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# The Impact of E-learning on Motivational Strategies and English learning

# Elham Shirvani<sup>1</sup>, Mehran Farajollahi<sup>2</sup>, Mahdi Moeinikia<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MA student of Educational Management, Department of Literature and Human Sciences,
Payame Noor University of Tehran

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Department of Literature and Human Sciences, Payame Noor University

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Safari, Sana, PHD in higher education management

#### **ABSTRACT**

This study was conducted to compare motivational strategies for learning in e-learning and conventional systems. It was done in Iran Language Institute, the biggest and the most reliable institute in Iran which works on the area of foreign languages specially English. The total number of the sample was 110 learners including 36 participants of e-learning and 74 participants of conventional courses which were selected based on convenient sampling in elementary 1, elementary 2 and elementary 3 levels which are of the basic levels in Iran Language Institute. The research method was a quasi-experimental one. Their score in post test was considered as the measure for learning rate in English learning. The data of motivational strategies were collected via part of Pintrich MSLQ questionnaire (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, McKeachie, 1993)[1] which its reliability In Iranian society was 0.88. Gathered data were analyzed by a t-test. Results showed that in comparison with e-learners, the conventional learners were better in reading comprehension, listening and vocabulary, although in grammar, there wasn't any meaningful difference between 2 groups. In the motivational component, the e-learners had a higher average score in intrinsic goal orientation, task value and control learning beliefs than the conventional group while the latter had higher average score in extrinsic goal orientation.

**KEYWORDS:** Learning English, e\_learning, Motivation, Motivational Strategies for Learning, Self-Regulated Learning Strategies

# INTRODUCTION

Nowadays as the era of information and communication technology (ICT), knowing a foreign language, especially an international language like English, is considered an important medium for global communication. Most of the higher education institutes working on the area of foreign languages intend to improve speaking, listening and even writing abilities of the learners. As a result of such improvements, the learners can take part in business environments and social interactions, conduct independent studies and familiarize themselves with the cultural foundations of that linguistic community (Dehbashi Sharif, Zandi, Zia Hosseini, Ebrahimzadeh, Alipour, 2011[2]; Khazaeei, Vahid Dastjerdi, Talebinezhad, 2011[3]).

Moreover, in the era of globalization, the world has changed into a village where English has been identified as a global language for international communications and interactions. English is used as the language of technology and computer because on the internet, the language of instructions, messages and texts, is generally English. English language is the most commonly used language among the ten well-known languages of the world; and almost two-third of the websites are written in English (Shirvani, 2012[4]).

On the other hand, development of Information and Communication Technologies in educational programs is an effective and long lasting step that has made some transformations in the goals, programs, procedures and practices and thus has led to effectiveness of education (Doherty, 2006 [5]; Levy[6], 2007; Udo, Bagchi & Kirs, 2011[7]). Due to the possibilities of the Internet, online education has become a strong alternative option for traditional face-to-face instruction (Yarahmadi, 2011[33]). The Internet has radically reshaped our higher education area. Today Internet-based teaching is an opportunity for millions of students to receive their education. It is not too expensive to use the Internet for study, and the courses provide excellent tools like message boards, chat rooms, etc (Haghshenas, Yousefpour, 2012[10]).

One of the consequences of development in information technology and communication is e-learning. This type of education known as one of the modern world phenomena in the information age and knowledge-based society, has substantial rate of expansion in its short history of emergence and is gradually replacing the conventional methods of teaching and learning (Tanyeli, 2009 [8]). E-learning can be used either as a helpful factor in the conventional classes or as an independent method for distance learning (Lee, 2009 cited in Gi-Zen Liu,

Zih- Hui Liu,& Gwo-Jen Hwang, 2010 [9]).In fact, English learning through the Web and the use of new educational approaches has made the students more interested in learning. In a study, Chuan Kung (2002)[10] has concluded that the use of such internet facilities can increase the learning of different aspects of English and as a result the learning of English in general.

Kao (2010)[11] in Taiwan, showed that the students who took part in online education in after-school programs, had improved their English in academic performance and showed positive attitudes toward using elearning platforms for their tutoring. This online tutoring program provided students in rural schools with the opportunity to have a favorable environment such as face to face classes in learning context. It also gave students the opportunity to have interaction with the tutors.

In a similar study in Cyprus, the effect of English teaching through web on learners' reading skills was investigated. In that study, in comparison to the conventionally trained group, the online trained group had higher levels of learning and it was obvious that the students who were involved in online reading activities had positive feelings and attitudes towards the reading activities online. Online activities also provide students with the advantages of other online skills like chatting, etc. (Tanyeli, 2009). Another investigation in Thailand, on the English learning effects of web logs, indicated that students had reported web logs and internet as tools for their online expression and language progress and that the online nature and user-friendly characteristics of web logs encouraged their self-expression in English. Weblogs are a powerful tool for English language learning and have a very beneficial effects on student's reading, writing and vocabulary development. The findings of this study confirm the assertion that Blogging promotes learner autonomy, through a learner centered approach which encourages students to read and write for communicative purposes. Blogging reinforces English language learning in EFL contexts where learners have limited exposure to the target language. Meanwhile, web logs can provide an exciting and motivating learning environment where students have a sense of ownership and readership. They can be used to enhance student analytical and critical thinking skills, create social interactions between students and the instructor, students and their peers, and students and a global audience (Noytim, 2010)[12].

In a research done in Iran by Haghshenas and Yousef pour(2012) on the role of pervasive computing in mobile learning, it is shown that the educational process will become more flexible and will fulfill to the needs of lifelong learning. Usage of mobile learning (M-learning) technologies in education is the most important of required technologies to provide main goals in distance education. It offers learning and data accession opportunities to learners not with standing time and place. This new technology has changed the traditional concept of learning so that students are being frequently surrounded by, and immersed in learning experiences (Haghshenas, Yousefpour,2012).

The results of Ozgur and Ozgur's study (2009)[13] showed that optimum learning opportunities could be created for language learners through the use of interactive web environments and the students could be more active in such environments because everything is in their own control. If they want to learn, they choose the activity they like from the provided activities and also get the taste of learning from and with their peers. According to the students, the nice thing about these environments is the fact that they can learn without getting bored. The other important finding is that the teachers have a very significant role to play in this scenario.

Hubackova (2010)[14] in Czech Republic, studied 3 groups of students: 1- in face-to-face teaching supported by an on-line course, 2- In distance teaching only through an on-line course and 3- In part-time studies only via an on-line course (in inter-university studies). Research findings demonstrated the widespread satisfaction of students of online courses while there wasn't any need to limit the number of applicants because the structure of the courses made it possible to accept a great number of interested people without any excessive strain put on teachers.

Andrade & Bunker (2009)[15] investigated the papers presented on the role of e-learning in motivation and learning English and have concluded that both teachers and students have very positive perspectives towards the use of this learning model.

Al Rifai's research results (2010)[16] in Kuwait, showed that watching TV programs in English had positive effect on people's motivations and attitudes towards English language. In another study in Iran, Vaezi (2009)[15] compared conventional and e-learning teaching approaches and found that the performances of students of conventional classes was a little better but not significantly higher than the students of e-learning classes in an Iranian context. The researchers believe that in addition to tools applied in content delivery and media used in teaching, motivational strategies have high importance in learning English.

Bandura (2001)[17] indicated that in the social cognitive model, motivation affects self-regulated learning strategies as well, and Artino and Stephense (2007)[18] and Pintrich (2003)[19] stated that in motivational strategies for learning model, motivation affects all aspects of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies of learning as well as different aspects of learning resource management. The motivational component includes 5 subscales

(Duncan and McKeachie, 2005[20]; Pintrich, 2000[21]): intrinsic goal orientation, extrinsic goal orientation, task value beliefs, learning control beliefs, self-efficacy, and test anxiety.

In the study conducted by Mohammadi, MoeiniKia and Zahed-Babelan (2010)[22] motivational strategies for learning were reported as the significant predictive factors in English language learning. Findings showed that among components of motivated strategies for learning, the shares of expectancy components, value components and resource management strategies as well as resource management strategies had important role in predicting second language learning. The remarkable thing is that on the one hand, these strategies are effective on English learning and on the other hand, they are affected by the education environment and media (Artino & Stephens, 2007; Pintrich, 2000, 2003, 2004[23]). Regarding the above mentioned issues, the researchers intend to investigate the impact of e-learning on motivational strategies and English language learning.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Since in the present study, there was not any possibility for random sampling and we couldn't control the intervening variables (because of the forming of the groups before the performance), therefore it followed a quasi-experimental design. As there were 2 groups, (a conventional group and an e-learning one), so it could be categorized as a pretest-posttest design with 2 groups. The general outline of the plan can be as follow:

E-learning group	Pretest	E-learning education	Post test
Conventional group	Pretest	Conventional education	Post test

## General outline of research plan

Result of their placement test was considered as the pretest, then they passed through a same course which was presented by the teacher in conventional group and through internet in virtual group, then they had an exam as their post test. It is worth noting that the tests used for both educational systems (e-learning and conventional) were identical.

## **Participants**

Subjects of the present study were participants of the e-learning English language learning courses of the Iran Language Institute and participants of conventional classes of Golbarg branch (for girls) and Sohravardi branch (for boys) who were studying at levels 1, 2, and 3 of Basic English learning. The total number of subjects was 110 learners including all the 36 students of e-learning and 74 students of conventional courses who were selected based on convenient sampling from 200 students of the levels mentioned before.

#### **Apparatus**

The obtained progress English test scores were based on the tests of the Iran Language Institute which were designed by experts.

Scores of motivational strategies were collected based on part of MSLQ questionnaire which is one of the most famous assessment tools of motivational strategies for learning. This is a 7 score Likret type which its answers vary from "It's not at all related to me" to "it refers to me completely". The questionnaire includes 31 items which evaluate the goals and beliefs of the learners on the desired field, 31 items which evaluate their beliefs about the skills to succeed in the field and 19 items which evaluate their test anxiety. The MSLQ questionnaire is considered to be an efficient, practical, and ecologically valid measure of students' motivation and learning strategies and it represents a viable means for assessing student motivation and use of learning strategies in the classroom. (Duncan and McKeachie, 2005).

This questionnaire also has been validated by Moeini Kia (2011)[24] for the Iranian society, and psychometric properties of its components and subscales have been reported in Table 1. Also, Table 1 reports the psychometric properties of the original questionnaire.

The reported results of Table 1 show that the reliability of motivation construct is 0.88, learning strategies is .77 and resource management strategies is .77 which are acceptable value according to the number of items. The reliability values of the subscales also indicated acceptable internal consistency of subscales.

Table 1: Internal Consistency of the Questionnaire on Motivational Strategies

	N	Reliability			
subscale	Number of items	Original study**	Study (in Iran)*		
Intrinsic goal orientation	1, 16, 22, 24	.74	.84		
Extrinsic goal orientation	7, 11, 13, 20	.62	.70		
Task value	4, 10, 17, 23, 26, 27	.90	.76		
Control of learning beliefs	2,9,18,25	.68	.62		
Self-efficacy	5, 6, 15, 20, 21, 29, 31	.93	.89		
Test American	3, 8, 14, 19, 28	.80	.67		
Test Anxiety	-	-	.88		
Motivational components Rehearsal	72,59,46,39	.69	.64		
Renearsar Elaboration	81,69,67,64,62,53	.75	.86		
Organizing	63,49,43,32	.64	.70		
Organizing Critical Thinking	71,66,51,47,38	.80	.80		
Metacognitive Self regulation	33,36,41,44,54,55,56,57,61,76,78,79	.79	.71		
e e		-	.77		
Learning Strategies Time &Environmental Management	35,43,52,65,70,73,77,80	.76	.71		
Effort Regulation					
Peer Learning	37,48,60,75	.69	.61		
Help Seeking	34,45,50	.76	.70		
1 0	40,58,68,75	.52	.57		
Resource Management Strategies		-	.77		

<sup>\*\*</sup> Duncan & McKeachi (2005)

#### **Procedure**

The literature of the research was reviewed by studying many different articles and books in the field of elearning and motivation strategies for learning, and then we had a same placement test for both conventional and elearning groups as a pretest. After teaching English to both groups for 21 sessions, all the students in conventional and e-learning groups went through a similar test which was considered as the posttest. The MSLQ questionnaire was spread out in conventional classes and was e-mailed to e-learning students in the last session. All the extracted results were analyzed by using independent *t*-test.

# RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of comparison of English learning between the e-learning and conventional groups have been shown in Table 2.It shows that the mean differences of total scores (post test -pre test) among the e-learning group (including 36 learners) was (-14.38±10.36) and conventional group was (-3.17±10.40). T-test results showed that  $t_{(108)} = -5.31$  was statistically significant (P<.05). In other words, it can be concluded that with 95% confidence there are significant differences between e-learning and conventional groups in terms of their learning rate. The mean scores of pre-tests and posttests of both groups show that in the E-learning group there has been high degradation from pretest to posttest. Simply put, compared with conventional education, e-learning didn't have positive impact on learning English.

Table 2: Comparison of English learning between the e-learning and conventional learners

Table 2. Comparison of English learning between the e-learning and conventional learners								
variable	group	N	Mean (Pretest)	Mean (Post test)	mean difference (Post –pre)	SD	t	Sig.
Listonino	E_L.	36	86.11	63.88	-22.22	17.6	5.18	0.000
Listening	Con.	74	75.81	74.05	-1.75	20.2	3.16	0.000
Vocabulani	E_L.	36	92.77	76.66	-16.11	12.9	2 20	0.01
Vocabulary	Con.	74	80.81	72.77	-8.04	18.1	2.38	0.01
Grammar	E_L.	36	83.75	77.22	-6.25	15.4	1.68	0.09
Graniniai	Con.	74	78.44	76.95	-1.48	14.4	1.00	0.09
Reading	E_L.	36	90.41	72.22	-18.19	17.2	4.30	0.000
comprehension	Con.	74	72.94	72.56	33	21.8	4.30	0.000
Total score	E_L.	36	88.55	74.16	-14.38	10.4	5.31	0.000
i otai score	Con.	74	77.81	74.63	-3.17	10.4	5.51	0.000

df = 108

The same findings are also evident with regard to listening, vocabulary and comprehension. So that in listening skills,  $t_{(108)} = -5.18$ ; in learning the words,  $t_{(108)} = 2.38$ ; and in reading comprehension,  $t_{(108)} = -4.30$  (P <0.05)

<sup>\*</sup> Moeini Kia (2011)

which are significant at 95% confidence level; the conventional learners had better results than the e-learning learners, although in learning grammar,  $t_{(108)} = -1.68$  is not significant at 95% confidence level (P <0.05) and it means that in this field, there isn't any meaningful difference between 2 groups.

The comparison of motivational components of e-learning and conventional groups has been shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Comparison of motivational components of the e-learning and conventional learners

variable	group	N.	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Intrinsia and minuted (ICO)	E_L.	36	23.88	3.10	2.70	0.006
Intrinsic goal oriented (IGO)	Con.	73	21.67	4.23	2.79	
Extuincia anal ariented (ECO)	E_L.	36	20.52	4.09	2.20	0.018
Extrinsic goal oriented (EGO)	Con.	74	22.47	3.94	2.39	0.016
Tl-V-l (TV)	E_L.	36	37.38	4.16	2.26	0.026
Task Value (TV)	Con.	74	34.93	5.81		
Control learning beliefs (CLB)	E_L.	36	22.77	3.12	2.67	0.009
Control learning beliefs (CLB)	Con.	74	20.68	4.14	2.07	
Self efficacy (TEC)	E_L.	36	45.13	5.42	72	0.465
Self efficacy (TEC)	Con.	74	44.12	7.40	./3	0.40.
Test Anxiety (TA)	E_L.	36	17.69	6.48	10	0.855
Test Allxlety (TA)	Con.	74	17.95	7.40	10	0.65.
Motivational components (MC)	E_L.	36	167.41	16.36	2.39 2.26 2.67 .73 18	0.15
Monvanonai components (MC)	Con.	73	161.86	19.92		0.131

df = 107

It is showed that  $t_{(107)} = 1.44$  was not statistically significant (P = 0/151> 0.05). In other words, at 95% level of confidence there was no significant difference between the learners of conventional and e-learning groups in terms of motivation. The results of Table 3 indicated that e-learning has positive effect on intrinsic goal orientation ( $t_{(107)} = 2/79$ ), task value ( $t_{(107)} = 26/2$ ), and control of learning beliefs ( $t_{(107)} = 2/67$ ), (p < 0.05).

The subscale of extrinsic orientation shows that  $t_{(107)} = -2.39$  (P <0.05) is significant at 95% level of confidence. Therefore, it can be concluded that at 95% confidence, in terms of extrinsic orientation, the average scores of conventional learning group are higher than those of e-learning group. Also, no significant difference was observed between the two groups in terms of self-efficacy ( $t_{(107)} = 0.73$ ) and test anxiety ( $t_{(107)} = -0.18$ ), (p >0.05).

Table 4: Comparison of learning strategies of the e-learning and conventional learners

variable	group	N.	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
	E_L.	36	19.86	4.90		
Rehearsal	Con.	73	19.93	4.90	-0.072 -0.680 -1.143 -0.530 -0.118	0.943
Elaboration	E_L.	36	28.33	6.93	0.690	0.498
Elaboration	Con.	74	29.24	6.40	0.680 1.143 0.530	0.498
0	E_L.	36	19.52	5.71	1.143	0.026
Organizing	Con.	74	18.28	5.17		
Cairi and Their daine	E_L.	36	24.19	6.36	- 0.680 1.143 - 0.530 - 0.118	0.507
Critical Thinking	Con.	74	23.59	5.14		0.597
Metacognitive Self-Regulation	E_L.	36	59.50	10.78	0.119	0.007
Metacognitive Sen-Regulation	Con.	74	59.22	11.54	- 0.680 1.143 - 0.530 - 0.118	0.907
Learning Strategies	E_L.	36	151.42	32.05	0.105	0.845
Learning Strategies	Con.	74	150.28	26.67	0.193	0.643
df =	108					

Table 4 shows the comparison of learning strategies components of conventional and e-learning learners. The standard deviation of e-learning group is 32.05 while it is 26.67 for conventional group and  $t_{(108)} = 0.195$ . Considering that P= 0.845>0.050, so it doesn't show any statistically difference in 95% level of confidence. It means that there isn't any meaningful difference between 2 groups in learning strategies. The same findings can be seen in subscales of learning strategies. So that, in rehearsal,  $t_{(108)} = -0.072$ ; in elaboration,  $t_{(108)} = 0.680$ ; in Organization,  $t_{(108)} = 1.143$ ; in critical thinking,  $t_{(108)} = 0.530$ ; and in motivational self-regulation,  $t_{(108)} = 0.118$ ; (P > 0.05) are not meaningful in 95% level of confidence.

Table 5: Comparison of resource management strategies of the e-learning and conventional learners

variable	group	N.	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
Time and Environment Management	E_L.	36	35.61	7.37	-1.48	0.140

	Con.	73	37.86	7.49		
Effort Provilation	E_L.	36	20.86	4.50	0.00	0.321
Effort Regulation	Con.	74	19.89	4.92	0.99	0.321
Peer Learning	E_L.	36	9.80	4.89	-1.38 -1.19 -1.26	0.172
reel Lealining	Con.	74	11.09	3.87		0.172
Help Cooking	E_L.	36	16.86	5.55	1.10	0.235
Help Seeking	Con.	74	18.04	4.48	-1.19	
	E_L.	36	83.13	16.10		
Resource Management Strategies	Con.	74	86.89	13.78	-1.26	0.208
	•				•	1

As it is shown in table 5, the standard deviation of resource management strategies for e-learning group is 16.10 while for conventional group, it is 13.78 and  $t_{(108)} = -1.26$ , so P = 0.208 > 0.05 is not meaningful in 95% level of confidence and it means that there isn't any significant difference between 2 groups in resource management strategies. We also can see that there isn't any meaningful difference between conventional and e-learning learners in subscales of resource management strategies because  $t_{(108)}$  in time and environment management is -1.48; in effort regulation is 0.99; in peer learning is -1.38 and in help seeking is -1.19.

## **CONCLUSION**

These results contradict the findings of overseas research indicating the positive role of e-learning in particular and ICT in general in learning English like those conducted by Hubackova (2010), Chan Kung(2002), Tanyeli (2009), Noytim (2010) and Kao (2010). However, in the study conducted by Vaezi (2009) within Iran, no significant difference has been observed between the performances of e-learning and conventional learning groups and this can be a confirmatory study in line with the obtained results of the present study. Haqqani (2009)[25] believes that teaching and learning English in the context of e-learning is undergoing changes; however, the ability to use IT (Mohammadi, Moeinikia, & Zahed-Babelan, 2010; Rahimi and Yadollahi, 2011[26]) and access to it (Mohammadi, Ghorbani, & Hamidi, 2011[27]) are important intervening variables in learning.

Other research results suggest that in terms of intrinsic goal orientation, task value and control of learning beliefs, e-learning has a positive impact on learning (compared with conventional teaching). These results are in line with the research findings of some other studies such as the ones conducted by Kao (2010), Tanyeli (2009), Noytim, (2010) which concluded significant role of technology in creating a positive attitude; the study conducted by Ozgur and Ozgur (2009) that indicated the significant role of technology in creating the sense of control and practice in learners; the study conducted by Andrade and Bunker (2009) which showed an increase in the degree of satisfaction of e-learners and the study performed by Al Rifai (2010) which showed the positive effect of e-learning on the motivation of the learners and their attitudes towards English language. Considering the negative relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation (Pintrich, 2000, 2003, 2004) and the positive role of e-learning in intrinsic goal orientation (in the present study), the higher extrinsic goal orientation among e-learners than conventional learners seems logical.

Because of not being any meaningful difference between the conventional group and e-learning one in behavioral, motivational, cognitive and meta cognitive self regulation, it seems that the students of e-learning system in Iran Language Institute are not familiar with self-regulated learning methods while according to the mentioned research results, this group needs to be self regulated to achieve success and progress in learning. As these students enter to e-learning system just by a placement test and the institute doesn't have any special program to make them familiar with the self regulated learning strategies, so they don't have any skill in self regulation in mentioned fields. It can influence their learning directly and so their final scores are lower than the conventional group. Teaching of these skills can help the learners to get familiar to the useful strategies and deeply change their attitude towards learning (Andrade and Bunker, 2009).

Given the importance of learning English (Dehbashi et al, 2011; Khazaee et al, 2011 and Shirvani, 2012), the role of information and communication technology (Doherty, 2006; Levy, 2007; Udo et al, 2011) and e-learning (Salehi and Safavi, 2009[28]; Lee, 2009[29]; Tanyeli, 2009) in the present world, especially in education and English learning, and also, the positive effects of e-learning on goal orientation, task value and control of learning beliefs (Shirvani, 2012), it seems that it is better to use technology in teaching English. However, because of the intervention of access to technology and ability to use it (Mohammadi et al, 2010; Rahimi and Yadollahi, 2011); the skills and abilities of the learners to use technology should be promoted prior to applying technology. It is also suggested that Iran Language Institute and other similar educational institutes that want to use e-learning system, should teach the e-learners the self regulated learning strategies before starting the courses while the supportive

teachers should be informed about their important role in improving students' positive attitude and their self regulated learning.

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