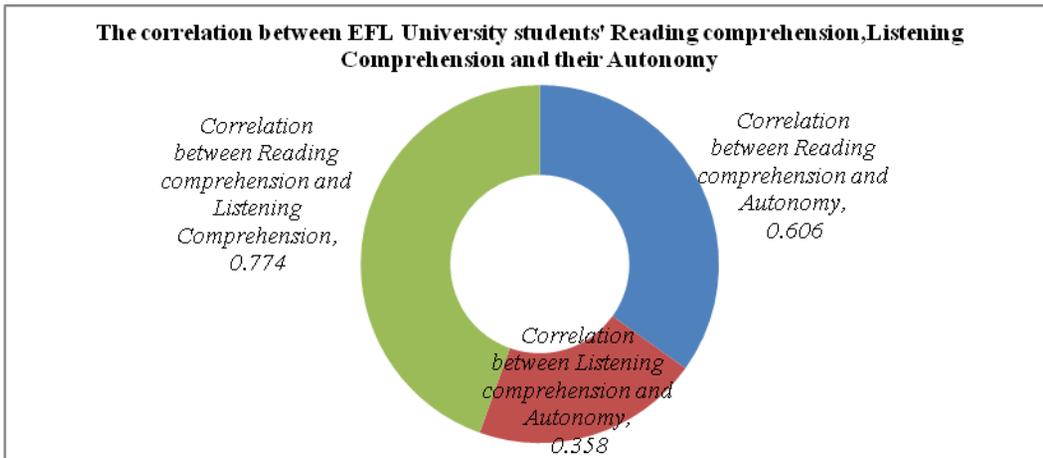
Table (6)
Pearson correlation coefficient of the participants' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills

		Reading	Listening
Reading	Pearson Correlation	1	.774**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	64	64
Listening	Pearson Correlation	.774**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	64	64

****. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Table (6) shows that the Pearson Correlation between the participants' reading comprehension skills and reading comprehension skills is (0.774**), which is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), and the P-value is (0.000). This indicates that correlation between the participants' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills is statistically significant positive which means the higher reading comprehension skills of the participants were, the higher their listening comprehension skills were and vice-versa. Thus, the third hypothesis, which states "there is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills", was accepted.

In addition, the following figure (1) illustrates the correlation between the EFL university students' reading comprehension and listening comprehension and their autonomy.

Figure (1)

- Figure (1) shows that the correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension and their autonomy was (0.606**), which is higher than the correlation between EFL university students' listening comprehension and their autonomy which was (0.358**). It also illustrates that the correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension and listening comprehension was (0.774**), which is higher than the correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension and their autonomy which was (0.606**).

9. Discussion of results

The current research aimed at investigating the relationship between EFL university students' reading comprehension, listening comprehension and their autonomy. The previously mentioned results revealed that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy, there is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university

students' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy, and there is a statistically significant positive correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and listening comprehension skills. This indicates that EFL university students, who obtain higher reading comprehension skills, have higher listening comprehension skills and higher autonomy, whereas students who obtain lower reading comprehension skills, get lower listening comprehension skills, and lower autonomy and vice versa. Furthermore, the findings show that the correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills and their autonomy is higher than the correlation between EFL university students' listening comprehension skills and their autonomy. This can be attributed to the students' perceptual preferences as mentioned in Gregorc Mind styles mode which discussed how individuals prefer to perceive and order information. This result reflects that the students' perceptual preferences affect their autonomy. In the current research, students became more autonomous in practicing reading comprehension more than practicing listening comprehension. This reveals that students preferred to use their concrete ability, which is more used in the reading comprehension to understand the reading text, more than preferring to use their abstract ability, which is more used in the listening comprehension to understand

the listening text. For example, in the reading comprehension, students can see the reading text in front of their eyes, they can touch the text, and highlight any part of the text, they can write on the text to order the sequence of the ideas and take notes, and they can go back to any part of the text and read it again. On the other hand, in the listening comprehension, students cannot see the listening text, cannot highlight the important parts of the listening text, and cannot go back to any part of the listening text, but they can visualize and imagine the listening text. Therefore, students in the most listening comprehension situations have to depend more on their abstract ability to allow them to understand the ideas and concepts of the listening text that cannot be seen.

Finally, the findings of the current research affirmed the positive correlation between EFL university students' reading comprehension skills, listening comprehension skills and their autonomy which agree with the results of Diakidoy & et al (2005), Zarei(2010), Palmer (2012), Rahimi & Abedi (2014), Cutting& Scarborough(2016), Elekaei &et al (2016) &Koosha & et al (2017). Also, the findings reveal that EFL university students are more autonomous when they are using their perceptual preferences.

10. Research Recommendations & Pedagogical Implications

According to the results previously mentioned and discussed, the researcher recommends the following:

- 1- Teachers should motivate students to practice their reading and listening comprehension skills outside classroom as this will help in increasing other learning skills.
- 2- Teachers should provide students with sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their learning.
- 3- Teachers should train students on higher reading and listening comprehension skills at the university stage.
- 4- Teachers should foster autonomous learning habits among their students
- 5- Students should be aware of the relationship between the English language skills; Receptive skills (Listening & Reading) & Productive skills (Speaking & Writing)
- 6- EFL curriculum designers should modernize and combine reading comprehension activities with listening comprehension activities.
- 7- EFL curriculum designers should design more language learning activities which depend on students' perceptual preferences to give EFL university students an appropriate chance to enhance their autonomy.

11. Suggested Topics for Further Research:

Considering the revealed results, the researcher suggests the following:

1. Investigating the relationship between EFL university students' listening and reading comprehension skills and their learning motivation
2. Investigating the relationship between EFL university students' listening and reading comprehension skills and their culture awareness
3. Investigating the relationship between EFL university students' oral performance and their autonomy

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الملخص

يهدف البحث الحالي إلى التحقق من وجود علاقة بين الفهم القرائي والفهم السماعي لدى طلاب الجامعة الدراسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية و استقلاليتهم. وقد تكونت عينة البحث من مجموعة مكونة من (64) طالب و طالبة من طلاب السنة الثانية- بجامعة النهضة محافظة بنى سويف - من مختلف كليات الجامعة للفصل الدراسي الثانى للعام الجامعي 2018-2019. واشتملت أدوات الدراسة على قائمة بمهارات الفهم القرائى و الفهم السماعي اللازمة لأفراد العينة من إعداد الباحثة بالإضافة إلى اختبار للفهم القرائى و إختبار للفهم السماعى من إعداد الباحثة أيضا للتطبيق على عينة البحث. كما تم إعداد مقياس لتحديد مستوى استقلالية التعلم لدى عينة البحث. وقد تم تطبيق البحث فى الفصل الدراسي الثانى للعام الجامعى 2018-2019. وقد أظهرت النتائج وجود علاقة إيجابية ذا دلالة إحصائية بين متوسطات درجات طلاب الجامعة الدراسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية فى اختبار مهارات الفهم السماعي و اختبار مهارات الفهم القرائى و مستوى الإستقلالية لديهم. كما أظهرت النتائج أن العلاقة بين الفهم القرائى لدى عينة البحث و درجة استقلاليتهم كانت أكثر قوة من العلاقة بين الفهم السماعى لدى طلاب العينة و درجة استقلاليتهم. لذلك فقد أوصى البحث بأن يأخذ بعين الإعتبار عند تصميم أنشطة تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية للطلاب الجامعة الدراسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية أن يتم تصميمها وفقاً للتفضيلات الإدراكية و أساليب التعلم المفضلة لدى الطلاب كى تساهم فى تنمية و إثراء الاستقلالية بينهم. بالإضافة إلى التوصية بضرورة تطوير و دمج أنشطة مهارات الفهم السماعى و مهارات الفهم القرائى داخل الفصول الدراسية بإستخدام وسائل حديثة و جذابة للطلاب الجامعة الدراسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية