

Identification of Language Learning Beliefs among Saudi EFL Learners

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Abstract

It is argued that positive yet realistic beliefs are source of success as language learners whereas negative or unrealistic beliefs can be an impediment to successful language learning. This empirical survey identifies Saudi English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' beliefs through Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) developed by Horwitz's (1987). The Arabic version of the questionnaire has been administered and 118 Saudi EFL learners from a Saudi university returned the questionnaire. The research questions set for this survey include what beliefs Saudi EFL learners have towards the difficulty of foreign language learning, foreign language aptitude, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies and motivation and expectations for English language learning. The results reveal that the participants bear high English language learning aptitude and believe that it is easier to learn it in childhood. No strong relationship in learning subjects like science and math and English language was reported. The participants also believe that for quick and successful language learning, it is imperative to practice the target language extensively. A positive trend is that Saudi EFL learners have been extremely positive and encouraging towards their chances of achieving communicative competence and do not have any unnecessary inhibition in speaking English.

Key Words: beliefs, effective ELT, language learning, EFL learners, perceptions, Saudi EFL learners

Cite as: Al-malki, E. A., & Javid, C. Z. (2018). Identification of Language Learning Beliefs among Saudi EFL Learners. *Arab World English Journal*, 9 (4), 186-199.

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no4.13>