

The Correlation between EFL Students' Perceptions and Their Practices in Speaking and Writing Skills: An Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods Study

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ABSTRACT

Students' beliefs about language learning are widely recognized as an important factor that may shape their language learning behaviour. However, classroom instruction and assessment often place greater emphasis on learning outcomes than on understanding how students' beliefs are reflected in their actual speaking and writing practices. Moreover, empirical evidence regarding the relationship between learners' perceptions and their language learning practices remains inconclusive. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate EFL students' perceptions and learning practices in speaking and writing skills, examine the relationship between these variables, and explore students' views on effective learning practices. An explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was employed involving 40 undergraduate students in an English Education Program. Quantitative data were collected using an adapted Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) questionnaire administered through Google Forms and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis. The qualitative phase consisted of semi-structured interviews, and the data were analyzed thematically to explain and enrich the quantitative findings. The results revealed that students generally held positive perceptions toward English learning and recognized the importance of regular speaking and writing practice. Nevertheless, Pearson correlation analysis indicated only a weak positive relationship between students' perceptions and learning practices ($r = .236$, $p = .143$), suggesting that positive beliefs were not significantly associated with their actual learning practices. Interview findings further demonstrated that students' learning practices were influenced by multiple factors, including learning opportunities, motivation, self-confidence, and access to authentic language use. These findings suggest that fostering positive beliefs alone is insufficient to encourage consistent language learning practices. English language instruction should therefore integrate motivational support with meaningful opportunities for authentic speaking and writing practice to promote more active learner engagement.

Keywords: *Learning Strategies, Exploratory, Speaking, Writing, English Language*

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INTRODUCTION

English plays a crucial role in both individual and social life. In an archipelagic country such as Indonesia, which is among the ten countries with the most islands in the world and is characterized by social, cultural, religious, and traditional diversity, English is increasingly present in everyday life. Its use is no longer limited to urban areas; English can be found in villages, border regions, and even remote areas. It appears in mobile phones, computer systems, and internet-based platforms commonly accessed by society. Consequently, English education becomes an essential gateway to accessing global knowledge, requiring learners to master the four core language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Learners demonstrate diverse preferences and tendencies in the language learning process. Fanselow, (1988) observed that some learners favour structured drill-based instruction, while others prefer more communicative and spontaneous learning. Additionally, some students expect immediate correction from teachers, whereas others feel anxious and

reluctant to speak due to fear of making mistakes. These variations indicate that language learning is deeply influenced by learners' internal perceptions and beliefs.

Many studies have examined learner beliefs using the BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory), but most have focused only on perceptions, not actual practice. Few studies have explored how these beliefs are reflected in learners' real classroom behavior and language learning strategies. Several studies focused on identifying students' beliefs and their relationship with language proficiency or achievement in different EFL contexts. For example, (Abdolahzadeh & Rajaei Nia, 2014) examined Iranian learners' beliefs and found that learners with higher English proficiency tended to hold more positive beliefs about language learning. Similarly, (Abdullah Al-malki & Zahid Javid, 2018) explored Saudi EFL learners' beliefs and reported that students generally demonstrated positive orientations toward English learning.

Other studies have investigated the relationship between beliefs and learning strategies. (Saeb & Zamani, 2013). reported that learners' beliefs influenced their use of language learning strategies, particularly among students studying in English institutes. More recent studies also suggest that learner beliefs are associated with motivation, self-confidence, and classroom engagement in EFL learning contexts (Arslan & Kafes, 2014; Aslan & Thompson, 2021; Hesmatantya, 2025).

Despite the growing body of research on learner beliefs, several gaps remain. First, most previous BALLI-based studies primarily examined learners' perceptions, beliefs, or attitudes without sufficiently investigating how these beliefs are reflected in actual learning practices, particularly in productive language skills such as speaking and writing. Many studies concentrated on general language achievement or proficiency rather than specific classroom practices and skill development (Abdolahzadeh & Rajaei Nia, 2014; Abdullah Al-malki & Zahid Javid, 2018).

Second, although speaking and writing are widely acknowledged as the most challenging productive skills for EFL learners, limited studies have simultaneously explored the relationship between learners' perceptions and their real practices in both skills within the same research framework. Existing studies often focus on either speaking or writing separately, while the integration between beliefs and practical behaviors remains underexplored (Heriansyah, 2012; Qomar, 2016; Richards et al., 2002).

Third, research examining the consistency between positive learner beliefs and actual language learning behavior has produced inconsistent findings. Some studies reported positive relationships between beliefs and learning achievement, while others found no significant correlation. This inconsistency indicates the need for further investigation, especially in Indonesian EFL contexts where English exposure is relatively limited outside the classroom (Hulin & Yulian, 2016; Iswati, 2019; Nonoy et al., 2025).

Difficulties in productive skills, particularly speaking and writing, are commonly reported. In writing (Qomar, 2016) identified problems related to limited vocabulary, incorrect tense usage, lack of understanding of narrative text structure, difficulty in developing ideas, and challenges in formulating appropriate titles. Furthermore, students often fail to produce well-organized texts because they skip essential stages of the writing process, such as planning and drafting. Writing is widely acknowledged as the most challenging skill for second language learners, as it requires complex cognitive processes, including idea generation, organization, and linguistic accuracy (Richards J. et al., 2002; Siburian, 2013).

Speaking skills present equally significant challenges. Heriansyah (2012) reported that limited vocabulary and fear of making errors are the most dominant factors hindering learners' speaking performance. Although learners attempt to overcome these obstacles through practice, their efforts often remain insufficient. Speaking, as an interactive process of meaning construction, requires not only linguistic competence but also confidence and strategic awareness (Tarigan, 1987).

Receptive skills also pose difficulties for English learners. Listening is frequently marginalized in English instruction, as universities tend to prioritize grammar, reading, and vocabulary (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Hamouda, 2013). Similarly, reading difficulties stem

from linguistic limitations, unfamiliar text genres, and insufficient background knowledge, resulting in low reading achievement (Nurjanah, 2018).

Within the Indonesian context, English is positioned as a foreign language, which limits its daily use to specific settings such as schools, government institutions, tourism sectors, and international workplaces. This condition affects learners' exposure and opportunities to practice English communicatively. As a result, English is often perceived merely as academic knowledge rather than a functional communication tool. Therefore, the learning context may play a significant role in shaping learners' beliefs about language learning.

According to Horwitz Horwitz, (1985), beliefs about language acquisition are the preconceived thoughts or concepts that language learners have regarding a range of topics pertaining to learning a second or foreign language. The Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) is one of the most widely used instruments for examining learners' beliefs about foreign language learning across different educational contexts.

Learners' beliefs about language learning have been widely recognized as an important factor influencing the language learning process in Second Language Acquisition research. According to Ana Maria Ferreira Barcelos (2003) argues that learners' beliefs influence their attitudes, strategies, and behaviors during the learning process. In addition, Wenden (1999) emphasizes that beliefs are closely related to learners' metacognitive knowledge and can affect the strategies they employ when learning a language. Furthermore, Paula Kalaja and Ana Maria Ferreira Barcelos (2003) highlight that learners' beliefs are shaped by their learning experiences, cultural background, and educational context. Therefore, understanding learners' beliefs is essential for teachers and researchers because these beliefs can significantly influence learners' motivation, learning strategies, and overall success in language learning.

Besides, perception plays a fundamental role in language learning. It represents how learners interpret their learning experiences and influences their motivation, strategy use, and learning outcomes (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Gibson's theory of direct perception and Marr's view of perception as problem-solving further emphasize the cognitive dimension of perception in learning processes. In the context of language learning, learners' beliefs about language difficulty, aptitude, learning strategies, and instructional methods significantly shape their engagement and achievement (Bagherzadeh & Azizi, 2012).

Despite this importance, English teachers often evaluate students primarily based on task performance and test scores, assuming that achievement reflects learners' perceptions. However, such measures do not adequately reveal how students perceive and practice language learning. To address this gap, Horwitz's Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) provides a systematic framework for examining learners' perceptions and beliefs. Previous studies using BALLI have shown that learners' beliefs influence motivation, confidence, and long-term success in language learning (Ariogul et al., 2009; Fazilatfar et al., 2015; Hulin & Yulian, 2016; Iswati, 2019).

In addition, previous BALLI-based studies have relied predominantly on questionnaire data, providing limited qualitative explanations for learners' responses. To address this limitation, the present study combines BALLI with semi-structured interviews within an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of students' beliefs and learning practices.

Although earlier studies have explored learners' beliefs and perceptions, most have not explicitly examined the relationship between perceptions and actual learning practices, particularly in speaking and writing skills. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students' perceptions and practices in speaking and writing skills within the English Education Program of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia, using the BALLI questionnaire and interviews to provide a more comprehensive understanding of learners' language learning experiences.

METHOD

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, in which quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data to explain and enrich the quantitative findings. According to (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), this design enables researchers to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem by integrating numerical trends with participants' experiences. In this study, quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire to investigate students' perceptions and learning practices in English speaking and writing skills. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted to explain the quantitative findings and provide deeper insights into students' responses.

The study was conducted at the English Education Program of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia, during the 2020/2021 academic year. The participants consisted of 40 undergraduate students enrolled in the second level of the English Education Program. Total sampling was employed because all students in the targeted cohort participated in the study. Among the participants, nine (22.5%) were male and thirty-one (77.5%) were female. Indonesian was the participants' primary language, while English functioned as a foreign language learned mainly through formal education.

The quantitative instrument was an adapted version of the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) developed by (Horwitz, 1985). The questionnaire consisted of two dimensions: students' perceptions and students' learning practices regarding English speaking and writing. Before administration, the questionnaire was reviewed by two experts in English language education to ensure its content validity. The questionnaire was then distributed online using Google Forms because data collection took place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To complement the quantitative findings, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants. The interviews aimed to explore the reasons behind students' responses and to explain how their beliefs were reflected in their actual speaking and writing practices. The interview protocol focused on language learning experiences, learning difficulties, and strategies used to improve productive language skills.

The quantitative phase was conducted first by administering the BALLI questionnaire to all participants. After the quantitative data had been analyzed, several participants were interviewed to obtain a deeper understanding of the statistical findings. This sequential procedure allowed the qualitative findings to explain and elaborate the quantitative results.

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize students' responses to each questionnaire item. Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis was employed to examine the relationship between students' perceptions and learning practices. The correlation analysis revealed a weak positive correlation ($r = .236$). Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level, and the analysis indicated that the correlation was not statistically significant ($t(38) = 1.49$, $p = .143$). Therefore, students' perceptions were not significantly associated with their actual learning practices.

The qualitative interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun & Clarke (2006) six-step procedure, including data familiarization, initial coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Finally, the qualitative findings were integrated with the quantitative results during the interpretation stage to provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' beliefs and learning practices.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discussions derived from the questionnaire and interview data. The analysis is organized according to the research questions. Each subsection addresses one research question, followed by an interpretative discussion supported by relevant literature.

Relationship between Students' Perceptions and Learning Practices

Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between students' perceptions and their learning practices in English speaking and writing. The analysis revealed a weak positive correlation between the two variables ($r = .236$). However, the relationship was not statistically significant ($t(38) = 1.49$, $p = .143$), indicating that students' positive perceptions toward English learning did not necessarily translate into consistent learning practices. Although many students expressed favourable beliefs regarding the importance of English learning, these beliefs were not consistently reflected in their actual speaking and writing activities.

Table 1. Pearson Correlation between Students' Perceptions and Learning Practices

Variables	r	t	p	Interpretation
Perceptions - Practices	.236	1.49	.143	Weak positive, not statistically significant

This finding suggests that learners' beliefs alone may not be sufficient to influence language learning behaviour. Other factors, such as learning opportunities, motivation, self-regulation, classroom environment, and language anxiety, may also contribute to the implementation of language learning practices. Therefore, positive perceptions should be accompanied by supportive learning environments and regular communicative practice to facilitate meaningful language development.

Students' Perceptions of Speaking

Students' perceptions toward speaking indicate that cultural understanding plays an important role in English communication. Most students believed that learning English-speaking cultures is necessary in order to speak English effectively. However, many students also tended to hesitate when speaking because they were afraid of making pronunciation mistakes and preferred not to speak unless they could pronounce words correctly. This finding suggests that learners' beliefs about accuracy may influence their confidence and willingness to communicate in English.

The interview data further revealed that students attempted to overcome speaking difficulties by applying communication strategies. One student stated, *"If I cannot say a word in English, I use gesture"* (Interview/S3). This response indicates that students actively employed non-verbal strategies to maintain communication despite their limited vocabulary or pronunciation difficulties. Such strategies are important in EFL communication contexts where learners often experience anxiety and linguistic limitations.

In addition, students believed that individuals who already speak a foreign language may find it easier to learn another language. This perception may positively influence students' motivation to learn English because they believe that mastering English could facilitate learning other foreign languages in the future. The questionnaire results also showed that 72% of the students considered English to be an important foreign language for Indonesian people. Similarly, 72% of the respondents agreed that the ability to speak more than one language is valuable. Furthermore, 92% of the students believed that everyone is capable of learning to speak a foreign language. These findings indicate that students generally possessed positive beliefs toward English speaking development and multilingual competence.

This finding is consistent with Barcelos, (2003), who argued that learner beliefs significantly influence students' attitudes and learning behaviors. Similarly, Horwitz (1985) emphasized that learners' beliefs about language learning may affect their confidence, motivation, and communication practices. Furthermore, (Lee & Chen Hsieh, 2019) found that self-confidence and lower speaking anxiety significantly contributed to learners' willingness to communicate in various EFL contexts, including classroom and digital communication settings. This suggests that students' confidence and perceptions toward English speaking may influence their readiness to engage in communicative practices. Although students

strongly believed that regular speaking practice improves fluency, many admitted that they rarely practiced English outside the classroom because of anxiety, limited opportunities, and lack of confidence

Students' Perceptions of Writing

Based on the questionnaire results, 55% of the students reported that they felt hesitant to guess unfamiliar English words during writing activities. This finding indicates that many students lacked confidence when dealing with limited vocabulary knowledge in English writing. Such hesitation may negatively affect students' writing fluency because learners tend to spend more time thinking about vocabulary accuracy rather than developing and organizing their ideas.

The interview data supported this finding. One student stated, *"When I can't think of a word during writing in English, I use a dictionary to look for the meaning"* (Interview/S2). This response suggests that students relied heavily on dictionaries as a strategy to overcome vocabulary limitations during the writing process. Although dictionaries may help learners improve lexical accuracy, excessive dependence on dictionaries may interrupt the natural writing flow and reduce writing spontaneity.

This finding is consistent with [Harahap et al., \(2015\)](#), who reported that EFL learners frequently experienced difficulties in selecting appropriate vocabulary during writing activities. Similarly, [Alqahtani \(2015\)](#) emphasized that vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in language production because limited vocabulary knowledge often prevents learners from expressing ideas effectively in writing. ([Richards et al., 2002](#)) also argued that writing is one of the most cognitively demanding language skills since learners must simultaneously manage idea generation, vocabulary selection, grammar, and organization.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that students' perceptions toward vocabulary knowledge significantly influenced their writing behavior and learning strategies. Students who lacked confidence in their vocabulary knowledge tended to avoid guessing unfamiliar words and preferred using external resources such as dictionaries. This tendency may also reflect writing anxiety, particularly when learners are afraid of making lexical or grammatical errors in their written production. According to [Cheng, \(2004\)](#), writing anxiety commonly occurs among EFL learners due to fear of negative evaluation and low linguistic confidence. Likewise, [Lee & Drajati \(2020\)](#) found that learners' self-confidence significantly influenced their willingness to communicate and express ideas in English, including in digital learning environments. Therefore, positive perceptions toward vocabulary learning and linguistic competence may contribute to more confident and effective writing practices among EFL learners.

Students' Learning Practices

The findings revealed that students strongly believed in the importance of continuous practice in English language learning. Most students believed that learning English for at least one hour per day could help learners achieve language proficiency within one to two years. This perception indicates that students recognized the importance of consistency and regular exposure in language learning practices.

The questionnaire results also showed that 86% of the students agreed that vocabulary mastery is one of the most important aspects of learning English. In addition, 99% of the respondents strongly agreed that repetition and continuous practice play significant roles in improving English proficiency. These findings suggest that students perceived language learning as a gradual process requiring repeated exposure and active engagement.

The interview data supported these findings. One student stated, *"Practice is so significant. Theory without practice is meaningless"* (Interview/S1). Another student explained, *"Practice is more important than theory because people who are good at theory are not necessarily fluent or successful in English. So there should be a balance between them. Theory first, and then practice"* (Interview/S5). These responses indicate that students valued experiential learning and

believed that practical communication activities were necessary to complement theoretical knowledge.

This finding is consistent with communicative language learning principles emphasizing meaningful interaction and repeated language use in developing language proficiency (J. Richards, 2006). Similarly, (I. S. P. Nation, 2013) argued that repeated exposure and vocabulary practice are essential components in second language acquisition because learners require frequent encounters with language forms to achieve fluency and retention.

Furthermore, students also emphasized the importance of grammar learning (77% agreed) and translation from their native language (72% agreed). This suggests that although students valued communicative practice, they still perceived grammatical accuracy and translation as important supports in language learning. In addition, 91% of the students strongly agreed that they would like to have native-speaker friends in order to practice English more actively.

The interview findings further demonstrated students' desire for authentic communication opportunities. One student stated, *"We need to have a native speaker friend because we can practice more"* (Interview/S3). This finding reflects students' awareness that direct interaction and communicative exposure are important for improving pronunciation, fluency, and self-confidence in speaking English.

However, 61% of the students also believed that allowing beginners to make too many errors might negatively affect their future speaking accuracy. This finding indicates that students still associated successful language learning with linguistic correctness. Such perceptions may influence learners' confidence and willingness to communicate, particularly in EFL contexts where fear of making mistakes is common.

Relationship between Perceptions and Practices

The findings revealed that students placed strong importance on pronunciation in English speaking practices. The questionnaire results showed that 88% of the students strongly agreed that speaking English with excellent pronunciation is important. This finding indicates that students were highly aware of pronunciation accuracy as an essential component of effective communication. In addition, 87% of the respondents strongly agreed that speaking practice with English speakers could help improve their speaking ability.

The interview data supported these findings. One student stated, *"English is not the theory on how to speak but we must also practice directly and make it a habit to exercise our speaking skills"* (Interview/S5). This response suggests that students perceived speaking ability not only as theoretical knowledge but also as a communicative skill that requires continuous practice and habituation. Students believed that direct speaking practice helped them recognize correct and incorrect language use more effectively.

Furthermore, several students attempted to improve their speaking skills through interaction with foreigners on social media platforms and through communication with native-speaking teachers. This finding indicates that students actively sought authentic communication opportunities beyond the classroom environment. Such practices may help learners increase their confidence, pronunciation awareness, and communicative competence in real-life interaction.

This finding is consistent with (J. C. Richards, 2006), who emphasized that communicative language learning requires meaningful interaction and authentic language use. Similarly, Lee & Drajati (2020) found that digital communication environments could positively support learners' willingness to communicate and speaking confidence in EFL contexts. The use of social media and online interaction may therefore provide alternative opportunities for students to practice English more actively.

Moreover, 67% of the students agreed that speaking a foreign language was easier than understanding it. This finding suggests that some students perceived productive communication as more manageable than receptive comprehension. Such perceptions may

influence students' motivation to engage more actively in speaking practices despite their limitations in listening comprehension.

The findings indicate that students viewed speaking practice, authentic interaction, and pronunciation improvement as important elements in developing English speaking skills. These perceptions may encourage learners to participate more actively in communicative activities both inside and outside the classroom.

Based on the questionnaire results, 86% of the students perceived that vocabulary learning was the most important aspect of foreign language learning. This finding indicates that students recognized vocabulary knowledge as a fundamental resource for expressing ideas in written communication. For EFL learners, limited vocabulary often becomes a major obstacle in writing because learners may struggle to select appropriate words, develop ideas, and convey meaning accurately.

The interview data further supported this finding. One student stated, *"Practice is just as important as vocabulary and grammar because although you understand many new words and language rules, if you do not practice them, sooner or later you will forget them. Practice will help you get used to it and make you more fluent in English"* (Interview/S8). This response suggests that students viewed writing development as a combination of linguistic knowledge and continuous practice. Possessing vocabulary and grammatical knowledge alone was perceived as insufficient unless learners actively applied them through repeated language use.

This finding is consistent with (Alqahtani, 2015), who emphasized that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency because it enables learners to communicate ideas effectively. Similarly, (P. Nation & Hunston, 2013) argued that vocabulary knowledge contributes significantly to language production, particularly in productive skills such as writing and speaking. Without adequate vocabulary resources, learners may experience difficulties in expressing complex thoughts and organizing written discourse.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of practice in strengthening language retention and writing fluency. Repeated use of vocabulary and grammatical structures allows learners to internalize linguistic knowledge and apply it more automatically during writing tasks. This supports the cognitive perspective of language learning, which suggests that frequent practice facilitates the transition of language knowledge from conscious learning to more automatic language use (DeKeyser, 2007).

From a writing development perspective, the findings also support the view of Richards et al., (2002), who argued that writing is a complex process involving idea generation, organization, vocabulary selection, and grammatical accuracy. Therefore, students' emphasis on vocabulary learning and continuous practice reflects their awareness that successful writing requires not only linguistic knowledge but also sustained opportunities to apply that knowledge in meaningful contexts.

Overall, the findings suggest that students perceived vocabulary mastery and continuous practice as complementary elements in developing writing proficiency. While vocabulary provides the linguistic resources necessary for written expression, regular practice enables learners to consolidate and utilize those resources more effectively in authentic writing situations.

Students' Perceived Best Practices

The fourth research question sought to identify students perceived best practices for improving English speaking and writing skills. The findings revealed four major themes, namely consistent learning habits, strategic language learning, authentic communication, and sustained learning motivation. Rather than relying on a single learning technique, students viewed English learning as a continuous process that requires regular practice, vocabulary development, interaction with proficient speakers, and strong personal commitment.

First, students emphasized the importance of practicing English regularly, suggesting that learning English for at least one hour each day could gradually improve their language proficiency. This finding reflects learners' ability to regulate their own learning behaviour by

setting learning routines and monitoring their progress. According to [Zimmerman \(2002\)](#), self-regulated learners actively plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning process, enabling them to become more independent and successful language learners. Therefore, students' recommendation to practice English daily demonstrates an awareness that language mastery depends largely on continuous self-directed learning rather than classroom instruction alone.

Second, students highlighted vocabulary, grammar, and translation as important linguistic resources supporting both speaking and writing performance. These findings indicate that learners consciously employed cognitive learning strategies to strengthen their language competence. This finding supports Oxford's **Strategic Self-Regulation (S²R) Model**, which emphasizes that effective language learning depends not only on the use of cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies but also on learners' ability to regulate their motivation, emotions, and learning behaviors according to different learning contexts ([Oxford, 2017](#)).

Another important finding concerns authentic communication. Students recommended interacting with native speakers and making English a habitual means of communication whenever possible. Such interaction provides opportunities to negotiate meaning, receive immediate feedback, and develop communicative competence. This finding supports Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis, which argues that language acquisition develops through meaningful interaction during which learners modify and clarify messages to achieve mutual understanding. Recent studies have continued to confirm this perspective. For instance, ([Lee & Drajati, 2020](#)) demonstrated that Indonesian EFL learners who engaged in frequent communicative practice showed significantly higher willingness to communicate, while [Sato & Ballinger \(2016\)](#) found that collaborative speaking tasks enhanced learners' oral proficiency and interactional competence.

Finally, students believed that maintaining motivation and establishing long-term learning goals were essential for successful English learning. Several respondents associated English proficiency with future career opportunities and regarded English as an important investment for their personal development. This finding is consistent with ([Yun et al., 2018](#)) who demonstrated through a meta-analysis of the *L2 Motivational Self System* that learners who possess a clear vision of their future L2 selves tend to exhibit stronger motivation, greater persistence, and higher levels of engagement in language learning. Therefore, students' future-oriented goals may play a significant role in sustaining their motivation to improve English speaking and writing skills despite learning challenges.

Overall, the findings indicate a clear belief–practice gap: students recognized the importance of speaking and writing practice, yet contextual and psychological constraints limited the implementation of these beliefs in their everyday learning.

CONCLUSIONS

The study reveals that although students hold positive beliefs about the importance of practice in speaking and writing, these beliefs are not consistently reflected in their actual learning practices. Pearson correlation analysis showed no significant relationship between students' perceptions and practices, suggesting that positive beliefs alone do not necessarily lead to consistent learning behaviours. Interview findings indicate that limited opportunities for authentic communication, language anxiety, and lack of self-confidence may contribute to this inconsistency. Despite this gap, both perceptions and practices can raise learners' awareness of their learning processes and support more reflective language learning. The study also suggests that integrating learning strategies, exploratory activities, and productive skills may enhance English learning among undergraduate students. However, the study is limited by its small sample of 40 students from one university and its reliance on self-reported data. Future research should involve larger, diverse samples and use classroom observations, learning analytics, or longitudinal designs to provide deeper insights.

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