

# The Strategic E-Learner: Variations of Learning Strategies and Needs in Self-Paced E-Learning

A. Wiklund-Engblom

Faculty of Education, Åbo Akademi University, Vaasa, Finland  
awiklund@abo.fi

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of my research is to find variations in how novice e-learners develop strategies for learning in a self-paced e-learning course in a large, international corporation. This study has been executed in accordance with two different methodological approaches, using data from the same test population. First of all, a quantitative analysis was done on questionnaire data, in order to find out how feedback as a factor affected learners' behaviour and learning outcome. Also, how learners themselves rated the course environment with regard to how different course features facilitated their learning.

The other methodological perspective deals with qualitative analysis of observations and interview data. In this part, three steps of analyses were done. The first step was to analyse screen recordings using a videographical approach. This approach is looking at video-based data from a phenomenographical perspective. The purpose was to find variations of behaviour in how learners managed the e-learning environment. The second step was to analyse interview data in order to find variations of how learners chose content and actions in their course work. A phenomenographical approach was used to find variations of strategies discussed in the interviews. Again the third step, uses a phenomenographical approach. This time the focus was on e-learners' use of cognitive learning strategies, but also to find factors that facilitate this cognitive learning process.

My concerns has to do with the triangulation of methods and the use of multiple methodologies for interpreting data. The data collected in my study, are both quantitative and qualitative, i.e., providing analyses with data on different levels scientifically speaking. For instance, one issue is, how to combine results from a phenomenographic analysis with that of quantitative data analyses, but also how to combine results from observations and from interviews while using a phenomenographic approach. I would like to hear from other researchers that have confronted this issue, and get advice on how to deal with it. I see that it can be problematic, but I also see it as an advantage in my analyses; the more data you have, the more holistic picture you get of the phenomenon, which in this case has to do with the complete learning profiles of the test persons subjected to study.