College EFL Students' Online English Learning Motivation in the Post-pandemic Era in China: Taking ARCS Motivation Model as the Analysis Standard

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Abstract
Securing the continuous progress of online English courses in the post-pandemic era presents a significant challenge for educators at the college level, particularly in terms of fostering and sustaining students' motivation for learning. Consequently, this research endeavors to explore the motivation of Chinese college students studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in the post-pandemic context through the utilization of the ARCS motivational questionnaire. The questionnaire, along with interviews conducted for research purposes, was administered to a sample of 262 sophomore students majoring in fields other than English. Data analysis revealed that, in the landscape of online English education during the post-pandemic era, educators generally demonstrate a commendable level of attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. Nonetheless, certain specific issues persist, as indicated by students' feedback and suggestions during the interviews. Given the continued prominence of online teaching in specific regions during the post-pandemic period, it is imperative for educational institutions and educators to collaborate in order to enhance the quality of online instruction.
Keywords: Online English Learning, The Post-Pandemic Era, China, ARCS Model

Introduction

In the year 2020, the global landscape witnessed profound ramifications due to the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. In response to this crisis, educational institutions in China swiftly adapted by adhering to the Ministry of Education's directive, commonly known as the "Schools Off, Classes On" policy, which necessitated the widespread implementation of online teaching models. By early May 2020, extensive data revealed that a staggering 1,454 colleges and universities across China had successfully integrated online teaching methodologies into their academic programs (Zhu & Liu, 2020). Notably, this educational transformation involved the active engagement of 1.03 million teachers who imparted instruction in 1.07 million courses, ultimately delivering a remarkable total of 12.26 million course sessions (Zhu & Liu, 2020).

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, English language instruction in higher education institutions has confronted unparalleled obstacles. Within the realm of online English teaching, numerous issues have emerged during the instructional process. For instance, students may encounter difficulties to their English language acquisition due to deficiencies in foundational linguistic skills, insufficient learning aptitude, and a dearth of intrinsic motivation to engage in English language learning endeavors (Sugarman & Lazarín, 2020). The outbreak of the pandemic has compelled numerous schools and educational institutions to swiftly transition to online learning. Many courses and instructional activities have been conducted through online platforms, including video conferencing tools, virtual classrooms, and learning management systems. This transformation has presented both novel challenges and opportunities for students, teachers, and educational institutions.

At the same time, due to the teaching characteristics of online education, such as separation of teachers and students, students are more likely to have lower learning motivation (Putra, 2021). The success of online learning hinges upon the technological infrastructure and digital proficiency of both students and teachers. In certain regions and households, there exist issues related to the digital divide, wherein students may lack access to stable internet connections or appropriate devices. This can result in unequal access to learning resources, thereby impacting students' learning experiences and academic outcomes (Su et al., 2021). Online learning provides a flexible learning environment, allowing students to study according to their own schedules. However, in comparison to traditional classrooms, online learning may lack face-to-face interaction and hands-on experiences (Huang, 2020). Students need to be self-driven and self-disciplined, while also adapting to virtual communication with teachers and peers. The Chinese government has always been closely following the trend of the pandemic and thoroughly implemented the normal state of pandemic prevention and control (Jin et al., 2021). In the post-pandemic era, online teaching has become an indispensable part of the education system. English teaching has undergone many fundamental changes due to the involvement of the Internet, which is prompting us to reflect on education.

Ensuring the sustained advancement of online English courses poses a formidable challenge for college educators, particularly with regards to cultivating and maintaining students' intrinsic drive for learning. Accordingly, the present study endeavors to assess the level of motivation exhibited by students presently engaged in online English language learning. To attain this objective, the ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction) model, an influential motivational framework formulated by Keller (Keller, 1987), serves as the principal theoretical construct guiding the investigation and subsequent

analysis. According to Keller (Keller, 1987), the ARCS model offers a comprehensive approach to instructional design that promotes learner attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. By applying the principles of the ARCS model, educators can enhance learners' motivation, engagement, and outcomes. By capturing learners' attention, increasing the relevance of the learning material, boosting learners' confidence, and fostering satisfaction, educators can stimulate learners' intrinsic motivation, promote their active involvement in learning activities, and facilitate better learning outcomes (John & Thomas, 2018).

Literature Review

In the aftermath of the pandemic, English online teaching in China has witnessed substantial expansion and advancement. An array of studies has concentrated on the utilization patterns of online teaching platforms, the perspectives held by teachers and students towards online teaching, and the consequential ramifications of online teaching on students' academic achievements (e.g., Zeng, 2020; Qadriani, 2022; Su, 2020; Li & Che, 2022). Scholarly findings substantiate the extensive adoption of online teaching platforms within the realm of English education in China. Educators and learners actively partake in online teaching endeavors through the utilization of video conferencing tools, virtual classrooms, and learning management systems (Chen & Li, 2021). Such platforms proffer learners augmented temporal and spatial flexibility, concurrently affording instructors amplified avenues for fostering engagement and interaction among students.

Numerous studies on online English learning have been carried out in the world in the context of online learning, also includes blended learning or flipped learning, which refers to a combination of traditional classroom learning and online learning (Mandasari & Wahyudin, 2021; Tayebinik & Puteh, 2013; Turan & Akdag-Cimen, 2020). Previous research has focused mainly on how online teaching can complement traditional classroom teaching and effectively enhance students' motivation for learning English (Jeong, 2019). However, there have been relatively few studies that have examined online English learning as a standalone, independent approach, and even fewer studies that have explored the factors that influence learning motivation in this context. Motivation is a critical factor in starting and sustaining second language learning, even though it is considered elusive and controversial. Second language students' motivation varies across different groups and learning contexts and can be influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

Keller introduced the ARCS motivation model in 1983, which comprises four components: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 1979; Keller, 1987). Attention is the fundamental factor that initiates and sustains motivation for learning and is essential for effective learning. Once students' attention is captured, they tend to exhibit greater interest when they perceive that the learning material is closely related to their learning goals, which further enhances the development of positive motivation for learning. As the third element of ARCS model, Keller (Keller, 1987) believes that confidence can affect students' achievements, and teachers must develop students' confidence if they want students to generate and maintain learning motivation. Last, if the consequences of the behavior are consistent with the students' expectations, and the consequences are positive, the students' motivation will be stimulated. The main result of satisfaction is continuous motivation (Keller, 1987). The ARCS model encompasses various strategies for improving motivation and designing effective instruction, which can be utilized with any instructional design model. The model draws from the overarching theory of motivation and performance,

and builds on the theory of expected value, which has been validated through numerous studies across various domains (Durrani & Kamal, 2021).

Keller (1999) proposed the use of the ABCS model in computer-based teaching and distance education, which established a precedent and served as a basis for utilizing this model in diverse fields thereafter. In an empirical study, the ARCS model was integrated with a flipped-classroom approach in instructional design models to assess its impact on students' achievements, motivation, and self-reliance. The study revealed that the flipped-classroom approach played a constructive role in augmenting students' motivation and self-reliance, thereby indicating the effectiveness of this approach (Durrani & Kamal, 2021). Furthermore, a study was conducted to create a Kinect-based somatosensory English learning system that combines Kinect technology as an interactive technique with theories of situated learning and the ARCS model. The findings showed that the proposed system was successful in enhancing students' motivation to learn and their learning outcomes (Chang et al., 2020). Arredondo and Riquelme (Arredondo & Riquelme, 2022) conducted a study to examine the correlation between motivation and meaningful learning among university students who utilized m-learning. The application of m-learning followed the ARCS model, and the study offers a reliable measurement model and substantial scientific references. The studies described above demonstrate significant efforts to integrate the ARCS model into various aspects of teaching, with the aim of enhancing students' motivation.

For the application of ARCS model in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), Hariyanto et al. (Hariyanto et al., 2019) analyzed the correlation between learning motivation and the English achievement of Midwifery students and showed that learning motivation closely relates to students' English achievement. Kurt (2017) conducted a study with a similar research objective but in a different context, which aimed to investigate the impact of the ARCS model on motivation among university prep class students. The results revealed that the integration of the ARCS model into language instruction had a favorable effect on students' motivation towards the course, across all categories. In addition, Li and Zhang (2020) conducted action research on the application of the ARCS model in an English reading class at an elementary school in China, while Jeon (2021) analyzed the use of motivational strategies based on the ARCS model. Both studies confirmed the advantageous role of the ARCS motivational model and presented explicit teaching plans based on this model.

As it can be seen from the above discussion, some scholars have conducted in-depth and comprehensive research on the ARCS motivation model. However, there is few related research on students' online English learning motivation in Chinese post-epidemic era.

In the current study, this motivation model is used to estimate after the long impact of the COVID-19 epidemic, what is the current motivation level of college EFL students in online English learning in China's post-epidemic era. Specifically, the study reported in this paper aims at answering the following two question:

(1) What is the current online English learning motivation level of college EFL students in the post-epidemic era in China?

(2) How do college EFL students experience online English learning in the post-epidemic era in China?

Methodology
Research Design

The sequential mixed methods were conducted in the present study, which refers to the research design that involves conducting qualitative and quantitative data collection and

analysis in a sequential order. Mixed-methods research can assist researchers in overcoming the limitations of qualitative and quantitative research individually by leveraging the strengths of both approaches to address complex research questions(Creswell & Tashakkori, 2007). In this study, the researcher employed a mixed-methods approach combining questionnaires and interviews to investigate the online English learning motivation among Chinese university students in the post-pandemic era. The aim was to conduct a comprehensive analysis and identify the difficulties faced by students in their online English learning endeavors.

Participants

The primary objective of this research is to assess the motivational state of Chinese college EFL students in relation to online English learning within the context of the post-epidemic era. The study participants were selected through random sampling from a single public university located in Jinan, Shandong Province, China. The total sample size of questionnaire consists of 262 individuals, all of whom are non-English majors. Among the total sample, there are 128 female and 134 male students, all falling within the age range of 18 to 20 years old. For the qualitative phase in this study, 10 students were randomly selected to attend the semi-structured interview, for the purpose of gauging their perceptions of online English learning.

Instruments for Data Collection

This study mainly obtained and analyzed data through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire utilized in this research was adapted from the Instructional Material Motivational Survey (IMMS) (shown in Appendix), which was developed by Keller (2010)for evaluating the level of students' motivation. The questionnaire is divided into four levels in terms of attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction and is designed to coherently test students' responses to instructional materials. Each question of this questionnaire has five response choices of 1 (not true), 2 (slightly true), 3 (moderately true), 4 (mostly true), and 5 (very true).

The reliability of the five-point scale was confirmed with a result of 0.96 (Fig. 1). To establish the validity of IMMS, two sets of instructional materials were created covering the concept of behavioral objectives, as proposed by Keller (Keller & Keller, 2010). The scores obtained from the experimental lesson were significantly higher than those obtained from the control lesson, indicating a satisfactory level of validity. The semi-structured interviews were designed according to research purposes and students' learning circumstances, which were carried out for 10 students respectively. The interviews are employed to gauge college EFL students' personal perceptions of online English learning. The entire interview process was conducted under the premise of the participants' approval and was recorded with the help of a voice recorder.

Scale	Reliability Estimate (Cronbach α)
Attention	.89
Relevance	.81
Confidence	.90
Satisfaction	.92
Total scale	.96

Fig. 1. The Reliability Result of IMMS (Keller, 2010)

Procedures of Data Collection

The administration of the questionnaire was conducted online using the Questionnaire Star website (https://www.wjx.cn) to ensure a contactless and convenient data collection process. The questionnaire comprised four distinct sections, designed to facilitate inferential statistical analysis based on the constituent elements of the ARCS model. As for the semi-structured interviews, they were carried out via face-to-face interactions within quiet and uninterrupted classroom settings. The entire interview process was meticulously recorded with the consent of the participants, facilitating subsequent data analysis.

Data Analysis

For this study, a total of 262 questionnaires were disseminated electronically to the targeted participants. Among them, 250 questionnaires were successfully retrieved, yielding a response rate of 95%. The collected questionnaire data were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using the IBM SPSS version 26.0 statistical package. In terms of the semi-structured interviews, all interview sessions were diligently recorded using a digital recording pen. The subsequent analysis of the interview data was conducted utilizing NVivo 12, a software tool known for its capacity to integrate with Microsoft Word. NVivo 12 facilitates an organized and exploratory analysis of complex data, enabling researchers to identify emergent patterns. Moreover, the software permits efficient data transfer between codes and offers mechanisms for saving data during the analytical process, thus rendering it advantageous for robust data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Results
Results of Questionnaire

To answer the first research question, the data were displayed through descriptive statistics, which is shown in the following figures

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
ATTEN1.	250	1	5	4.52	.949	.901
ATTEN2.	250	1	5	4.47	.995	.989
ATTEN3.	250	1	5	4.50	.995	.990
ATTEN4.	250	1	5	2.13	1.580	2.498
ATTEN5.	250	1	5	2.33	1.642	2.695
ATTEN6.	250	1	5	4.50	.958	.918
ATTEN7.	250	1	5	4.56	.905	.818
ATTEN8.	250	1	5	2.17	1.580	2.496
ATTEN9.	250	1	5	4.41	.995	.989
ATTEN10.	250	1	5	4.56	.882	.778
ATTEN11.	250	1	5	2.10	1.580	2.497
ATTEN12.	250	1	5	1.94	1.481	2.193
Valid N (listwise)	250					

Fig. 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Questionnaire (Attention)

Fig. 2 presents the data analysis for the attention element of the questionnaire, comprising a total of 12 questions. Among these questions, questions 4 (M=2.13, SD=1.580), 5 (M=2.33, SD=1.642), 8 (M=2.17, SD=1.580), 11 (M=2.10, SD=1.580), and 12 (M=1.94, SD=1.481) are reverse-scored items. For instance, question 4 addresses the perception that "This course is

so abstract that it is hard to keep my attention." Consequently, the mean values of these reverse-scored questions are relatively low. Most of the item data analysis falls within a normal range, indicating that teachers generally fulfill the fundamental requirements of the ARCS model in capturing students' attention during the post-pandemic era in China. Examining the standard deviation and variance, it becomes evident that, in comparison, the data for these reverse-scored propositions (Q4, 5, 8, 11, 12) exhibit a relatively large degree of dispersion. This indicates that a majority of students affirm the English teaching provided by the teachers in terms of attention.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
RELE1.	250	1	5	4.15	1.326	1.757
RELE2.	250	1	5	4.55	.927	.859
RELE3.	250	1	5	4.56	.931	.866
RELE4.	250	1	5	4.20	1.327	1.761
RELE5.	250	1	5	4.46	1.018	1.037
RELE6.	250	1	5	4.48	.979	.958
RELE7.	250	1	5	2.56	1.712	2.930
RELE8.	250	1	5	4.46	.974	.948
RELE9.	250	1	5	4.61	.853	.728
Valid N (listwise)	250					

Fig. 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Questionnaire (Relevance)

The second component of the ARCS model, which is relevance, is analyzed in Fig. 3. The Figure reveals that Q7, which pertains to the course's relevance to the students' needs, has a notable level of variation (M=2.56, SD=1.712). Although the majority of participants responded positively, a small number of students provided neutral responses, indicating uncertainty about the course's suitability to their needs, despite already having some knowledge of the subject matter.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
CONF1.	250	1	5	3.67	1.482	2.197
CONF2.	250	1	5	2.90	1.543	2.380
CONF3.	250	1	5	4.44	.981	.963
CONF4.	250	1	5	2.50	1.634	2.669
CONF5.	250	1	5	4.45	.969	.939
CONF6.	250	1	5	2.52	1.514	2.291
CONF7.	250	1	5	4.28	1.139	1.297
CONF8.	250	1	5	2.46	1.606	2.579
CONF9.	250	1	5	4.44	.972	.946
Valid N (listwise)	250					

Fig. 4. Descriptive Statistics of the Questionnaire (Confidence)

As shown in Fig. 4, in response to these reverse emotional propositions (Q2, 4, 6, 8), most students have a more positive attitude. They generally believe that in the English classroom in the post-pandemic era, they have the confidence to master the new teaching content and fully understand the new knowledge points related to the pandemic. However, some students still have anxiety or even fear of English. As an illustration, the average score for the initial

query (I had the impression that this course would be easy for me.) is around 4 points (M=3.67, SD=1.482), indicating that a portion of the students find English a challenging subject.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
SAT1.	250	1	5	4.53	.928	.860
SAT2.	250	1	5	4.52	.911	.829
SAT3.	250	1	5	4.49	.958	.918
SAT4.	250	1	5	4.56	.882	.778
SAT5.	250	1	5	4.61	.868	.753
SAT6.	250	1	5	4.61	.849	.721
Valid N (listwise)	250					

Fig. 5. Descriptive Statistics of the Questionnaire (Satisfaction)

Based on the findings presented in Fig. 5, it can be deduced that the students' responses to this particular segment of the study are largely positive. Evidently, the students hold a general belief that the English course imbues them with a sense of enjoyment. Furthermore, they express a desire to delve deeper into the subject matter, and they exhibit high levels of satisfaction with both their instructors and their own classroom performance. Furthermore, in alignment with the objective of this particular section, the students generally perceive the feedback provided by their teachers during the instructional process as effective (Q4, M=4.56, SD=0.882). Moreover, the completion of English courses instills a profound sense of accomplishment within the students (Q5, M=4.61, SD=0.868).

Results of Interview

The purpose of the interviews was to assess the experience of Chinese college EFL students regarding motivation for online English learning in the post-epidemic era. Specifically, attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction aspects were explored. Following the completion of the questionnaire survey, the researcher employed a random sampling technique to select a sample of 10 students from various academic disciplines for the interview process. The interview questions are provided in detail in Appendix B, and the subsequent section presents a summary of the interview content.

Attention

S1: *In English class, the teacher used the courseware to teach, and turned the boring knowledge into vivid pictures and animations, which attracted my attention. She taught me English knowledge through stories, which greatly improved my enthusiasm for learning. I think memorization of words and the explanation of grammar are boring and distracting, and the teacher does a good job in these two areas.*

S2: *I think the English class is quite interesting, but sometimes the content of the class is a bit difficult for me, but the teacher will use different methods to attract our attention, such as group competition or role-playing, etc., but occasionally the content is more difficult It still feels a little boring, and I can't maintain a high level of focus all the time.*

Relevance

S3: *English teachers are very good at linking the knowledge in textbooks with our life. In addition, most of our textbooks are closely related to our study life. During the online class, although we cannot interact with the teacher as freely as in the classroom, the teacher has expanded us a lot of knowledge about the pandemic.*

S4: *Most of the examples in English classes are related to life. I think it's easier to understand that way. At the same time, the stronger the correlation with the individual, the easier it is to remember. It would be better if the teacher could connect more words to reality, because I always have trouble remembering words, especially the more complicated ones.*

Confidence:

S5: *To be honest, I don't answer many questions in English class. The teacher's focus is on the active classmates. Especially in the online class environment, the teacher can't pay attention to what everyone is really doing, but the teacher also encourages us and strives to make us express our thoughts confidently.*

S6: *Yes, I feel that the teacher inspires my self-confidence in the classroom. Sometimes I answer the wrong question, but the teacher will encourage me to think more carefully. Although online classes cannot communicate face-to-face, we can feel that the teacher is fully mobilizing our enthusiasm, allowing us to answer questions more confidently.*

Satisfaction:

S7: *I am quite satisfied with my own English learning, but it seems that my grades are not always up to my ideal state, which may be caused by my inattentiveness in doing the questions. Teachers have provided us with teaching resources online to a large extent and guided our learning well, and the rest are related to our own efforts.*

S8: *Overall, I am satisfied with my English studying, but I still need more in-depth guidance from the teacher, because some complex knowledge points have not been fully learned. Although it is a college English course, it is not enough to pass the exam, and I still need to fully study the knowledge to enrich myself.*

Comments or suggestions

S9: *I hope that the English teacher will use more vivid and interesting examples in the teaching process, and not explain the grammar in a boring way, because online classes are easy to lose concentration.*

S10: *I hope that the teacher can add some extracurricular things, which can be closely integrated with real life. For example, about the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics just held in China, we also want to learn some English knowledge about this kind of national event.*

In summary, the findings suggest that Chinese college students generally express satisfaction with online English instruction in the post-pandemic era, although there exist certain areas of concern that warrant attention. It is important to acknowledge that the ten participants selected for the author's interviews were chosen randomly, resulting in variations in academic performance among them. Students with lower grades offer distinct suggestions regarding teacher behavior in the classroom, highlighting the need for English instructors to implement appropriate measures to address these concerns. For instance, Participant S2 reveals the difficulty they face in learning English, particularly when encountering challenging and monotonous content, which affects their ability to sustain attention for extended periods. Consequently, teachers should prioritize individual student engagement, particularly within the online classroom setting, and take measures to ensure the attention of each student, particularly those with limited self-control. Furthermore, during the interviews, Participant S9

expressed a desire for instructors to employ dynamic and engaging techniques that foster students' interest and motivation, thus enhancing their active participation in online English lessons.

The findings of this survey align with earlier research, reinforcing the notion that persistent challenges persist in relation to students' motivation for online English language learning (Susilawati & Supriyatno, 2020; Jarf, 2022; Rapanta et al., 2021). Despite the growing popularity and widespread adoption of online learning platforms, it is evident that certain obstacles continue to impede students' motivation in this domain. Several studies have illuminated the existence of factors such as limited social interaction, reduced self-discipline, technological difficulties, and a lack of personalized learning experiences, all of which hinder students' engagement and enthusiasm in the online English learning process. Consequently, further attention and concerted efforts are required to address these issues and cultivate a more conducive learning environment that fosters and sustains students' motivation for online English language learning (Geng et al., 2021; He, 2022).

Conclusions

Following the profound ramifications of the pandemic, educational institutions and educators have undergone a substantial transformation in their pedagogical approach, transitioning towards the pursuit of high-quality online courses during the protracted period of online teaching. The analytical examination of data signifies a generally favorable implementation of the ARCS model in contemporary online education. However, it is important to acknowledge the existence of unresolved issues that demand attention and resolution.

The principal pedagogical characteristic of distance learning lies in the separation between educators and students, as well as the consequential social isolation experienced by students. Network-mediated communication and interaction serve as essential conduits through which students engage with their instructors, distinguishing online learning from its traditional offline counterpart. The inherent informality and virtuality of online communication sets it apart. Notably, students exhibiting inadequate self-regulation and self-discipline encounter formidable challenges in sustaining prolonged focus on the learning process.

Regarding attention aspect, particularly among students with limited self-directed learning abilities and grappling with complex concepts, educators can leverage online resources and technology to captivate and sustain their focus. As elucidated by some participants in the interview, enhancing the relevance and engagement of classroom content can be achieved through the dissemination of pertinent English knowledge, concurrently broadening students' awareness of current events transpiring within their immediate surroundings. For building students' self-confidence, teachers need to pay special attention to the cultivation of poor students' self-confidence, and they can use the excellent students as an example to improve the learning enthusiasm of other students. Finally, in the online teaching environment, more attention should be paid to students' satisfaction with English courses and their own English learning, teachers' verbal feedback in the classroom, and the organization of teaching activities are particularly important for this.

Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of online learning motivation among Chinese college English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in the post-pandemic era. It sheds light on the challenges and opportunities associated with online English instruction and provides insights into students' perceptions and experiences. Furthermore, the present

study employs the ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction) model as a theoretical framework to assess students' motivation. By applying this influential motivational framework, the study enhances the understanding of the factors that influence students' motivation in the online learning environment. The findings of this study provide practical implications for English instructors and educational institutions. By understanding the specific issues identified by students, educators can adapt their teaching strategies and incorporate more engaging and relevant content to enhance students' motivation and learning outcomes.

Limitations & Implications for Future Studies

In conclusion, the present study contributes to understanding the online English learning motivation of Chinese college EFL students in the post-pandemic era. As online and blended learning approaches become increasingly prevalent in educational contexts worldwide, further research is warranted to investigate the English learning experiences of students from both the instructor and student perspectives. Moreover, given the unique characteristics of online learning, future research should also consider Chinese EFL students enrolled in private higher institutions to ensure the findings are representative of the broader EFL student population in China. Additionally, expanding the scope of investigation to include other regions globally would enhance the generalizability of findings. It is important to note that this study employed a questionnaire and interviews as data collection methods from Chinese college EFL students. To enhance the comprehensiveness, persuasiveness, and credibility of future research, establishing triangulation by incorporating multiple perspectives and data sources from various stakeholders, such as teachers, lecturers, policymakers, and administrators, is recommended. Furthermore, future research should adopt an empirical research to investigate the practical effect of ARCS motivation model and more diverse range of research methodologies to further enrich the scholarly discourse in this field.

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