

# **EFL Kuwaiti Students' Attitudes Toward Modern Learning Technologies**

**BY**

**DR :Ahmad F. Alnwaiem**

Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Basic Education,  
The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Kuwait

**مجلة الدراسات التربوية والانسانية. كلية التربية. جامعة دمنهور  
المجلد الخامس عشر - العدد الثالث - لسنة 2023**



# **EFL Kuwaiti Students' Attitudes Toward Modern Learning Technologies**

Dr. Ahmad Alnwaiem,

College of Basic Education, The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training,

Email: a.alnwaiem@paaet.edu.kw

## **Abstracts**

As information and communication technology grow, language learners increasingly have the ability to improve their proficiency in a target language (ICTs). The purpose of this study is to investigate how 54 Kuwaiti EFL learners feel about using the most recent research and to see how much of that feeling may be attributed to their sense of autonomy and self-efficacy. A one-phased explanatory quantitative method research design was employed to address the suggested research objectives. The results show that most students were enthusiastic about using ICTs in EFL learning, even if they were rarely incorporated into the English curriculum. When compared to communication and networking technologies, students preferred information technology more. These results lead in a greater understanding of learners' ICT attitudes, as well as their relationships with self-efficacy and learner autonomy.

## **Keywords:**

Information and communication technologies, Kuwaiti EFL students, attitudes, learning technologies.

## **Introduction:**

The value of traditional English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes in Kuwait is questioned when seen from the perspectives of social learning and ecological theories. Instead of separating language learning from a social context, social learning theory emphasizes the crucial roles that social communication resources offer to learners while acquiring and developing language. EFL learning is restricted to a physical classroom environment, with little opportunity for social interaction.. Numerous scholars have pointed out, social interaction promotes language learning. In a similar vein, environmental perspectives place language learning under the control of various factors. Language learning, as explained by Arnfast, Jergensen, and Holmen (2010), encompasses not only individual abilities but also power dynamics, linguistic standards, and social interactions. Traditional EFL environments are limited by a lack of practical language inputs, which means that learners are likely to engage in very few social interactions in their target language, English. Fageeh (2011), suggested that these are the primary causes of learners' poor EFL proficiency. One example is that when speaking with others after class, students prefer to use their mother tongue when they interact. Several studies have reported the benefits of information and technology in learning English as a foreign language. Incorporating IT will increase genuine language inputs as well as the chance for learners to engage in EFL sociocultural contexts related to the target language. According to Singh (2010), integrating IT into EFL learning provides an opportunity to address many of the constraints of conventional EFL learning settings, resulting in improved English linguistic and functional skills among learners. Learners are expected to conduct extra instruction and independent activities outside of class in order to be successful; this is feasible due to the diverse forms of language resources (e.g., audio-visual news) offered by numerous technical advances, such as online media platforms, television, and CDs/DVDs (Bahrani, Tam, & Zuraidah, 2014). A social networking site such as Livemocha may enable students to participate in regular exchanges with English speakers in written and/or spoken form outside the framework of traditional learning (Lloyd, 2012). Additional technology resources, such as email, chatrooms, and videos streaming sites, provide several educational advantages to learners: enhancing interactive communication in, and exposure to, the speakers of the mother tongue, promoting students' enthusiasm and independence, generating chances for learners to engage in target socio-cultural environments, and promoting learners to interact in target socio-cultural environments (Singh, 2010). According to earlier studies, the utilizing of ICTs promotes learners' autonomy and enhances learners' self-efficacy in EFL learning (Singh & Embi, 2007). (Zheng et al., 2009). Self-efficacy and autonomy are essential variables in language learning that could clarify learners' limited proficiency in a target language (Cotterall, 1999). Researchers discovered that teachers expected IT to constantly work in school teachers did not, however, know

how to incorporate accessible technical resources successfully into the teaching practice of EFL (Nguyen, Warren, & Fehring, 2014). Small IT use in the curriculum was a factor in Learners' acceptance of ICT for EFL studying outside of school (Dang & Nguyen, 2014). The extent to which a person cooperates with technology predicts how much he or she is going to use it. In general, some of the factors that can affect someone's position in terms of technology acceptance can be: his/her perceived ease of use or perception of benefits (Davis et al. 1989). It seems, however, that the impact on perceptions of IT use for EFL learners' self-efficacy and independence has not been examined thoroughly.

### **Literature review**

Existing research on the use of IT in foreign language acquisition indicates that this technology offers students creative ways to advance their abilities, such as permitting consistency between formal and casual settings or broadening the context of the classroom (Lloyd, 2012, para. 41). IT aids in creating a more motivating learning environment that gives pupils a more authentic language experience. Due to the development of web 2.0 technologies, students now have access to genuine conversations between learners and native speakers (Godwin-Jones, 2006). Such opportunities to learn are also only possible while students are abroad (Stevenson & Liu, 2010). Many authors, such as Ho (2002), stressed the importance of using the target language authentically for the development of the language skills of the learners.

Perloff (2010) describes attitude as a informed, global assessment of an entity (person, place, or issue) that influences thinking and behaviour. Perloff author proposed that views are not natural, but rather acquired by social interaction and vary from person to person or group to person due to social and cultural influence. Furthermore, attitudes are known as assessments. Having an attitude indicates you have defined something and measured its net worth or importance, Perloff explained. It indicates you are no longer impartial about the matter (p. 44). Attitudes typically contain subjective reactions and emotions such as passions and hate, interests and dislikes, and that they direct individuals' behavior and guide them to act on their opinions. Various researchers have established what influences people's attitudes toward the adaption for technology. Davis, Bagozzi, and Warshaw (1989) propose two self-belief structures (perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness) as influences of attitude toward the adaption of technology in their Technology Acceptance Model. In his Theory of Planned Behavior, Ajzen (1991) proposed two factors: concrete social expectations and perceived behavioral regulation. Rogers popularized the Innovations theory (2003), in which he emphasizes the importance of technical advancement awareness, in addition to relative benefit, societal expectations, and predicted outcomes. Bhattacharjee and Sanford (2006) used the

Elaboration Likelihood Model to investigate attitudes toward using a technological development. Petty and Cacioppo proposed two structures as influential variables: perceived utility and source credibility.

Students in low-IT learning situations are more likely to see the use of IT in learning English favourably and make up the majority of respondents in recent surveys. In their investigative analysis of IT use by EFL university students in Vietnam, Dang and Nguyen (2014) discovered that a significant majority of students (82.6 percent) had positive attitudes toward IT use in EFL learning. Another example is Liu's (2009) study of the ICT attitudes of 140 Chinese college students who did not major in English. which revealed ta large number of respondents were completely mindful of and mostly optimistic about the influence of IT to learners' EFL development. Students' perceptions of ICT characteristics, such as relative advantage, compatibility, simplicity, and observability, had a significant impact on their attitudes (Liu, 2009).

Despite having spent at least seven years studying English in school, the majority of Kuwaiti students who graduated from college or university with minimal English proficiency Alkandari & Al-hazmi, 2016). This is proven by the fact that Kuwaiti graduates' oral communicative ability in disciplines other than English falls short of the labour market's expectations.

Many factors contribute to the lack of effectiveness of EFL teaching and, eventually, learning in Kuwaiti higher education. Alhazmi's study identifies four main variables that affect students' learning outcomes. The first consideration is the perceptions of learners regarding English. In this research, learners across all fields of study did not all have the same positive perceptions about English. Learners' perceptions about English can affect their motivation and actions in the acquisition of English . The second consideration is the lack of opportunities and incentive for students to learn speaking and communication skills. It was impractical for teachers to teach speaking and listening skills in a class of 50 to 55 students as well as a lack of instructional time. Besides that, students were prevented from concentrating on speaking skills due to a lack of tests. The third consideration is the school's lack of technological assistance, which resulted in a low-IT EFL learning environment. Any technical problems, according to teachers, were not resolved until the end of the academic year. Because of these difficulties, teachers will be unable to incorporate technologies into EFL classrooms. The fourth and final consideration is poor classroom content as a result of poor recruitment. There was a lack of accountability in the recruiting process, which resulted in the hiring of unqualified part-time teachers on the basis of family connections. Knowing linguistic characteristics such as grammar rules and vocabulary is not enough for language learning. A learner must acquire sociolinguistic comprehension of the target language, which effectively

addressing how to use the language in social and communicative environments (Ho, 2002). According to Nguyen et al. (2015), grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and listening skills are taught to Kuwaiti non-English major students. The curriculum, on the other hand, does not place a premium on evaluating students' communicative abilities. According to a review of the literature, sociolinguistic characteristics were not adequately addressed in EFL teaching and EFL curriculums in Kuwait. Learners' only language inputs that came from their instructors and textbooks, implying that they had no contact to the target language's social backgrounds (Ho, 2002). When interacting with native English speakers, Vietnamese learners of English prefer to act in ways that are consistent with their native cultures. As a result, possessing only linguistic skills does not guarantee that a student will be able to communicate effectively in English (Ho, 2002).

Relative benefit describes the extent to which a technology is used to help users improve the productivity, reliability, and cost-effectiveness of their existing activities (Rogers, 2003). The degree to which an advancement in technology is considered to be compatible with current values, prior knowledge, and desires of potential users is referred to as compatibility. Simplicity can be defined as the level that an advancement in technology is considered to be easy to comprehend and use. Lastly, observability refers to the extent that the outcomes of a technological advancement are apparent to others. Existing empirical research has also shed light on why students have such a negative attitude about using ICTs. Learners' attitudes are influenced by factors such as a lack of familiarity with ICTs in a classroom environment and gender differences. Actual use of IT in English classrooms remained inadequate, according to Liu's research (2009). As a result, students were not trained in school and were not encouraged to employ accessible ICTs for language learning both inside and outside of the classroom. According to Liu (2009) the gender of the student correlates with negative perceptions about the use of IT in Learning English (2015). Male non-English major college students were less excited about using IT than females and those majoring studying liberal arts disciplines; female students were more enthusiastic and comfortable in studying English. Liu's (2009) results were consistent with Warren's (2015) findings, but on a different study demographic and in differing educational background.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is also intended to provide a better understanding of Kuwaiti English major students' perceptions toward the use of IT in EFL learning. Several researchers have found that students' perceptions can accurately predict their potential adoption of technology. Before seeking to change behaviours, it is important to evaluate them. The method of incorporating IT into the curriculum or instruction is driven by a clear comprehension of the range of learners' attitudes regarding the use of technology.

Furthermore, keeping such attitudes into consideration may lead to greater progress in IT integration. Another aim of the study is to show how students' perceptions toward the use of technology in EFL learning can be explained by their self-efficacy and independence as language learners. Examining the relationship between learners' behaviours, self-efficacy, and independence improves our perception of attitude change in a low-IT EFL learning sense. EFL learners who think themselves efficient or autonomous have a favourable outlook on the use of technology.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Several academic studies have identified the benefits of IT to the production of EFL or a target language, according to a review of literature. In Kuwait, however, IT is rarely used to support teachers in teaching English to students majoring in English language courses (for example, teaching English). There has been little research on learners' attitudes toward the use of IT in EFL learning outside of conventional, low-IT educational environments, especially in the context of Kuwait. Any tentative connections between IT use and learner autonomy for language learners have also been found in previous research; nevertheless, whether there is a statistically significant correlation between the attitudes of learners and their perceived self-efficacy and independence as EFL students is uncertain. The goals of this study were to investigate the attitudes of 54 Kuwaiti non-English major students against the use of IT in EFL instruction, as well as to investigate the connection between students' IT attitudes and their self-efficacy and independence as language learners.

### **Research Objective**

The purpose of this research is to answer the following research Objective: To find out the attitudes of Kuwaiti non-English major students toward the use of IT in EFL learning.

### **Research Questions**

This study aims to answer the following research question:

1. What are the attitudes of Kuwaiti non-English major students toward the employment of IT in EFL learning?

### **Methodology**

This study included 54 Kuwaiti EFL students who completed the Quantitative Data survey. The ratio of men and women was almost equal, with most of the (85 percent) participants living in Kuwait. The majority of respondents range from 18 to 22 years of age, representing 79.4% of the study as a whole. The university students represented 98.5% in the total study, 60.1% of them enrolled in associate programs and 38.4% in bachelor's degree programs. Most participants reported that they had no trouble in their homes studying EFL using or accessing the internet; 80% stated that

they own a computer and 83% stated that they have internet at home. A overwhelming majority (approx. 90 percent) of participants characterized the feeling that they have in relation to their computer and the internet as "comfortable" or "extremely comfortable." In particular, 40,6% graded their abilities 'High to Most' and 49,6% on average. A limited portion (9,4%) shared that they had no computer or Internet expertise at their level of comfort at 'medium to very low' and less than 1% (four participants).

## **Results**

The results of this analysis are described in the following section. The first section provides a summary of comprehensive figures from a 53-respondent survey on their position with regard to the use of ICT in an EFL setting.

### **Section 1: Descriptive Statistics on ICT Attitudes**

The section begins with a summary of all findings, followed by observations about how participants use particular kinds of IT to learn EFL and how they use ICT to enhance their EFL skills.

#### **High Prevalence of Positive ICT Attitudes**

The participants' responses to 20 questions regarding their attitudes regarding the use of ICT in EFL learning are summarized in Table 11. The overwhelming majority (61.1% ) of participants had an optimistic outlook, compared to the percentage of participants who had neutral attitudes (29.1% ) and those who had a pessimistic attitude (9.8 percent ). The total mean score for the attitude was 3.69 (SD = 1.517) above the 5-point point midpoint of scale and 5 was the most agreeable of all respondents, 1 was the most disagreeable of all.

## Attitudes toward the Use of ICTs in EFL

Survey item #	1-2*	3**	4-5***	M (SD)
	(%)	(%)	(%)	
<b>Attitudes toward ICT Use in English Learning (Overall M=3.69, SD=.517)</b>				
<b>Part 1: Using ICTs for English Language Learning (M=3.63, SD=.562)</b>				
I think the following technologies could help me learning English better				
Computer .1	4.9	15.2	79.9	4.08 (.912)
Digital music .2	9.3	27.3	63.4	3.70 (.919)
Films on DVDs.3	11.2	29.4	59.4	3.64 (.975)
Online dictionaries .4	5.9	19.0	75.1	3.98 (.897)
TV/ Radio .5	9.5	31.5	59.0	3.61 (.899)
Videoconferencing e.g. Skype.6	13.6	45.7	40.7	3.34 (.887)
Voice over Internet Protocol, e.g Skype, Viber, Zalo.7	11.8	33.3	54.9	3.57 (.940)
Blogs.8	22.0	44.6	33.4	3.14 (.972)
Social networking sites, e.g. Facebook.9	14.7	27.7	57.6	3.59 (1.075)
<b>Sub-scores (%)</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>58.1</b>	
<b>Part 2: ICT- enhanced English Learning For or Against? (M=3.73,SD=.587)</b>				
I think that technologies could help me ....				
Speak English better. .10	10.6	27.0	62.4	3.67 (.954)
With reading in English. .11	6.8	22.6	70.6	3.84 (.858)
Improve my listening skills..12	4.7	18.8	76.5	3.99 (.841)
With writing in English..13	10.6	35.1	54.3	3.55 (.895)
Plan and organize my own studies better..14	12.3	38.9	48.8	3.46 (.921)
Take greater control of my own English learning. I feel .15	12.7	37.6	49.7	3.47 (.940)
.....				
ICTs give learners access to more to learn English..16	6.7	24.5	68.8	3.83 (.871)
Using ICTs can motivate me more to learn English..17	6.0	24.5	69.5	3.83 (.837)
Using ICTs to learn English can help me integrate better .18 into the world in which I live.	10.0	31.3	58.7	3.66 (.934)
ICTs can make English-language education more .19 accessible and less threatening.	6.2	27.1	66.7	3.78 (.846)
ICTs in English-language learning will increase in the .20 future.	5.1	21.1	73.8	3.98 (.873)
<b>Sub-scores (%)</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>63.5</b>	
<b>Overall percentage</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>61.1</b>	

\*disagree to strongly disagree; \*\*neutral; \*\*\*agree to strongly agree

### Differences in Attitudes Across ICT Categories

The first part of Table 1 presents the opinions of students on the value of nine distinct types of IT. The average result was 3.63 (SD:.562). With two exceptions—the usage of blogs and videoconferencing—the majority of participants had a positive attitude toward the use of various ICTs, according to 44.6 percent and 45.7 percent of

participants, respectively. Figure 1 depicts the diversity of participant perceptions about particular ICT applications used for English language instruction.

In contrast to telecommunication and social networks, information technologies received a higher amount of positive perceptions. Digital music scored third with 63.4%, and DVD video reached fourth with 59.4%. Their score for computer and internet dictionaries ranked at 79.9% and 75.1% respectively. Participants with a positive attitude toward telecommunications (items 5–7) surpassed those with a positive attitude toward social networks (items 8 and 9) by about 6%. This is due to a substantial disparity in the positive views of participants toward networking systems against the two modes of communication technology. The blogs in the networking technologies category got obtained the lowest average number of participants with a positive perception (33.4 percent), lowering the ranking of social networking sites (57.6 percent). In comparison to networking technologies, there was no statistically meaningful change in participants' positive attitudes toward telecommunication tools; and, although videoconferencing was towards the bottom of the chart, it was still around 6% higher than the blogs. The respondents who had a negative attitude about the use of IT in EFL learning made up the smallest category. According and the results, 33.4 percent (for blogs) to 79.9 percent (for websites).

This would not rule out the likelihood that between 20.1 and 66.6 percent of the participants have a completely opposite viewpoint. In fact, 15.2% (for computers) to 45% (for all research participants) of all research participants conveyed neutral viewpoints for videoconferencing. Participants who were unfavorable varied from 4.9% (for computers) to 22%. (for blogs). IT is viewed as a better way of EFL learning than communication and networking technologies in general.

## **Conclusion**

The results demonstrated that respondents' attitudes about ICT use in EFL learning have an impact on the associations between ICT attitudes and the aforementioned factors. We discovered clear and significant relationships between ICT attitudes and self-efficacy and between ICT attitudes and the adoption of English-language learning strategies. The connections between ICT views and socially oriented motivation and the significance of within-group relationships are causal and connected with gender and comfort levels with technology, in contrast to self-efficacy and the usage of English-language learning strategies.

## References

- Ajzen, I. (1985). From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behavior. In J. Kuhl & J. Beckman (Eds.), *Action-control: From cognition to behavior* (pp. 11-39).
- Heidelberg: Springer.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 50, 179-211.
- Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (1980). *Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Alkandari & Al-hazmi (2016). A comparative study of English and non-English major university students' motivation to learn English oral communication. 91-101.
- Arnfast, J. S., Jergensen, J. N., & Holmen, A. (2010). Second language learning. In Aukrust, V. G. (ed.). *Learning and cognition*. Elsevier Ltd
- Bahrani, T., Tam, S. S., & Zuraidah, M. D. (2014). Authentic language input through audiovisual technology and second language acquisition. *Sage Open*, 4(3), 1-8. DOI: 10.1177/2158244014550611
- Bhattacharjee, A., & Sanford, C. (2006). Influence processes for information technology acceptance: An elaboration likelihood model. *MIS Quarterly*, 30(4), 805-825.
- Cotterall, S. (1999). Key variables in language learning: What do learners believe about them? *System*, 27(4), 493-513.
- Dang, H. T. & Nguyen, N. H. T. (2014). An exploratory study of ICT use in English language learning among EFL university students. *Teaching English with Technology*, 14(4), 32-46.
- Davis, F. D., Bagozzi, R. P., & Warshaw, P. R. (1989). User acceptance of computer technology: A comparison of two theoretical models. *Management Science*, 35(8), 982-1003.
- Davis, F. D., Bagozzi, R. P., & Warshaw, P. R. (1989). User acceptance of computer technology: A comparison of two theoretical models. *Management Science*, 35(8), 982-1003.
- Fageeh, A. I. (2011). EFL learners' use of blogging for developing writing skills and enhancing attitudes toward English learning: An exploratory study. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 2(1), 31-48.

- Ho, T. M. H. (2002). Developing pragmatic competence in Vietnamese learners of English. *Teacher's Edition*, 4-11.
- Godwin-Jones, B. (2006). Emerging technologies: Tag clouds in the blogosphere: Electronic literacy and social networking. *Language Learning & Technology*, 10, 8-15. Retrieved from <http://llt.msu.edu/vol10num2/pdf/emerging.pdf>
- Godwin-Jones, B. (2011). Emerging technologies autonomous language learning. *Language Learning & Technology*, 15(3), 4-11.
- Liu, J. (2009). A survey of EFL learners' attitudes toward information and communication technologies. *English Language Teaching*, 2(4), 101-106.
- Lloyd, E. (2012). Language learners' willingness to communicate through Livemocha.com. *Social Media and language Learning Revolution*, 15(1), [Online] doi:10.4000/alsic.2437. Retrieved from <http://alsic.revues.org/2437>
- Davis, F. D., Bagozzi, R. P., & Warshaw, P. R. (1989). User acceptance of computer technology: A comparison of two theoretical models. *Management Science*, 35(8), 982-1003.
- Rogers, E. (2003). *The diffusion of innovations* (5th ed.). New York: Free Press.
- Singh, I. G. (2010). *The computer mediated communication to develop ESL learners' communicative competence*, 2(3), 72-85. Retrieved from <http://www.inflibnet.ac.in/ojs/index.php/JLCMS/article/view/128/125>
- Stevenson, M. P., & Liu, M. (2010). Learning a language with Web 2.0: Exploring the use of social networking features of foreign language learning websites. *CALICO Journal*, 27(2), 233-259
- Singh, R. K., & Embi, M. A. (2007). Learner autonomy through computer mediated communication (CMC). *Jurnal Teknologi*, 46(1), 99-112.
- Zheng, D., Young, M. F., Brewer, R. A., & Wagner, M. (2009). Attitude and self-efficacy change: English language learning in virtual worlds. *CALICO Journal*, 27(1), 205-231.

