

Listening Pre-tasks in Motivational and Cognitive Strategies Instruction and Quality of Subjective Experience: EFL Learners' Perspectives

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Abstract

EFL learners may advocate the desire to have a fulfilling experience while doing tasks rather than focus solely on finishing them. However, learners' perspectives have been virtually ignored in the classroom task implementation. Thus, the current study attempted to explore the perceptions of Iranian EFL learners towards listening pre-tasks in motivational and cognitive strategies instruction as a possible way to improve the quality of listening tasks experience. To this end, seventy-three EFL learners were divided into an experimental group (n= 37) who received both motivational and cognitive strategies instruction and a control group (n= 36) who received no strategies instruction. The data for the study were collected by means of a self-report task evaluation questionnaire, which assessed the participants' subjective experience based on six subscales: interest/enjoyment, perceived competence, value/usefulness, effort/importance, felt pressure/tension and perceived choice during task-based activities of the listening comprehension. The data were enriched with the participants' written comments, which were later content analyzed. Results indicate that the experimental group had more significant levels of positive experience related to the listening tasks than the control group. The findings of the study could be indicative of the efficacy of pre-task strategies instruction in addressing both motivational and cognitive aspects of listening pre-tasks and of how motivation and cognition interact to give shape to the unique subjective experience of EFL learners.

Keywords: Cognition, Motivation, Subjective Experience, Pre-task

1. Introduction

A challenge facing listening comprehension instruction is providing FL learners with strategies that help them deal with listening more effectively (Goh, 2000;

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Ngo, 2016). Listening comprehension in the classroom context is now seen both as an activity to listen to speakers and as a process of strategies instruction that learners can actively engage into achieve their goals (Guan, 2014; Nasrollahi-Mouziraji & Birjandi, 2016). Teachers quite often use the term motivation when they explain why some learners are better language learners in comparison with others (Hadfield & Dörnyei, 2013). In addition to motivation, the cognitive demands of the tasks do provide a clearer picture of why some learners cannot benefit from the actual task engagement. It is important to note that the quality of learners' subjective experience is a significant contributor to their motivation to learn (e.g. Deci & Ryan, 1985; Schiefele & Csikszentmihalyi, 1994). Learners' subjective perceptions of task demands might also be particularly influential on processes associated with engagement of cognitive strategies. Bearing this in mind, they may appear to incorporate the experience arising from their own subjective feeling during tasks performance. In other words, the subjective experience evoking from motivation and cognition can activate or hamper the pursuit of the learning goals.

While motivational and cognitive models offer solutions into various questions of academic learning, there is widespread agreement on the intervening relationship of these models in the classroom context (Garcia & Pintrich, 1994). Research evidence shows that EFL learners' motivational beliefs as well as cognitions are significant mediators of instructional input and tasks features (Pintrich, 1989; Weinstein & Mayer, 1986). The literature reveals that many theories of motivation and cognition postulate important links between them. Dembovskaya (2009, p. 57) states that "many theories of motivation are cognitive in that they specify cognitive processes that can produce motivational effect on individuals". Schunk (2012) also depicts a model of motivated learning, which consists of pre- task, during- task and post task stages, but he calls it a cognitive model of motivation because "it views motivation arising largely from thoughts and beliefs" (p.356). Furthermore, the cognitive theories are also motivational in nature because the motivational influence can also, in turn, formulate ideas in learners' mind and influence some aspects of cognitive processes such as deeper and more intensive type of input processing (Dembovskaya, 2009). It can be inferred that although motivation and cognition are not synonymous, they are two closely intertwined processes that cannot simply form a single substitution for each other (Ajideh, Rahimpour, Amini, & Farrokhi, 2013). Hence, it can be pointed out that a task with fruitful result seems to involve more than the isolation role of motivation or cognition, but it requires the coordination of both altogether.

One essential condition for listening comprehension to take place is to realize that motivation and cognition work together. As Nasrollahi-Mouziraji and Birjandi (2016) state "if the cognitive aspects of the listening process are not introduced to the learners through practical instruction, they would feel overwhelmed by the listening task and conceive that they cannot manage the task and repeated failure

would lead to lesser degrees of motivation” (p. 107). Furthermore, enhancing learners’ motivational beliefs with tasks such as task value, competence, etc., would be important in motivating them to increase their efforts and move towards effective engagement with tasks. This type of interaction seems to exist in classroom tasks whereby the learner is not only motivationally prepared to engage in doing a task, but also cognitively equipped to achieve the real meaning of the task implemented.

Effective listening comprehension may take place when learners are cognitively prepared to deal with the cognitive demands/loads of a given task and are motivated enough to actually get the task done (Dembovsckaya, 2009). As De Corte, Lodewijks, and Parmentier (1987) state “when we try to understand the contribution of cognitive mechanisms to human abilities, we are looking at how the computing systems underlying learning actually operate. When we investigate motivation, we are asking certain questions about why those cognitive mechanisms are being activated” (p. 133). Dembovsckaya (2009) also states that learners may become interested in the subject matter and possess adequate motivation to act well in classroom, but they may not be equipped with the required cognitive strategies such as background information to meet success criteria. On the other hand, some learners may have already built enough learning strategies and background knowledge on a topic but are not interested enough to move toward success because they have been obliged to attend the class. Thus, it will be possible that both kinds of learners show average performance due to different reasons (Dembovsckaya, 2009). Thus, it can be inferred that a greater psychological awareness of the task would lead in more use of cognitive strategies, resulting in deeper processing and superior quality of learning experiences (Chiecher, Donolo, & Rinaudo, 2007; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2009).

In general, some empirical research in last few years (Ajideh et al., 2013; Dembovsckaya, 2009; Farrokhi & Modarres, 2012; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008; Ma, 2009; Mozgalina, 2015; Poupore, 2014; Sadighi & Zare, 2002; Wang, Huang, & Hsu, 2015) have mostly confirmed that tasks-involving motivational and/or cognitive pre-task strategies can produce interesting results. Some other studies have also shed lights on the links between several motivational and cognitive variables and achievement-related behaviors (Neuville, Frenay, & Bourgeois, 2007; Pintrich, 1989; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; Pokay & Blumenfeld, 1990). However, relatively little attention has been paid to the role of the pre-task strategies in influencing feeling of subjective experience in prospective EFL learners’ belief about language success. Furthermore, the reciprocal relationship between motivation and cognition and their subsequent contribution to language learning achievement has not been largely dealt with in previous studies (Ajideh et al., 2013; Nasrollahi-Mouziraji & Birjandi, 2016). As far as the related literature is concerned, there is no research examining the simultaneous operationalization of

motivational and cognitive strategies applied in pre-task stage of listening task implementation in an instructional context and also assessing learners' subjective experience related to the given tasks. The available descriptions given by learners of their probable success or failure while performing a task can be analyzed and it can contribute to the understanding of strategies usefulness and task effectiveness. Teachers' careful attention to EFL learners' opinions and perception can lead them to experience more positive feelings (Nasrollahi-Mouziraji & Birjandi, 2016). As Ngo (2016) states "only a few studies on listening strategy instruction have explored this issue from the learners' perspective whose voices are critically important in providing insights into how students learn and improve listening comprehension" (p. 245).

In sum, as Mihye (2014, p. 1) puts it, "the perspectives and experiences of learners have been largely excluded while the central focus has been on teachers". Very little is known about how the relative contributions of both motivational beliefs and cognitive processes involved in pre-task phase of task performance can influence learners' subjective experience or the way they perceive given tasks. This study can remind us of the active rather than the passive dimension of the listening comprehension skill and is most likely to pave the way for further investigation on psychological states, cognitive engagement and feelings experienced by learners. The study's findings may serve as a basis for guidelines on what conditions need to be met in order to positively influence EFL learners' positive aspects of their tasks experience which can, in turn, help them achieve their learning goals.

Given the discussion above, the present study was conducted explored the subjective experience of EFL learners after they had engaged in listening pre-tasks in motivational and cognitive strategies instruction. As such, the research question guiding this study was as follows:

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in the subjective experience (with regard to the following subscales: interest/enjoyment, perceived competence, value/usefulness, effort/importance, felt pressure/tension and perceived choice) of EFL learners who receive listening pre-tasks in motivational and cognitive strategies instruction and that of those who receive no strategies?

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

The study was conducted in Safir English language institute in the east part of Guilan, Iran. Due to the quasi-experimental design of this study, eighty-nine (89) members of three intact classes of the second-grade intermediate EFL learners, aged between 18 and 24, participated in this study. They were all male native

speakers of Persian and the local dialect. The participants were seldom exposed to English, except for time in the classroom and had very little opportunity to use English outside the classroom. They were considered as intermediate EFL learners in terms of general proficiency as reported by the registration office at the institute. To make sure the homogeneity of the participants, however, a TOEFL test (Phillips, 2001) was administered. Finally, the 73 learners whose scores fell one standard deviation below and above the mean (+/-1 SD) were selected as the final participants of the study and they were randomly assigned to an experimental group (n= 37) and a control group (n= 36).

2.2 Instruments

The TOEFL test of language proficiency (Phillips, 2001) was administered to assess the proficiency level of the groups. The test given to the learners consisted of 50 listening questions, 40 structure and written expressions and 50 questions related to reading comprehension section and vocabulary items.

The second instrument used in this study was a listening task. The listening tasks were in the forms of short daily dialogues (given by two or more English speakers) on particular topics. They were taken from the book “Tactics for Listening” (Richards, 2011). These tasks were intended to measure learners’ ability to identify the main idea, understand the details and make inference. It should be mentioned that these listening tasks require learners to listen to a text and then answer some questions each with 4 choices or write a short answer.

The third instrument is known as a self-report task evaluation questionnaire adapted from Ryan and Deci (1992). It is based on the intrinsic motivation inventory (IMI), a multidimensional measurement device intended to evaluate individuals’ subjective experience related to a target task (Ryan & Deci, 1992). This questionnaire includes a set of six subscales, which measures subjects’ interest/enjoyment, perceived competence, effort/importance, value/usefulness, felt pressure/tension, and perceived choice while doing given tasks (Ryan & Deci, 1992). This questionnaire included 25 closed-ended questions and the rating scales were numerically coded as (1) Not at all true to (7) very true (See Appendix A).

It should be noted that while the whole questionnaire is called the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory, the interest/enjoyment scale is only considered as the one directly assessing intrinsic motivation. Perceived choice and competence are supposed to positively predict both self-report and behavioral measures of intrinsic motivation. The pressure/tension dimension, however, is assumed to negatively predict intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 1992). The effort subscale is included because greater effort is associated with more engaged participation in tasks. Finally, the value/usefulness subscale shed some lights into the likelihood of the

tasks being perceived as beneficial and valuable (Dembovszkaya, 2009; Pflingsthorst & Czura, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 1992).

It should be mentioned that this questionnaire has been used in various studies and contexts (e.g., McAuley, Duncan, & Tammen, 1989; Tsigilis & Theodosiou, 2003) and it is known to be as a valid and reliable instrument (McAuley et al., 1989; Ryan, 1982). Furthermore, two open-ended questions were included in the task evaluation questionnaire (please indicate the positive aspects of your tasks experience and please indicate the negative aspects of your tasks experience) adopted from Gregory, Lee, Dalgarno, and Tynan (2016), which allowed the participants to express their task performance experience in their own words and supplement the questionnaire data with the nuances of personal opinions.

2.3 Procedure

From among the initial 89 second-grade intermediate EFL learners, 73 learners were selected as the final participants of the study. As mentioned above, the selection of the participants was based on their language proficiency level which was determined with reference to their scores in the TOEFL test administered in the first session. Then, the homogenous subjects were randomly divided into an experimental group ($n = 37$) and a control group ($n = 36$). Furthermore, the learners' scores on the listening part of the TOEFL test were served to determine their listening proficiency level at the outset of the experiment. The results showed that the experimental group and the control group were almost at the same level of listening proficiency. The mean score for the experimental group was 41.73 and the mean for the control group was 40.98. The standard deviation of the scores of the experimental group and control group were 7.36 and 6.93, respectively. The results of the independent t-test also indicated no significant differences between the means ($t = 0.59$, $p > 0.05$). On the whole, the treatment phase of this study included a total of six treatment sessions held for about 25 minutes once a week. In each treatment session, following general instruction regarding how to complete the task, the researcher provided the experimental group with the motivational and cognitive pre-task (MPT&CPT) strategies instruction but there was no opportunity for the control group to receive any kind of pre-task intervention. Subsequently, the participants in both groups were required to complete a listening task in about 10 minutes. Finally, one day after the sixth treatment session, the participants in both groups filled out a questionnaire intended to see whether the MPT&CPT strategies instruction could positively influence learners' subjective experience of tasks performance. It should be mentioned that the questionnaire also included two open-ended questions, which allowed them to express their personal experience. In fact, the main objective behind the two open-ended questions was to seek the experimental group learners' views on positive or negative aspects of their tasks experience resulting from the MPT&CPT strategies instruction. Thus, providing a response in the open-ended

questions was not mandatory for the control group and the data included the statements from the 32 experimental group participants that chose to make written comments and the other learners left the questionnaire open-ended questions unanswered.

Regarding the MPT strategies, the researcher tried to generate the learners' initial task motivation. In other words, the researcher increased learners' awareness of some aspects of task motivation such as perceived enjoyment & pleasure in completing the task, perceived expectancy of success in performing the task, perceived value of the task, perceived responsibility & willingness in performing the task, perceived effort attributions on performing the task and perceived comfort in terms of task completion and environment. The following motivational concerns stand out in the pre-task stage of this study:

Motivational Pre-task Strategies

- Whiting learners' appetite and interest about the task.
- Increasing learners' feeling of competence.
- Ensuring learners that tasks are within their ability.
- Attributing learners' previous failures to lack of effort rather than ability.
- Encouraging students to try harder.
- Drawing learners' attention to their strength and abilities.
- Raising learners' awareness of what task success involves and assuring them that there are no serious obstacles for achievement.
- Encouraging learners' responsibility for task participation and the amount of effort they put into it.
- Showing of teacher's belief in learners' effort and their capabilities to do the task.
- Explaining the purpose and utility of the task.
- Raising learners' belief about the value of the task.
- Controlling learners' emotional state about the task.
- Providing students with positive feedback.
- Establishing a good relationship with students.
- Bringing in and encouraging humor.

In fact, the MPT strategies operationalized in this study are mainly based on guidelines suggested by Dörnyei (2001), Oliva (1972) and Dembovskaia (2009).

Below, it is described how the MPT strategies were followed by the researcher's presentation, examples, and brief interaction. In the beginning of the task, the researcher delivered a short speech addressing the following factors. The pre-task also involved a short questioning and answering conducted in English between the researcher and the participants.

- Perceived enjoyment and pleasure: The researcher intended to choose some attractive and interesting tasks. He tried to relate the tasks content to the participants' natural interests. Moreover, he provided the learners with moderately challenging tasks and adjusted the tasks to their own lives. Learners were informed that other students with a comparable level of language proficiency indeed considered the tasks as interesting to perform and the researcher wished that they would find them fun too.
- Perceived expectancy of success: The researcher told the learners that he was sure they could do well on the tasks. He gave them some reasons for his confidence in their capability to complete the tasks successfully. For example, he told them that their teacher had been confident enough of their ability to do well on the tasks. In fact, the researcher tried to make the learners aware of their strengths and abilities, indicate them that he believed in their capability and assure them that tasks were inside their level of language ability.
- Perceived responsibility, willingness and effort attributions: The researcher provided the learners with the purpose and utility of the designed tasks. In fact, he stressed that the designed task would provide a learning opportunity for the learners to develop their listening comprehension ability in a meaningful context. Furthermore, the learners' positive listening experience (success) and negative listening outcomes (failures) were attributed to their personal ability and lack of effort, respectively. The researcher also emphasized on the learners' 'charge of their own tasks performance, and the level of effort and persistence expended on them.
- Perceived value: Attempts were made to draw the learners' attention to the values and worth associated with the tasks. The researcher also elaborated on the individual values that learners could attach to their success on the tasks. For example, the researcher elicited from the learners their reasons for learning English. In addition, the learners were informed that in order to improve on listening skill, one thing was absolutely essential, namely, to

practice listening. It was told that the tasks they were about to do were every useful to practice listening comprehension skill, which could in turn help them achieve their learning goals.

- Perceived comfort with task and environment: The researcher tried to control the learners' emotional variables such as anxiety, stress or hopelessness that might negatively affect their task performance and achievement. In other words, he was aware of the fact that factors including the learners' negative anxiety about the tasks, a tense classroom atmosphere and irrelevant distraction from others could be harmful. Similarly, the researcher positively coped with the learners' incorrect opinions and beliefs about language learning in the classroom context. Furthermore, he showed them that he cared about them, provided them with opportunity to express their concerns, encouraged humour, cleared to them that failures were part of their success and provided them with motivational feedback in general.

Together with the MPT, some kinds of cognitive involvement strategies consisted of setting the context, activating background knowledge and pre-teaching of vocabulary and grammar were chosen as the main features of the listening pre-task intervention in this study and they were intended to stimulate some of the linguistic and schematic knowledge and to lower the demands imposed by tasks and placed on learners. The rationale for the first point (a) is based on the fact that in real life people usually have some ideas of the context of something they are listening to and it can help learners match their listening context with what normally happens in the real-life context (Field, 2002). The rationale for the second point (b) is due to the fact that learners' previous exposures to the upcoming listening topics make it possible for them to recall their previous information and provide them with some kinds of content expectations (Chastain, 1988). Finally, the reason for the third point in our study (c) refers to the problems which may occur due to learners' unfamiliarity with the structures or vocabularies to be contained in the oral upcoming input, which in turn will lessen learners' ability to perform the tasks successfully (Rost, 2002).

Setting the context

- The teacher says or does something to get the learners interested in the topic and set the context. This could be a picture, illustration, or a set of questions to the whole group. This idea here is to give the learners some idea of what the listening will be about and where it is happening.

Activate appropriate background knowledge

- Activate appropriate background knowledge for the upcoming listening experience through one or more of the following: questions — discussion (whole class or in pairs/groups) — generating hypotheses about the topic —reading about related information.

Presenting unknown vocabulary and grammar

- The pre-teach vocabulary words were chosen from the passage because they were key to performing the task successfully. Difficult words that were not important were ignored. Anticipate and discuss the problematic structures that might be unfamiliar/troublesome for learners.

3. Results and Discussion

As mentioned above, a self- report Task Evaluation Questionnaire was conducted after the treatment phase of this study in order to examine the combined effect of MPT& CPT strategies instruction on EFL learners' subjective perceptions of their listening tasks experience. Descriptive statistics for the questionnaire are illustrated in Table1. The results indicate that the total mean score of the experimental group (M = 4.99)is higher than that of the control group (M= 3.49).

Table1. *Descriptive Statistics for the Total Mean Scores of the Task Evaluation Questionnaire*

Statistic	Experimental group (n=37)	Control group (n=36)
Mean	4.99	3.49
SD	0.75	0.93
Min - Max	2.55–7.00	1.12 – 6.71

Furthermore, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted for the Task Evaluation Questionnaire to explore the overall effect of the independent variable (MPT& CPT strategies instruction) on the six dependent variables (perceived interest/enjoyment, perceived competence, perceived effort/importance, perceived choice, perceived value/usefulness and perceived pressure/tension). It should be mentioned that preliminary assumption testing was done to examine normality of distribution and homogeneity of variance, with no serious violations observed. In other words, the results of the Shapiro-Wilk's normality test and Leven's test showed p-values ($p > .05$), suggesting that the assumptions are met.

Analyses of data in Table 2 indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in EFL learners' subjective experience of listening tasks based on MPT& CPT strategies instruction, $F(6, 66) = 38.07, p < .0005$; Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.224$. The results show a statistically significant difference in the responses of the two groups, suggesting that the participants who were exposed to the MPT& CPT strategies instruction reported more positive experience related to their experimental tasks performance than the control group.

Table 2. *MANOVA Results of the Task Evaluation Questionnaire*

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	Wilks' Lambda	.014	790.71	6	66	.000
Group	Wilks' Lambda	.224	38.07	6	66	.000

Given the significance of the overall effect, further analyses must be done to determine whether the individual dependent variables are significantly affected by the independent variable. Table 3 reports the descriptive statistics of each group for the six sub-categories of the Task Evaluation Questionnaire (interest/enjoyment, perceived competence, effort/importance, choice, value/usefulness and pressure/tension). The results indicate that the experimental group's mean scores of all sub-categories are higher than the control group's and the participants in the two groups might exhibit different level of experience across the above-cited sub-categories. Thus, considering the experimental group participants, the highest IMI scale-score was obtained by the category perceived interest/enjoyment, with an average of 5.67, followed by perceived choice and perceived effort/importance with an average of 5.54 and 5.32, respectively. Perceived competence had an average of 4.91 and perceived value/usefulness an average of 4.55. The lowest average obtained referred to perceived pressure/tension with 3.96

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for the Six Sub-categories of the Task Evaluation Questionnaire

Question category	(J) Group	Mean	SD	Min - Max
Perceived interest /enjoyment	Experimental	5.67	.640	4.63 – 6.75
	Control	3.61	1.132.21	– 6.71
Perceived competence	Experimental	4.91	.8333.77	–7.00
	Control	3.60	.8771.23	– 5.18
Perceived effort/ importance	Experimental	5.32	.716	4.21 – 6.65
	Control	3.79	1.20	2.19 – 6.54
Perceived choice	Experimental	5.54	.612	4.14 –6.36
	Control	2.91	1.23	1.12 – 4.85
Perceived value/ usefulness	Experimental		.925	3.21 –6.10
	Control		1.18	1.36 –5.33
Perceived pressure/ tension	Experimental	3.96	.8032.55	–6.52
	Control	3.34	.716	2.11 – 5.11

As mentioned before, to determine how the dependent variables are affected by the independent variable, univariate analyses (ANOVA) need to be performed. Table 4 displays the effect of the independent variable on each of the dependent variables of the study. Analysis of data show that listening pre-tasks in motivational and cognitive strategies instruction had a significant effect on “perceived interest/enjoyment”: ($F(1, 71) = 92.09, p = .000$), “perceived competence”: ($F(1, 71) = 41.92, p = .000$), “perceived effort/importance”: ($F(1, 71) = 44.02, p = .000$), “perceived choice”: ($F(1, 71) = 138.62, p = .000$), “perceived value/usefulness”: ($F(1, 71) = 12.12, p = .001$) and “perceived pressure/tension”: ($F(1, 71) = 11.84, p = .001$). Therefore, a significant difference was found across all of the sub-categories of Task Evaluation Questionnaire.

Table 4. *Tests of between Subject Effects for the Six Sub-categories of the Task Evaluation Questionnaire*

Sub-categories		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Perceived interest/enjoyment	Between Groups	77.549	1	77.549	92.099	.000
	Within Groups	59.783	71	.842		
	Total	137.331	72			
Perceived competence	Between Groups	31.046	1	31.046	41.926	.000
	Within Groups	52.575	71	.740		
	Total	83.621	72			
Perceived effort/importance	Between Groups	42.934	1	42.934	44.021	.000
	Within Groups	69.248	71	.975		
	Total	112.182	72			
Perceived choice	Between Groups	126.059	1	126.059	138.620	.000
	Within Groups	64.567	71	.909		
	Total	190.626	72			
Perceived value/usefulness	Between Groups	13.679	1	13.679	12.127	.001
	Within Groups	80.087	71	1.128		
	Total	93.767	72			
Perceived pressure/tension	Between Groups	6.877	1	6.877	11.849	.001
	Within Groups	41.205	71	.580		
	Total	48.082	72			

Table 5 also shows the pair-wise comparison between the experimental and control groups' subjective experience of the six sub-categories discussed above. As illustrated in Table 5, there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups on the perceived interest/enjoyment dependent variable ($p = .000$), perceived competence ($p = .000$), perceived choice ($p = .000$), perceived effort/importance ($p = .000$), perceived value/usefulness ($p = .001$), as well as on the perceived pressure/tension dimension ($p = .001$).

Table 5. Pairwise Comparisons of Experimental and Control Groups

Dependent Variable	(I) Groups	(J) Groups	Mean Difference (I- J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^a	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Perceived Interest/enjoyment	experimental	control	2.062	.215	.000	1.633	2.490
	control	experimental	-2.062 [*]	.215	.000	-2.490	-1.633
Perceived competence	experimental	control	1.304 [*]	.201	.000	.903	1.706
	control	experimental	-1.304 [*]	.201	.000	-1.706	-.903
Perceived Effort/importance	experimental	control	1.534 [*]	.231	.000	1.073	1.995
	control	experimental	-1.534 [*]	.231	.000	-1.995	-1.073
Perceived choice	experimental	control	2.628 [*]	.223	.000	2.183	3.074
	control	experimental	-2.628 [*]	.223	.000	-3.074	-2.183
Perceived value/usefulness	experimental	control	.866 [*]	.249	.001	.370	1.362
	control	experimental	-.866 [*]	.249	.001	-1.362	-.370
Perceived pressure/tension	experimental	control	.614 [*]	.178	.001	.258	.970
	control	experimental	-.614 [*]	.178	.001	-.970	-.258

As further analysis of data, Pearson correlation coefficients were also evaluated in order to determine the relationships between different measures of IMI. The strongest correlation was found between interest/ enjoyment category and the other IMI subscales. In other words, the data indicated that there existed a positive correlation between interest/enjoyment and perceived choice ($r = 0.67, p < .01$) as well as interest/enjoyment and perceived effort/importance ($r = 0.61, p < .01$). A negative correlation was detected between interest/enjoyment and pressure/tension ($r = -.057, p < .01$). The analysis of data also indicated a positive correlation between interest/enjoyment and perceived competence ($r = 0.59, p < .01$) as well as interest/enjoyment and perceived value/usefulness ($r = 0.53, p < .01$). These findings display the assumptions of the IMI, suggesting that the interest/enjoyment dimension, which in this case is considered as the most direct measure of self-reported intrinsic motivation, is correlated with the learners' self-reported perceived competence, effort/importance, value/usefulness, felt pressure/tension, and choice. The trends might offer that when the learners' intrinsic motivation is higher, they may perceive the tasks as more valuable, put more effort into the

tasks, feel less pressure while tasks performance, feel more willingness and choice in regards to the tasks undertaken and position themselves as more competent learners.

Finally, for the qualitative analysis, at the end of the task evaluation questionnaire, the experimental group's participants were required to answer two open-ended questions about what they thought the positive and negative aspects of their tasks experience were. The content analysis of their responses indicated that their answers were excitedly positive, mostly commenting on the benefits of MPT& CPT strategies instruction, which positively enhanced their subjective experience of tasks performance.

In fact, the vast majority of written comments elicited from the participants reflected the positive aspects of the tasks experience, with a comparably very few number of statements on the elements of the strategies instruction which they were less pleased with or interested.

The majority of the learners rated their own tasks perception with elevated level of improvement. They underlined that they perceived being positively different in their performance after their exposure to the listening pre-task strategies. They generally thought that it was necessary to spend some time on tasks because they felt time on pre- task strategies can be considered to be as an achievement factor.

Furthermore, the learners were more prone to focus on the motivational pre-task strategies, serving as the basis for the specific aspects of their performance. They considered them as variables which were intended to lower the anxiety, overcome the unwillingness problems and increase factors such as motivation, competence, interest, choice, effort, responsibility and value/usefulness needed to do the tasks. For example, two learners noted:

I really liked it. My teacher explained some reasons for our tasks participation. They were useful and fun. It took a lot of effort and time because it was important for me to do the tasks well. Listening ability helps me make friends with foreign people. I am sure I can do well.

The strategies were really important. They helped us with listening tasks a lot. I think if we spend more time on them, the results can be much better. I really enjoyed the tasks because I was prepared for them.

The learners believed that before knowing about the motivational pre-task strategies, they thought that they could not accomplish the listening tasks because they did not believe in their abilities and did not feel pretty competent. However,

after listening to the teacher's motivational pre-task strategies for a while, they developed some degree of competence required to do the tasks. As two learners pointed out:

I felt relax and competent while doing the tasks. I was really excited to complete the listening tasks successfully. I think that I can improve my listening comprehension if I want and practice.

The strategies helped me believe in my ability. I think I can deal with listening tasks and perform them well.

Another student commented that he no longer felt uncomfortable with the listening tasks within the study because they were quite enjoyable and valuable to him. He also added that while doing the tasks, he was really motivated because he thought that he was doing the tasks for himself rather than someone else. Two of the learners also noted that they put a lot of effort and energy into the tasks because they had some choices for doing them. However, some kinds of forced-choice listening tasks which are usual in their classroom really made them feel nervous and bored before.

One of the learners also mentioned that he was easily demotivated at the time of listening activities before because he thought that listening tasks selected for them were not appropriate for their level of proficiency. However, based on his recent experience of motivational strategies, he was assured that the tasks were matched with his level of ability. He further stressed the fact that his bad performances on previous listening comprehension activities were no longer related to his lack of capability but effort. For instance, two learners said:

I always thought that listening activities were very hard for me and I could not do them. I love my teacher as he taught me that I should try harder than before in order to become successful.

I can expect more success with listening tasks if I put more effort into them.

Many of the learners also underlined that that the cognitive pre-task strategies were really helpful for them. During the task completion, they were not confused by unknown vocabulary and grammar because they had already reviewed key words and grammatical points. In other words, they thought that the utilization of these strategies helped them overcome the weakness of being distracted by unfamiliar words and grammar and enhance their listening tasks performance. Many of the learners also mentioned that background knowledge is really

important in the process of listening comprehension. In other words, they stated that these strategies helped them know to what extent it was necessary to use their previous information on a certain topic as it makes the process of interpretation and recall of content much easier. Other learners also reflected that activation of background knowledge and topic familiarity aided them to compensate for some possible missing parts while listening to the text and guess what was going to happen. Some of them noted:

When I thought about what I knew about the topic or text, it helped me a lot comprehend better. It really works.

I was not interested in listening at all. I felt anxious while listening because I faced a lot of unknown words every time. But my teacher told me about some of the important words before the listening and it was really useful.

When I heard a lot of difficult vocabularies and structures, I completely felt unable to pay attention to the rest of the conversation and I got confused. But I think pre-teaching of them was good for me. I felt strong because I could use them.

In general, it seems that the participants mostly acknowledged the positive aspects of their tasks experience they were engaged in. They believed that MPT& CPT strategies instruction could create an interesting, enjoyable, engaging, useful, valuable and pressure-free learning experience. If these issues are met, one can expect such a learning situation to exert a positive effect on language learners and it can be one of the significant positive reinforcements of learners' tasks performance.

4. Discussion

The purpose of this research, conducted with intermediate EFL learners, was to investigate the combined effects of the MPT& CPT strategies instruction on the subjective experience related to the listening tasks. In particular, this study attempted to examine the state of six dimensions related to the participants' unique way of task experience: interest/enjoyment, perceived competence, value/usefulness, effort/importance, felt pressure/tension and perceived choice during listening tasks performance and under the influence of the above-cited treatment. The analyses of data indicated that the responses on task evaluation questionnaire reported by the experimental group were all positively affected by the MPT& CPT strategies instruction. In other words, the participants in experimental group perceived more positive experience related to their tasks accomplishment than the control group. Furthermore, the participants' written

comments on two open-ended questions also verified the positive trend observed in the quantitative data.

The results seem to offer that the motivation variable mutual reinforcement with cognition can be useful. In fact, by raising learners' initial awareness of listening task motivation and cognitive strategies, instructors can foster the effectiveness of engagement experience resulting from their joint incorporation. It seems that these two types of strategies which form a small part of motivation and cognition processes reinforce the integrative views/models of motivation and cognition and the important idea of activating learners from both dimensions simultaneously. As Garcia and Pintrich (1994) state "neither motivational nor cognitive models alone can fully describe the various aspects of student academic learning, yet the two types of models are complementary due to the respective strengths and weaknesses of motivational and cognitive models" (p. 127). Similarly, Rahimpour, Ajideh, Amini, and Farrokhi (2013) emphasized on the motivational, cognitive and emotional mutual supports regarding the authentic task engagement in task based language teaching context. This issue is also in agreement with Anais et al.'s (2012) view who considered motivational and cognitive strategies as interrelated components influencing the learning outcomes. They also add that the correlation between these two components is interesting as it implies and supports the significance of being an active learner from both motivational and cognitive dimensions.

Regarding the motivational pre-task strategies used in this study, it can, therefore, be concluded that the learners' initial awareness of task motivation might promote their positive attitudes towards the tasks which, in turn, affected their ability to positively reflect on their experiences. Generally speaking, learners who believe in their ability and competence to succeed can tend to be more motivated. This is in line with Dörnyei's (2001) idea that when individuals decide to perform something, they evaluate themselves in terms of if "they are up to the challenge" (p. 8).

Thus, it seems that students' self-perception of their competence may deeply influence their required effort and further action plans (Schunk, 2012). In addition, learners' feeling of personal responsibility and willingness can also affect the required effort to carry out the task and pursue the goals. Task value was another crucial factor affecting learners' experience in this study as the researcher tried to enhance learners' perceptions of the task value. Wigfield and Eccles (1992) confirm that values of a given task can positively direct learners to attempt hard. In other words, it is believed that students' greater appreciation of task value can positively include their ongoing engaging experiences with a task or tasks. If learners find the tasks valuable and beneficial, they may even use more learning

strategies to overcome the problems and achieve positive outcomes. Nasrollahi-Mouziraji and Birjandi (2016) also state that “the more importance is attached to a task in the learning process, the more learners are engaged in cognitive, metacognitive and resource management strategies” (p.107). This idea is also in line with Warton’s (2001) view that subjective task value experience on the part of learner will more likely increase their continuous engagement with tasks. Lowering anxiety with tasks is the other motivation-related variable which may pose a positive impact on individuals’ perception of task experience. On the contrary, if learners report high levels of tension during tasks, it may cause obstacles such as dissatisfaction with tasks, nervousness and bad atmosphere. The presence of the MPT did lower perceived pressure and tension, which is good and the learners also reported that they did not have a feeling of pressure or tension in their experience of tasks performance. Generally speaking, it is believed that learners in pressure-free learning atmosphere are more likely to report less stressful experiences during tasks engagement (Deci & Ryan, 1985; 1987; King& Gurland, 2007).

In addition to motivation, three kinds of cognitive strategies including context familiarity, activating background knowledge and pre-teaching of vocabulary & grammar have been considered for this study. In general, although attempts are made to choose those kinds of tasks which their content fit learners’ language proficiency level, probable issues such as unfamiliarity of topic and context, lack of background knowledge and complexity of some words and structures may convey the message that the tasks are not appropriate on the part of learners and it can negatively affect their tasks involvement (Lee, 2012). Regarding the listening comprehension in particular, Anderson and Lynch (2000) state that “... a common problem for the foreign listeners – the speech may contain words or phrases that the listener can hear adequately but is unable to understand because of serious problems with the syntax or semantics of the foreign language” (p.6). Accordingly, it can be inferred that, the use of cognitive strategies not only can enhance learners’ cognitive engagement but also reinforce learners’ ability to formulate certain positive conceptions concerning their level of pleasant subjective experience related to tasks as they would be able to cope with the tasks demands efficiently.

All in all, learners’ satisfaction with the above-cited tasks features might have the potential to evoke their task motivation which can, in turn, promoted their use of cognitive strategies. As Blumenfeld, Kempfer, and Krajcik (2006) state “Motivation sets the stage for cognitive engagement. Motivation leads to achievement by increasing the quality of cognitive engagement” (p. 475). Many of the researchers (Blumenfeld et al., 2006; Neuville et al., 2007; Neber & Schommer-Aikins, 2002) state that some aspects of task motivation including interest, value and competence which can support learners’ psychological

satisfaction with tasks can lead to higher level of learning strategies. In the same vein, the observed results of this study can be encouraging because they indicate that motivational and cognitive variables can mutually influence each other. In fact, motivation variables can preserve the psychological needs of learners for tasks accomplishment but cannot suffice to account for cognitive demands imposed by tasks. Cognition variables, although, can facilitate tasks cognitive engagement difficulties; they cannot deal with motivational factors such as goals, effort, persistence, choice, etc. (Dembovskaia, 2009; Efklides, Niemivirta, & Yamauchi, 2003).

5. Conclusion

The present study examined the learners' subjective experience of their listening tasks experience. The results showed that certain measures might need to be taken to enhance the learners' individual perceptions of the tasks. In sum, the findings of this study offer that the combined role of the MPT& CPT strategies instruction may help learners to be their own promoters of a successful learning experience. In other words, when learners' level of task motivation increases, they may get engaged in the deeper and more effective use of learning strategies which can, in turn, lead to better the quality of learning experiences. It is hoped that participation in and a positive evaluation of the learning tasks in general may bring long-term gains. The results may encourage teachers to enhance learners' task-specific motivation which can, in turn, hold them accountable for task performance and promote them to invest more in cognitive strategies. Once again, it should be mentioned that in this study the main focus was on the unique way learners perceive the tasks rather than the outcome of their performance. We do believe that for a successful language learning to happen, the learners should at first have a positive experience regarding their tasks performance and then learning would happen in the process.

This study underlined the significance of learners' subjective perceptions of their listening tasks experiences. It seems that since few studies have examined the learners' perspective in their analysis of tasks, the much-needed link between subjective experiences doing tasks and learners' cognitive, affective and motivational states should be addressed in further studies. Future studies can also identify the relationships between quality of experience and task outcomes and examine ways to augment positive states and results. It would be also of great interest to researchers to see how learners' subjective experiences differ when doing different types of tasks (Shumow, Schmidt, & Kackar, 2008). It is also interesting to probe if students' immediate subjective experience reported during given tasks can associate with their long-term functioning outcomes (Shumow et al., 2008). Finally, due to the importance and challenges of listening comprehension, learners' level of motivation, affect, and cognition about learning

tasks might have the potential to affect their quality of perception reporting while tasks engagement, how well they perform and how much they learn from their tasks.

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Appendix (A)
Task Evaluation Questionnaire

Student Name: _____

The following questions concern your experience with the listening tasks you did. For each of the following statements, please indicate how true it is for you, using the following scale:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all true			somewhat true				very true

- I think I am pretty good at these tasks.
- I enjoyed doing these tasks very much.
- I put a lot of effort into these tasks.
- I was anxious while working on these tasks.
- For the most part, I felt like I was doing these tasks because I wanted to.
- I thought they were boring tasks.
- I believe these tasks could be of some value to me.
- After working at these tasks for a while, I felt pretty competent.
- These tasks were fun to do.
- I was very relaxed in doing these.
- For the most part, I felt like I was doing what the teacher wanted me to.
- I didn't try very hard to do well at these tasks.
- I would describe these tasks as very interesting.
- They were tasks that I couldn't do very well.
- I did not feel nervous at all while doing these tasks.
- I think that doing these tasks is useful for learning to improve my listening.
- For the most part, I felt like I was doing these tasks only because the teacher wanted me to.
- I didn't put much energy into the tasks.
- I think doing these tasks could help me to become better at listening comprehension.
- I thought these tasks were quite enjoyable.
- I felt pressured while doing these tasks.
- I tried very hard on these tasks.
- For the most part, I felt like I was doing what I wanted to do while working on the tasks.
- I am satisfied with my performance at these tasks.
- I would be willing to do these tasks again because they are somewhat useful.

Please answer these questions briefly:

Please indicate the positive aspects of your tasks experience.

Please indicate the negative aspects of your tasks experience.