

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

Dr Mohamed mekheimer ♦
Associate professor of ELT faculty of Education
beni suef universiy, Egypt

Received: 31 /07/2024	Accepted: 19/ 08/2024	Published: 31/12/2024
-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Abstract: As Saudi Arabia progresses towards developing a learner-centred pedagogy via the life-long e-learning, understanding how learners learn and what influences their learning has become just as important as determining what they learn. This is especially true in the context of learning English as a foreign language in new e-learning milieus. In such contexts, knowledge of English has increasingly become a tool for participation in the e-learning arena, and the number of English language learners joining e-learning programmes is growing at an unprecedented rate in Saudi Arabia as elsewhere in the world. In addition, research on the effects that attract learners of English to e-learning is receiving rising attention. This paper explores the relationships among learners' use of language e-learning strategies, attitudes, motivations, beliefs about language learning, and English language proficiency for a sample of five advanced university students in King Khalid University. Qualitative methods and anecdotal analyses were used to collect the data for the study. Findings of this study suggested that two sources of influence

♦ *Corresponding Author : Dr Mohamed mekheimer*

were the most powerful in relation to learners' use of language e-learning strategies: (a) ability beliefs, and (b) motivational orientations, especially orientation towards competition and academic as well as technological self-efficacy. These two factors, i.e., ability beliefs and the motivational factors, in conjunction with other e-learning acceptance and adoption factors, and intrinsic motivation and attitudes towards e-learning technology use, accounted for a significant portion of the variance in English language proficiency in the latent variable path analysis. Findings also suggested that a multitude of contextual issues, such as English curriculum, web-based tests, virtual classroom language instruction and student participation, and peer influence, interplayed to affect learners' strategy use, motivational orientations, and attitudes about language e-learning, resulting in distinct dimensions and patterns. Results of this study speak cogently to the need for language e-pedagogy in Saudi Arabia to explicitly integrate e-learning and e-teaching technologies and address the motivational aspect of language e-learning for the purpose of engaging learners and enhancing learning effectiveness. Future research should systematically examine patterns and sources of variation in these learner variables as well as identify their developmental trajectories in e-learning milieus.

Keywords: E-Learning, English as a Foreign Language, Saudi Arabia, Learner Beliefs, Motivations, Attitudes, Language Learning Strategies, Qualitative Research

Introduction

The shift towards learner-centred pedagogy and the widespread adoption of e-learning in Saudi Arabia have brought to the forefront the importance of understanding the factors that drive successful language learning in digital environments. This is particularly relevant for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, as proficiency in English has become essential for participating in the global e-learning landscape. While previous research has explored the role of various factors in e-learning success, there is a need to delve deeper into the complex interplay of learners' beliefs, motivations, and attitudes towards language learning in the specific context of Saudi Arabia. Previous studies have investigated factors such as technology acceptance (Davis, 1989), learner engagement (Salmon, 2000), and pedagogical design (Moore & Kearsley,

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

2011) in e-learning environments. However, these studies often lack a nuanced understanding of the interplay between learners' psychological and motivational factors within the unique cultural and educational context of Saudi Arabia.

This study addresses this gap by examining the interconnectedness of learner beliefs, motivations, and attitudes towards language learning within the Saudi e-learning landscape. It recognizes that the success of e-learning initiatives in Saudi Arabia hinges not only on the availability of technology and effective pedagogical design, but also on the individual learner's willingness to engage, their belief in their own abilities, and their motivations for pursuing language learning.

Furthermore, the study acknowledges the specific challenges and opportunities associated with English language learning in Saudi Arabia. The rapid growth of English as a global language, coupled with Saudi Arabia's focus on modernization and economic diversification, has made English proficiency increasingly essential for personal and professional success (Al-Otaibi & Al-Shehri, 2014). However, traditional language teaching methods often struggle to meet the needs of a diverse learner population, and the shift towards e-learning presents both exciting possibilities and unique challenges in this context. This study aims to shed light on these challenges and opportunities by exploring the individual experiences and perspectives of advanced EFL learners in a Saudi university setting.

Literature Review

Learner Beliefs

The role of learner beliefs, specifically self-efficacy, has been extensively studied in the field of education. Bandura (1997) defines self-efficacy as an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform a task. This belief plays a crucial role in shaping motivation, effort, and ultimately, achievement. Research has consistently shown that learners with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to engage in challenging tasks, persist in the face of obstacles, and achieve greater success (Schunk, 1991).

Table 1

Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Academic Achievement

Self-Efficacy Level	Academic Achievement
High	Higher grades, better performance on assessments, higher academic aspirations
Low	Lower grades, poor performance on assessments, lower academic aspirations

Table 1 illustrates a straightforward correlation between a learner's academic performance and their level of self-efficacy. It emphasises two distinct categories:

High Self-Efficacy: Learners who possess high self-efficacy have a firm belief in their capacity to achieve academic success.

Low Self-Efficacy: Learners who have low self-efficacy are uncertain about their academic success.

The table subsequently establishes a connection between these levels of self-efficacy and three corresponding characteristics of academic achievement:

Grades: Students who possess high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to achieve higher grades, while those who possess low levels of self-efficacy are more likely to achieve lower grades.

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

Assessment Performance: Assessment performance is positively correlated with high self-efficacy, whereas low self-efficacy is associated with subpar performance.

Academic Aspirations: Learners who possess high levels of self-efficacy frequently establish ambitious educational objectives, whereas those who possess low levels of self-efficacy may establish less demanding objectives.

Previous research illustrates a robust correlation between academic achievement and self-efficacy (Cheemers, Hu & Garcia, 2001; Elliott, McGregor & Gable, 1999; Nofle & Robins, 2007; Phillips & Gully, 1997; Skinner, Furrer, Marchand & kindermann, 2008; Wolters, 2004). Learners who are confident in their academic capabilities are more inclined to exert effort, engage with the material, and ultimately achieve superior results (Alfassi, 2003; Stiggins, 2005; Zimmerman, 2000). In contrast, learners who are uncertain about their capabilities may be less motivated, less inclined to persist through obstacles, and as a result, exhibit inferior academic performance (Rovai & Jordan, 2004; Thoonen, Slegers, Oort, Peetsma & Geijssels, 2011).

Extant research highlights the importance of nurturing self-efficacy in education, emphasizing the need for educators to provide positive feedback, promote growth mindsets, and offer success opportunities (Jacobi, 1991; Ryan & Deci, 2000). It also highlights the need to identify and support students with low self-efficacy, offering supplementary support and encouragement. Further research is needed to understand the factors contributing to self-efficacy development and determine effective methods in educational settings (Bandura, 2001; Davis, 1989; Venkatesh, Morris, Davis & Davis, 2003).

In the context of language learning, self-efficacy has been shown to influence learners' willingness to take risks, their persistence in practicing the language, and their overall language proficiency (Oxford & Shearin, 1994).

Motivational Factors

Motivational factors play a significant role in shaping learners' engagement and performance. Deci and Ryan's (1985)

Self-Determination Theory highlights the importance of intrinsic motivation, characterized by a sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as a driving force for engagement and deep learning. Conversely, extrinsic motivation, driven by external rewards or punishments, can lead to superficial learning and decreased engagement.

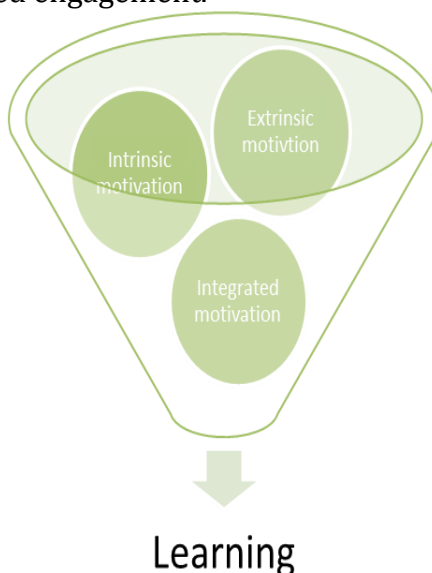


Figure 1. *Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Motivation in Language Learning*

The Venn diagram illustrates the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in language learning. Intrinsic motivation is driven by personal enjoyment, curiosity, and self-improvement, while extrinsic motivation is fuelled by external rewards, recognition, and pressure. The overlapping section, "Integrated Motivation," represents the ideal state where learners experience a harmonious blend of both types, fostering a sense of flow, purpose, and positive reinforcement. The diagram highlights the complex interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in language acquisition, with learners often experiencing a combination of both throughout their learning journey. The diagram emphasizes the importance of cultivating an environment that nurtures both types of motivation by incorporating enjoyment, challenge, personal relevance,

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

recognition, feedback, and practical application. This diagram serves as a valuable tool for educators and learners to identify and leverage the diverse range of motivators that contribute to a successful and fulfilling language learning experience.

Motivational factors in e-learning:

In the context of e-learning, specific motivational factors like competition orientation and self-efficacy have emerged as important drivers of learner engagement (Keller, 2008). Competition orientation refers to the individual's desire to outperform others, which can provide a strong motivation for engaging in learning activities. Self-efficacy in e-learning contexts, both academically and technologically, refers to the learner's belief in their ability to successfully navigate the online learning environment and master the content.

Attitudes Towards Language Learning

Learners' attitudes towards language learning can significantly impact their engagement and performance (Gardner, 2004). Attitudes encompass a range of factors, including:

- **Perceptions of the language:** Learners' beliefs about the importance, usefulness, and difficulty of the language can influence their motivation to learn it.
- **Language learning experience:** Past experiences with language learning, both positive and negative, can shape learners' attitudes towards future language learning endeavors.
- **Cultural and social factors:** Cultural beliefs about language learning and the role of English in society can also influence learners' attitudes.

Attitudes towards e-learning: In addition to attitudes towards language learning, learners' attitudes towards e-learning technology itself can influence their engagement and effectiveness. Factors such as perceived usefulness, ease of use, and enjoyment of using technology can all contribute to learners' willingness to engage with e-learning platforms.

Research on Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) highlights the importance of perceived usefulness and

ease of use in determining technology acceptance. Learners are more likely to embrace e-learning if they perceive it as a valuable tool for learning and if they find the technology intuitive and user-friendly.

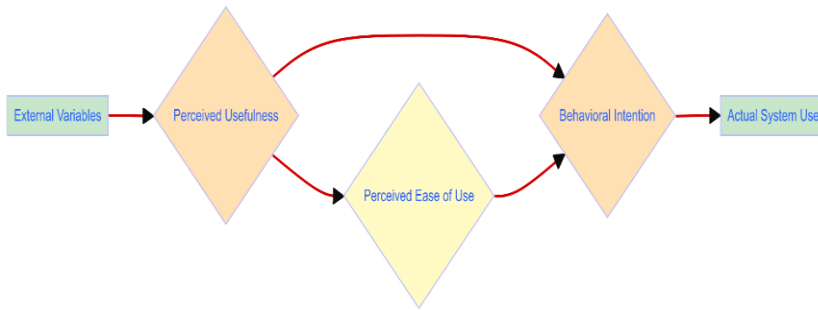


Figure 2. *The Final Version of the Technology Acceptance Model by Venkatesh & Davis (1996)*

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a framework that identifies the factors that influence a person's attitude towards using technology. It consists of three components: Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Attitude Toward Using (AT), and Behavioral Intention to Use (BI). PU refers to a person's belief that using a technology will enhance their performance or achieve their goals. PEOU refers to the degree to which a person believes using a technology will be free of effort. Attitude Toward Using (AT) is a person's overall positive or negative evaluation of the technology based on its perceived usefulness and ease of use. BI, on the other hand, is a person's intention to use the technology, which is influenced by their attitude. The TAM model emphasizes the importance of both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use in determining a person's attitude towards using technology.

Furthermore, the enjoyment factor plays a significant role in promoting engagement and sustained use. Learners who find e-learning enjoyable are more likely to participate actively, explore the platform's features, and invest time in the learning process (Keller, 2008).

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

Integrating Factors for E-Learning Success

The literature reviewed so far underscores the complex interplay of learner beliefs, motivations, and attitudes in shaping e-learning success. To effectively implement e-learning initiatives, particularly for language acquisition, a comprehensive understanding of these factors is crucial.

Interplay of Factors Influencing E-Learning Success

The layered pyramid model is a framework that outlines the key factors that contribute to successful e-learning experiences. It starts with the base layer, which is the learner's self-efficacy, growth mindset, and perceived value in e-learning. Motivations, driven by intrinsic and extrinsic factors, drive active participation. Attitudes, influenced by technology, the learning environment, and content, are crucial for a receptive mindset and enhancing learning outcomes. Contextual factors, such as course design quality, technology availability, instructor support, and peer interaction, also play a significant role in e-learning success. The ultimate goal is e-learning success, which involves achieving learning goals, acquiring new knowledge, developing skills, and experiencing overall growth. This model emphasizes the interconnectedness of these factors and the need for a holistic approach to e-learning design and implementation. By addressing learners' beliefs, motivations, attitudes, and the surrounding context, e-learning experiences can be optimized for greater success.

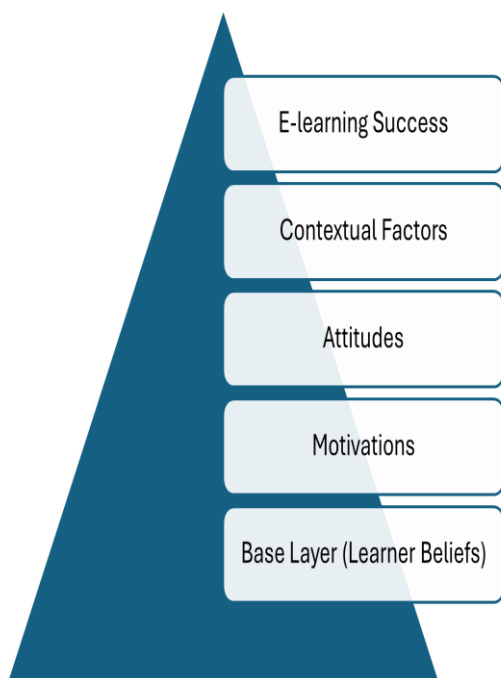


Figure 3. *A layered model of learner beliefs, motivations, attitudes and contextual factors*

The model illustrates the interconnected layers that contribute to e-learning success. The base layer, based on learner beliefs, includes self-efficacy and growth mindset. The second layer, motivations, includes intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The third layer, attitudes, focuses on learners' attitudes towards technology and content. The fourth layer, contextual factors, includes course design quality, technology infrastructure, instructor support, and peer interaction. The top layer, e-learning success, combines these layers, resulting in knowledge acquisition, skill development, and goal achievement.

Methodology

This qualitative study employed in-depth interviews and anecdotal analysis to explore the experiences of five advanced EFL students at King Khalid University. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews that probed the students' use of language e-learning strategies, their beliefs about

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

language learning, their motivations for learning English, and their attitudes towards e-learning.

Participant Selection:

Five advanced EFL students were selected from a pool of eligible students enrolled in an EFL program at King Khalid University. The criteria for selection included:

Advanced English Proficiency: Students were required to demonstrate a high level of English proficiency, as assessed through their academic records and language proficiency tests.

Active Engagement in E-Learning: Students were selected based on their regular participation and engagement in online learning platforms and activities.

Diversity of Learning Experiences: The five participants were chosen to represent a diverse range of experiences and perspectives within the e-learning context, including variations in their beliefs, motivations, and attitudes towards language learning.

Data Collection:

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant, lasting approximately 60-90 minutes each. The interviews were guided by a set of open-ended questions designed to explore the following areas:

Language Learning Strategies: Participants were asked to describe the strategies they used to learn English in the e-learning environment, including specific tools, techniques, and resources they relied on.

Beliefs about Language Learning: Participants were asked to share their views on their own abilities to learn English, their perceptions of the difficulty of the language, and their beliefs about the importance of English proficiency in their personal and professional lives.

Motivations for Learning English: Participants were asked to identify their primary reasons for learning English, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.

Attitudes Towards E-Learning: Participants were asked about their experiences with e-learning platforms, their

perceptions of the usefulness and ease of use of the technology, and their overall enjoyment of the learning experience.

Data Analysis:

The interview transcripts were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. This involved identifying key themes and patterns within the data related to the learners' beliefs, motivations, attitudes, and strategy use. Anecdotal evidence, including specific examples and stories shared by the participants, was carefully examined to gain a deeper understanding of the interplay of these factors.

Findings

The findings of this study revealed a complex interplay between learners' beliefs, motivations, and attitudes, significantly shaping their experiences and outcomes in the e-learning context of EFL at King Khalid University.

Insights into the English Learning Journey of Five Male Undergraduate Students at King Khalid University

The semi-structured interviews with five male undergraduate students at King Khalid University provided valuable insights into their English language learning experiences, motivations, and perspectives. These young men, each with unique aspirations and backgrounds, showcased a diverse range of approaches to language learning, revealing a complex interplay of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, individual learning styles, and perceptions of the challenges and rewards of English proficiency.

Navigating the E-Learning Landscape: The participants embraced the convenience and flexibility of the e-learning platform, appreciating its ability to cater to their busy schedules and diverse learning styles. "I can learn at my own pace," stated one participant, highlighting the platform's flexibility. "The interactive quizzes and games make learning fun and engaging," shared another, reflecting the appeal of active learning. They utilized flashcards and online dictionaries to build vocabulary, with one participant remarking, "It's essential for understanding technical terms and concepts in my field." Engagement with English-language media proved valuable for immersion and practice, as one participant shared, "Watching

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

English movies and listening to podcasts helps me immerse myself in the language and culture." Some relied heavily on technology like online translators and grammar checkers to refine their writing skills, as one participant observed, "It's crucial for communicating effectively in a professional setting." Others prioritized active communication through conversations with classmates and online tutors, with one participant emphasizing, "Practicing speaking is essential for improving fluency."

Balancing Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: The participants' motivations for learning English were multifaceted, often driven by a blend of personal aspirations and external pressures. "I want to pursue a Master's degree abroad, and English proficiency is crucial for my future career," one participant shared, reflecting the desire for career advancement in a globalized landscape. Another participant, motivated by the prospect of studying abroad, stated, "English proficiency is a vital stepping stone to realizing this goal." A shared passion for English literature and culture also played a significant role for some, with one participant expressing, "I enjoy reading classic English novels and want to deepen my understanding of the language and its literary nuances."

Addressing Challenges and Embracing Opportunities: The participants acknowledged the inherent challenges of learning a new language, particularly when it came to speaking fluency and mastering complex grammar structures. One participant admitted, "The biggest challenge is speaking with native speakers." However, they expressed confidence in overcoming these hurdles, driven by their determination and a strong sense of personal responsibility for their academic and professional growth. "I'm working on building my fluency and confidence," shared one participant, highlighting their commitment to improvement. They viewed English proficiency not only as a practical skill but also as a valuable asset for unlocking new opportunities, expanding their horizons, and connecting with diverse cultures. "English proficiency is vital for future opportunities and opens doors for global communication,"

stated one participant, highlighting the broader significance of language acquisition.

A Collaborative Approach to Learning: The participants emphasized the importance of a collaborative approach to learning, recognizing the value of peer support, online communities, and engaging with native speakers. They also acknowledged the need for supplementary offline resources to complement the online platform, highlighting the importance of a holistic approach that encompasses both online and offline learning environments. "I find it helpful to practice speaking with my classmates," one participant shared, reflecting the value of collaborative learning. Another participant noted, "I supplement the online platform with offline resources, like textbooks and language exchange groups."

Overall, these interviews provided a nuanced understanding of the English learning journey of male undergraduate students at King Khalid University. Their experiences highlight the importance of individualized learning strategies, the power of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, and the critical role of both online and offline resources in fostering effective language acquisition.

1. The Power of Ability Beliefs:

Learners who firmly believed in their ability to learn English (high self-efficacy) demonstrated a greater propensity to utilize language e-learning strategies effectively. They actively sought out resources, experimented with different learning approaches, and were more persistent in their efforts, even when encountering challenges. This finding is evident in the case study of "**The Competitive Learner**," where the participant consistently sought out opportunities to improve, used various online platforms to practice, and consistently engaged with the material. His strong belief in his ability fuelled his motivation and led to significant progress in his English proficiency.

2. Motivational Orientations: Competition and Self-Efficacy:

Motivational factors played a significant role in influencing learners' strategy use and engagement. Competition orientation

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

and both academic and technological self-efficacy emerged as particularly important. **"The Competitive Learner"** exemplifies this, as his desire to outperform his peers propelled his engagement and learning strategies. Similarly, **"The Technology Enthusiast"** displayed a strong technological self-efficacy, embracing the e-learning platform with confidence and actively exploring its features.

3. Contextual Factors: Curriculum, Assessments, and Social Interaction:

Contextual factors such as the English curriculum, web-based tests, virtual classroom interactions, and peer influence exerted a significant impact on learners' beliefs, motivations, and strategies. **"The Struggling Student"** exemplifies the influence of the curriculum, as the perceived difficulty of the course material negatively impacted their self-belief and motivation. In contrast, **"The Socially Connected Learner"** thrived in the social aspects of the e-learning environment, finding motivation and support through online interactions with peers. The nature of online assessments, the structure of virtual classrooms, and the level of peer interaction all influenced how learners approached their learning and the strategies they employed.

The interviews revealed a powerful connection between learners' beliefs about their abilities and their success in utilizing e-learning strategies. Those who held strong confidence in their ability to learn English (high self-efficacy) were more likely to actively engage with the platform, experiment with different learning approaches, and persist through challenges. This finding is evident in the case study of **"The Competitive Learner,"** whose unwavering belief in his abilities fuelled his motivation and led to significant progress in his English proficiency. He actively sought out opportunities to improve, experimented with various online platforms, and consistently engaged with the material.

Motivational factors also played a crucial role in shaping learning experiences. Competition orientation and both academic and technological self-efficacy emerged as particularly

impactful. "The Competitive Learner" exemplifies the influence of competition, as his desire to outperform his peers propelled his engagement and learning strategies. Similarly, "The Technology Enthusiast" displayed a strong technological self-efficacy, embracing the e-learning platform with confidence and actively exploring its features. This highlights the importance of fostering a motivational environment that encourages learners to embrace challenges and strive for improvement.

The context within which learning occurs significantly impacted learners' beliefs, motivations, and strategies. The curriculum, the nature of assessments, virtual classroom interactions, and peer influence all played a role. "The Struggling Student" exemplified the influence of the curriculum, as the perceived difficulty of the course material negatively impacted their self-belief and motivation. In contrast, "The Socially Connected Learner" thrived in the social aspects of the e-learning environment, finding motivation and support through online interactions with peers. This underscores the need for e-learning platforms to consider the social context of learning and facilitate meaningful interactions among learners, fostering a supportive and collaborative learning environment.

Case Study Elaboration:

Case Study 1: The Competitive Learner

This participant, a highly motivated student named Khalid, demonstrated a strong belief in his ability to learn English and used this self-assurance to his advantage. He actively sought out challenging tasks, embraced online resources and tools, and frequently participated in online forums to engage with other learners. Khalid's desire to excel and his confidence in his abilities led to significant progress in his language proficiency. He often remarked, "I want to be the best in my class, and I know I can achieve that with hard work and dedication. Learning English is a key part of that."

Case Study 2: The Technology Enthusiast

Faisal, a student with a natural affinity for technology, readily embraced the e-learning platform, finding it intuitive and engaging. His positive attitude towards the technology, coupled with his strong technological self-efficacy, resulted in a

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

high level of engagement. He actively explored the platform's features, utilized interactive exercises and simulations, and made full use of the online resources available to him. Faisal's positive experience with e-learning fuelled his motivation and contributed to his successful language learning journey. He often shared, "This platform is so cool! It's like having a personal tutor in my pocket."

Case Study 3: The Struggling Student

Mohammed, on the other hand, struggled with self-doubt and lacked confidence in his ability to learn English. Despite a strong intrinsic motivation to improve his English, his negative beliefs about his abilities hindered his progress. He often avoided challenging tasks, limited his use of online resources, and felt overwhelmed by the course material. Mohammed's case study highlights the critical need for fostering a supportive and encouraging learning environment, especially for learners who struggle with self-doubt. He admitted, "I feel like I'm not good at languages, and I'm afraid to make mistakes."

Case Study 4: The Socially Connected Learner

Fahad found a sense of community and motivation through the social aspects of e-learning. He actively participated in online forums, formed connections with other learners, and sought out collaborative learning opportunities. Fahad's strong social motivation fuelled his engagement and contributed to his positive learning experience. He often said, "Learning with others makes it so much more fun and engaging. We can help each other out."

Case Study 5: The Goal-Oriented Learner

Ali, a student with clear career goals that required English proficiency, exhibited a strong intrinsic motivation for learning the language. His goal orientation drove his engagement and persistence, leading to significant progress in his language abilities. He actively sought out resources, participated in online activities, and sought feedback to enhance his learning. Ali's case study demonstrates the power of goal-setting and intrinsic motivation in shaping e-learning success. He stated, "My dream

is to work for a multinational company, and English proficiency is a must. I'm determined to achieve my goals."

These case studies offer a glimpse into the individual journeys of learners within the e-learning environment, showcasing the critical interplay of beliefs, motivations, and attitudes in shaping their learning experiences.

Discussion

The findings of this study accentuate the importance of addressing the complex interplay of learners' beliefs, motivations, and attitudes within the e-learning context to enhance learning effectiveness. To effectively integrate e-learning into language pedagogy in Saudi Arabia, educators must move beyond simply adopting technology and instead focus on creating a holistic learning environment that caters to the individual needs and motivations of EFL learners.

1. Integrating E-Learning Technologies Effectively:

The study reveals the need to go beyond simply integrating technology into the curriculum. While access to e-learning platforms is essential, educators must focus on *how* these technologies are incorporated to support diverse learning styles and enhance engagement. This involves:

- **Tailoring Content and Activities:** The curriculum should be designed to incorporate a variety of learning resources and activities that cater to different learning styles. For example, using interactive simulations, multimedia content, and gamified learning experiences can enhance engagement and cater to different learning preferences.
- **Leveraging Technology to Foster Collaboration:** E-learning platforms can be used to create opportunities for collaborative learning, such as online group projects, discussions, and peer feedback sessions. This fosters a sense of community and promotes peer-to-peer learning, which can be particularly beneficial for EFL learners.

2. Addressing Motivational Factors:

The study highlights the critical role of motivation in driving e-learning success. Educators should focus on fostering intrinsic motivation and promoting factors such as competition

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

orientation, academic self-efficacy, and technological self-efficacy:

- **Intrinsic Motivation:** Creating a learning environment that fosters autonomy, competence, and relatedness can boost intrinsic motivation. This involves providing learners with choices, opportunities for self-directed learning, and a sense of accomplishment. Encouraging curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving can also ignite intrinsic motivation.
- **Competition Orientation:** While competition can be a powerful motivator, it's important to ensure it doesn't create an overly competitive environment that discourages collaboration and discourages struggling learners. Encouraging friendly competition through activities like online quizzes and collaborative projects can be effective.
- **Academic and Technological Self-Efficacy:** Building learners' confidence in their ability to learn English and navigate e-learning platforms is crucial. Providing clear instructions, offering frequent feedback, and highlighting successes can boost self-efficacy.

3. Creating a Supportive E-Learning Environment:

Fostering a positive and inclusive e-learning environment that values collaboration, feedback, and learner autonomy is vital for creating a conducive learning environment. This includes:

- **Encouraging Collaboration:** Creating a culture of collaboration within the e-learning environment promotes peer-to-peer learning and allows students to support each other. This can be facilitated through online discussion forums, group projects, and peer review activities.
- **Valuing Feedback:** Regular and constructive feedback is essential for learners to track their progress and identify areas for improvement. Utilizing online assessment tools and providing personalized feedback can enhance learning outcomes.

- **Promoting Learner Autonomy:** Empowering learners to take control of their learning is crucial. Providing opportunities for self-directed learning, allowing learners to choose learning activities, and encouraging them to set their own goals can boost engagement and create a sense of ownership over the learning process.

Conclusion

This study illuminates the complex interplay of learner beliefs, motivations, and attitudes within the e-learning context of EFL in Saudi Arabia, echoing the findings of researchers like Bandura (2001) and Zimmerman (2000) who emphasize the crucial role of self-efficacy in learning. Our findings highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to language e-pedagogy that addresses both cognitive and motivational factors, aligning with the principles of self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), to create effective and engaging learning experiences.

The study underscores the importance of moving beyond simply integrating technology into the classroom, as suggested by Davis (1989) and Venkatesh et al. (2003) in their research on technology acceptance. Instead, it emphasizes creating a learner-centered e-learning environment that fosters intrinsic motivation, promotes self-efficacy, and supports a positive learning experience. This echoes the recommendations of researchers like Skinner et al. (2008) who highlight the importance of student engagement and motivation in effective learning environments.

Further research is needed to systematically examine the dynamic relationships between these variables and their developmental trajectories within e-learning milieus. This aligns with the call for longitudinal research in educational psychology, as advocated by Chemers et al. (2001), to inform future pedagogical practices. Longitudinal studies that track learners' growth over time and explore how their beliefs, motivations, and attitudes evolve within the e-learning context, as proposed by Elliot et al. (1999), are crucial for informing future pedagogical practices and fostering a more effective e-learning experience.

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

This study offers crucial implications for EFL pedagogy in Saudi Arabia, emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay of learner beliefs, motivations, and attitudes within the e-learning context. By acknowledging these factors, educators can create more effective and engaging learning experiences. Best practices include fostering a learner-centered environment that promotes self-efficacy, caters to diverse learning styles, and encourages collaboration and active participation. Specifically, this involves integrating e-learning technologies in a way that supports diverse learning preferences, leveraging online platforms to foster collaboration and build community, and addressing motivational factors through promoting intrinsic motivation, competition orientation, and academic and technological self-efficacy.

Further research is needed to systematically examine the dynamic relationships between these variables and their developmental trajectories within e-learning milieus. Longitudinal studies that track learners' growth over time and explore how their beliefs, motivations, and attitudes evolve within the e-learning context are crucial for informing future pedagogical practices. This research can further inform the development of more effective e-learning strategies tailored to the specific needs and learning styles of EFL learners in Saudi Arabia, ultimately contributing to the development of a more competent and globally-connected generation of English speakers.

References

- Alfassi, M. (2003). Promoting the will and skill of students at academic risk: An evaluation of an instructional design geared to foster achievement, self-efficacy and motivation. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 30(1), 28.
- Al-Otaibi, M., & Al-Shehri, A. (2014). The importance of English language for Saudi Arabian students. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 4(1), 77-85.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 1-26.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.1>
- Chemers, M. M., Hu, L., & Garcia, B. F. (2001). Academic self-efficacy and first year college student performance and adjustment. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93(1), 55-64.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.93.1.55>
- Davis, F. (1989). Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), 319-340. <https://doi.org/10.2307/249008>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum Press.

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

- Elliot, A. J., McGregor, H. A., & Gable, S. (1999). Achievement goals, study strategies, and exam performance: A mediational analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 91(3), 549–563. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.91.3.549>
- Gardner, R. C. (2004). *Attitude and motivation in second language learning*. London: Continuum.
- Jacobi, M. (1991). Mentoring and Undergraduate Academic Success: A Literature Review. *Review of Educational Research*, 61(4), 505–532. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543061004505>
- Keller, J. M. (2008). *Motivational design for learning and performance: The ARCS model approach*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.
- Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (2011). *Distance education: A systems view*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Noftle, E. E., & Robins, R. W. (2007). Personality predictors of academic outcomes: Big five correlates of GPA and SAT scores. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 93(1), 116–130. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.93.1.116>
- Oxford, R. L., & Shearin, J. (1994). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Phillips, J. M., & Gully, S. M. (1997). Role of goal orientation, ability, need for achievement, and locus of control in the self-efficacy and goal-setting process. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82(5), 792–802. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.82.5.792>

- Rovai, A. P., & Jordan, H. (2004). Blended Learning and Sense of Community: A Comparative Analysis with Traditional and Fully Online Graduate Courses. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 5(2).
<https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v5i2.192>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic motivation, Social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Salmon, G. (2000). *E-moderating: The key to teaching and learning online*. London: Kogan Page.
- Schunk, D. H. (1991). *Self-efficacy and academic behavior*. Educational Psychologist, 26(1/2), 61-81.
- Skinner, E., Furrer, C., Marchand, G., & Kindermann, T. (2008). Engagement and disaffection in the classroom: Part of a larger motivational dynamic? *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 100(4), 765–781. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012840>
- Stiggins, R. (2005). From Formative Assessment to Assessment for Learning: A Path to Success in Standards-Based Schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 87(4), 324–328.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/003172170508700414>
- Thoonen, E. E. J., Sleegers, P. J. C., Oort, F. J., Peetsma, T. T. D., & Geijsel, F. P. (2011). How to Improve Teaching Practices. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 47(3), 496–536.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x11400185>

The Relationship Between Attitudes, Motivations, and Learner Beliefs: Stories in the E- Learning Context of English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia

Venkatesh, V., Morris, M. G., Davis, G. B., & Davis, F. D. (2003). User

Acceptance of Information technology: toward a Unified View.

MIS Quarterly, 27(3), 425–478. JStor.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/30036540>

Wolters, C. A. (2004). Advancing Achievement Goal Theory: Using

Goal Structures and Goal Orientations to Predict Students'

Motivation, Cognition, and Achievement. *Journal of*

Educational Psychology, 96(2), 236–250.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.96.2.236>

Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Self-Efficacy: An Essential Motive to Learn.

Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25(1), 82–91.

<https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1016>