



# Delphi Research Method to Enhance the Quality of General Education

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# Overview



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# Introduction

## Significance

- This study aims to identify the underlying reasons that impede or facilitate students' progress at learning in general and learning English in particular.
- This study is concerned with the factors perceived by the students as significant in influencing their learning and achievement.

# Introduction

## Research rationale

- The fact that most freshmen students have shown low levels of English language competency (as indicated below) has formed the launching pad for our research:
  - Inability to produce one complete and meaningful sentences
  - Vocabulary reservoir is limited to elementary and lower-intermediate grade levels
  - Sentence structures are mainly fragments and run-on sentences
  - Grammar knowledge is cursory and unfounded
  - Writing is rudimentary and unclear
- In addition to their limited English competency, it was noted that the students have shown insufficient progress in their majors



# Introduction

## Research questions

1. What are the factors that students enrolled in General Education courses view as catalysts and/or obstacles to their English learning?
2. How could those students contribute to the improvement of the quality of general education and program outcomes?



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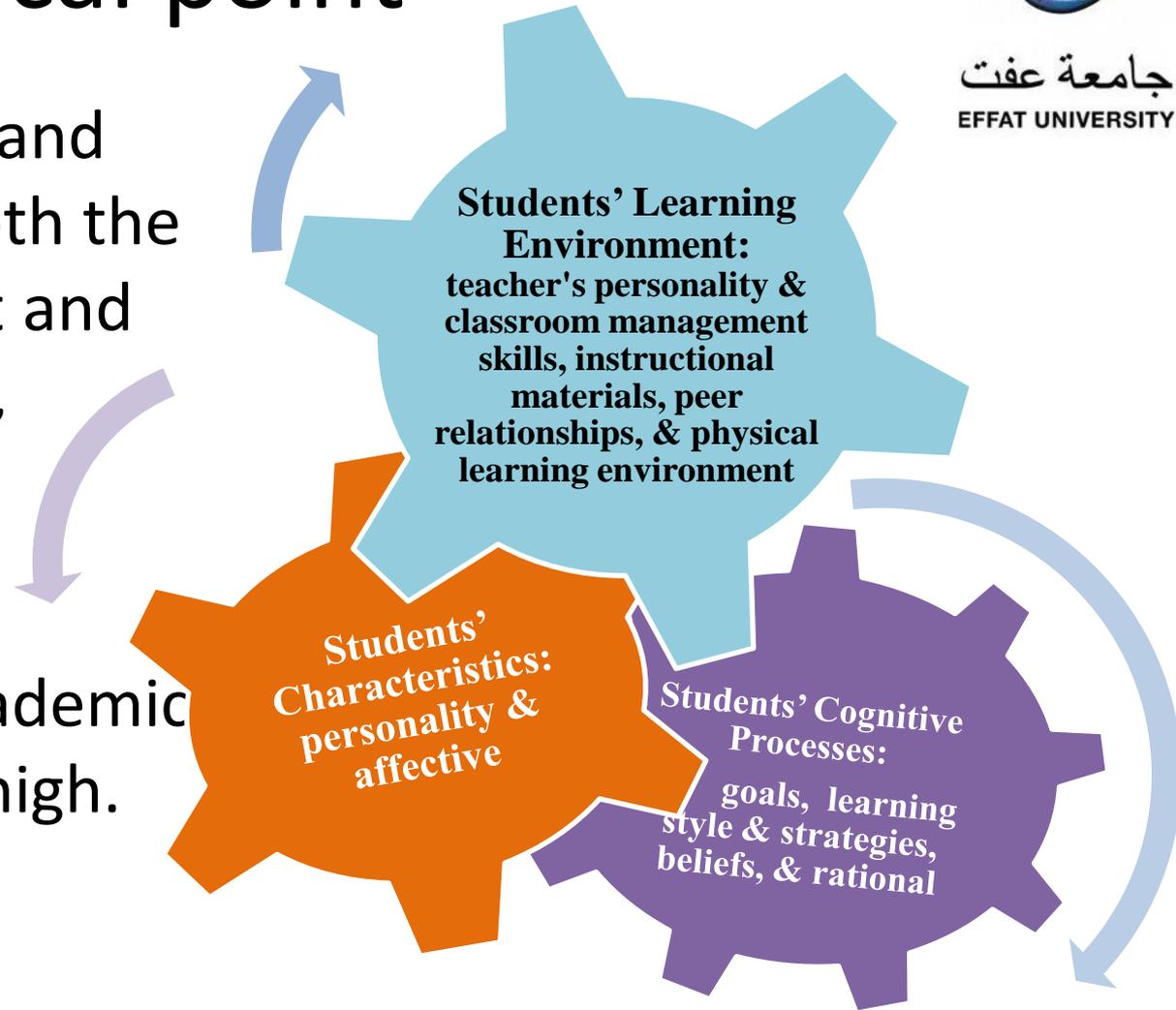
# Literature gap

- Research has identified an array of factors that directly and indirectly affect students' progress in language proficiency.
- Many studies have investigated the attitudes and perceptions of students in schools. But ....
- Relatively little research has investigated the impact of students' attitudes and perceptions about learning on students' academic achievement in higher education in Saudi Arabia.

# Literature focal point

If students' attitudes and perceptions about both the learning environment and activities are positive,

their learning and academic achievement will be high.



# Research methodology

- Preliminary questionnaire to 160 students identifying and ranking positive and negative factors influencing their academic achievement
- Secondary questionnaire to 30 student experts selected from the initial group
- Two groups of four student experts participated in semi-structured interviews

# Adapted Delphi method



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- A systematic method that involves structured interaction among a group of experts on a subject: the students.
- The Delphi method typically includes at least two rounds of experts answering questions and giving justification for their answers, providing the opportunity between rounds for changes and revisions.
- Multiple rounds or iterations are performed until the group of experts arrive at a consensus.

# Results



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- The study in its current findings depicts the following impediments:
  - lack of motivation,
  - self-confidence, and
  - practice
- The expert participants (students) believe that the learning environment, including their peers and teachers, among many other factors can considerably affect their learning
- This study is unique because it has given students an opportunity to voice their perceptions of the factors that would support their learning.



# Summary

- We initially assumed that students' low competency in English language has negatively influenced students' performance.
- Academic achievement is more than language acquisition.
- Two prominent factors that may impede or facilitate students' progress in learning are:
  1. Faculty members;
    - pedagogical behaviours and
    - classroom management skills
  2. Student peer relationships and attitudes



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Thanks!

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