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Relationship Between Changes in Language Learning Beliefs and Changes in English Proficiency*

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This study investigated the relationship between changes in language learning beliefs and English proficiency among 41 Korean university students who participated in a short-term English program. Participants' beliefs were assessed using the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), and their proficiency was measured using the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). Frequency analysis, descriptive statistics, paired-sample *t*-tests, and correlation analysis were employed to analyze the data. The study found significant improvements in both listening and reading scores, and changes in beliefs varied with proficiency gains. Students with higher proficiency gains demonstrated improved confidence and self-efficacy, and decreased instrumental motivation, whereas those with lower gains exhibited minimal changes in beliefs. Correlation analysis revealed that belief shifts, such as reduced self-consciousness and increased integrative motivation, were positively related to proficiency gains. These findings suggest the dynamic nature of learners' beliefs and their potential impact on language learning outcomes, highlighting the importance of addressing belief systems in English language education.

Key words: language learning beliefs, BALLI, English proficiency, short-term program

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1. INTRODUCTION

Learners' beliefs about language learning are crucial for shaping their preferred strategies and outcomes. Defined as learners' subjective and holistic perceptions of various aspects of language acquisition (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Horwitz, 1988), language learning beliefs are recognized as a considerable individual difference factor alongside linguistic aptitude, learning strategies, and motivation in second language acquisition research (Dörnyei, 2005; Ellis, 2004). Foreign language learners develop unique beliefs influenced by their target language, personal characteristics, and learning environment (Kim, 2003). These beliefs in turn shape learners' behaviors and outcomes in language learning. For instance, if a learner believes that innate talent is crucial for mastering a foreign language but believes that they lack this talent, their motivation may decline, leading to passive engagement and lower outcomes. Conversely, learners who believe that effort can lead to high language proficiency may engage more actively in their learning, seek effective strategies, and achieve better results even when facing challenges. Studies have shown that highly proficient learners often believe that anyone can learn a foreign language. They also value practicing with native speakers, have strong integrative motivation, and maintain positive perceptions of their ultimate proficiency and self-efficacy (Chin, 2015; Cho, 2016; Huang & Tsai, 2003; Kim, 2011; Mori, 1999; Yoon & Maeng, 2024).

While earlier research considered language learning beliefs to be stable mental constructs from a metacognitive perspective, recent studies (Amuzie & Winke, 2009; Peng, 2011; Tanaka & Ellis, 2003; Yang & Kim, 2011; Yoon & Maeng, 2022) have shown that these beliefs can change over time, influenced by environmental factors and learning experiences. Considering the impact of beliefs on learning and their potential to evolve, positive changes in beliefs may lead to improved learning outcomes. Understanding the relationship between changes in beliefs and proficiency can be valuable in designing effective educational programs and guiding learners. However, there has been limited research on how these beliefs change among English learners. Additionally, most studies have focused on static correlations rather than exploring the dynamic relationship between changes in beliefs and proficiency over time. Thus, this study aims to address this gap by analyzing both changes in English proficiency and language learning beliefs among Korean university students participating in a short-term English program, and examines how shifts in these beliefs relate to improvements in proficiency. This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1) What changes in English proficiency occur among participants in the short-term English program?
2) How do learners' beliefs about language learning change and how do these changes vary between groups with higher and lower improvements in English proficiency?

3) What is the relationship between changes in language learning beliefs and changes in English proficiency?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Language Learning Beliefs and Their Relationship with Proficiency

Language learning beliefs are crucial for understanding individual differences in second language acquisition (Horwitz, 1988; Mantle-Bromley, 1995). These beliefs shape behaviors, strategies, and engagement levels, ultimately influencing proficiency outcomes. Research has shown that learners who hold certain beliefs about language learning are often more likely to achieve higher proficiency. For instance, high-proficiency learners tend to believe in the accessibility of language learning for all and emphasize communicative practice, while lower-proficiency learners prioritize grammar and translation (Chin, 2015; Huang & Tsai, 2003). Such findings indicate that learners who hold beliefs that support active engagement and confidence tend to experience greater success in language acquisition.

Research has further explored specific beliefs and their impact on proficiency. For example, Kim (2011) identified self-efficacy as a belief with a significant effect on English achievement among Korean EFL learners. Later, Kim (2012) reported that both self-efficacy and the belief in the importance of grammar positively correlated with proficiency. Cho (2016) found that integrative motivation was a key factor in academic achievement among Korean e-learning students. Mori (1999) observed that EFL learners studying Japanese in the US who viewed language learning as a manageable process achieved higher proficiency, whereas those who believed in their innate talent and preferred straightforward solutions had lower achievements. Yoon and Maeng (2024) analyzed beliefs and English proficiency among Korean students participating in short-term EFL and ESL programs. The analysis revealed that while the high-proficiency group showed increased confidence and willingness to communicate in English, as well as strengthened beliefs in their ability to succeed in English, the low-proficiency group showed only modest improvements in these areas. Additionally, in a study conducted in the ESL context, Li and Zhang (2022) examined Chinese students in the UK, finding moderate correlations between beliefs about analytic learning and IELTS scores. The study also noted increased learner autonomy and self-confidence during the study abroad period, underscoring how shifts in beliefs can influence learning behaviors and outcomes. However, not all studies have found an explicit relationship between beliefs and proficiency. Tanaka and Ellis (2003), for example, reported no correlation between changes in beliefs and TOEFL score changes among Japanese ESL students over a 15-week study period, suggesting that belief impacts may require a longer

period to manifest in proficiency gains. Ellis (2008) further proposed that beliefs indirectly influence proficiency by guiding strategy choices rather than directly affecting outcomes.

The nature of language learning beliefs can be understood from various perspectives. From a sociopsychological perspective, beliefs are seen as subjective judgments that influence behaviors and learning outcomes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In cognitive theory, beliefs are understood as metacognitive knowledge that reflects learners' awareness of their abilities, task characteristics, and strategies (Flavell, 1979, 1987; Wenden, 1998, 1999). Horwitz (1988) further describes language learning beliefs as preconceived notions about language learning that influence learners' confidence, motivation, and anxiety, which in turn affect their commitment and strategy use (Barcelos, 2015; Horwitz, 1985, 1988, 1999).

Several factors influence the formation and development of these beliefs. Language-related factors, such as the perceived universality and complexity of the target language, shape learners' beliefs. For example, learners of widely used languages like English tend to show higher confidence and willingness to communicate (Lee & Kim, 2014; Kuntz, 1996). Learner-specific factors, such as age, proficiency level, and individual characteristics, also impact belief formation. University students, for instance, may prioritize cultural understanding, whereas younger learners focus on vocabulary and grammar (Kim, 2007). English majors often demonstrate stronger beliefs in their language abilities than non-majors (Lee, 2015), and gender differences emerge, with male students emphasizing pronunciation and grammar (Siebert, 2003). Environmental factors, such as sociocultural contexts, further shapes beliefs. Bilingual individuals often develop greater confidence and self-efficacy due to early exposure to multiple languages (Hong, 2006). Cross-cultural research suggests that students in similar educational environments share common belief patterns, highlighting the influence of context on language learning beliefs (Fujiwara, 2011).

In summary, language learning beliefs are multifaceted and dynamic, with significant implications for proficiency by guiding learners' approaches, strategies, and motivational levels. The interplay between beliefs and proficiency suggests that fostering adaptive beliefs can lead to improved language outcomes and that these beliefs should be a critical focus in language education and instructional design.

2.2. Changes in Language Learning Beliefs

Given the relationship between language learning beliefs and L2 proficiency, cultivating positive beliefs may enhance learning outcomes. Recent research has acknowledged their dynamic nature, subject to change based on environmental factors and learning experiences (Amuzie & Winke, 2009; Ellis, 2008). Amuzie and Winke (2009) investigated how studying abroad influences foreign students' language learning beliefs, noting shifts in autonomy and self-efficacy. Students increasingly recognized that personal effort was more important for

success than the environment alone. Additionally, those who stayed abroad longer exhibited more significant changes in their beliefs, highlighting the influence of context and duration in shaping beliefs. Similarly, Tanaka and Ellis (2003) found that Japanese students learning English experienced significant changes in beliefs related to analytical learning, experiential learning, and self-efficacy during a 15-week overseas program, with the most substantial shifts occurring in self-efficacy and confidence.

Peng (2011) provided qualitative insights into Chinese students, whose beliefs regarding English communication classes fluctuated based on factors such as the type of class activity, level of peer and teacher support, and the teaching methods. Yang and Kim (2011) explored the sociocultural aspects of changes in beliefs among Korean students studying in the US and the Philippines and found that interaction with locals and adaptation to the local environment considerably influenced changes in beliefs and learning behaviors. Active engagement with locals reinforced their belief in the efficacy of studying abroad, whereas a lack of integration led to weakened beliefs and less favorable experiences. These findings suggest that effective integration of learning environments and belief systems is crucial for improving language skills abroad. Yoon and Maeng (2022) observed that even short-term English program could alter the beliefs of working students. They found that students with significant proficiency improvements experienced positive changes in learning outcomes and confidence. By contrast, those with minimal gains experienced stagnation in confidence and an increase in negative beliefs. Additionally, learning impediments, such as challenges in attending due to work commitment and difficulties in understanding lessons due to limited study time, significantly influenced belief changes.

In summary, research indicates that language learning beliefs are dynamic and can be reshaped through meaningful experiences and contextual interactions, which are critical in facilitating positive learning outcomes.

2.3. Efficacy of Short-Term English Programs

Research on short-term English programs in the EFL context has reported various outcomes in terms of English proficiency gains and individual difference factors, such as learning strategies, motivation, beliefs, self-efficacy, and anxiety. Studies have suggested that even brief domestic programs can contribute to measurable improvements in English proficiency. For example, Kim and Kim (2017) observed an average TOEIC score increase of 89.81 points among intermediate students in a four-week program, with particularly notable gains in grammar. Similarly, Lee (2011) found that a four-week English camp yielded an average TOEIC score improvement of 89 points, with additional survey results indicating that students gained confidence and overcame anxiety toward English through the program.

Studies examining individual difference factors have shown that strategy use, motivation, and self-efficacy are closely linked to changes in English proficiency. For example, Shin (2013a) reported significant differences in strategy use—including memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, and affective strategies—between groups with higher and lower score gains, attributing the lower use of social strategies to the TOEIC-focused nature of their learning tasks. Kil (2017), in an analysis of TOEIC score gains with respect to self-efficacy, motivation, and anxiety among students in a seven-week intensive program, found that students with higher improvement reported greater self-efficacy and more frequent use of self-directed learning strategies, though anxiety negatively impacted learning outcomes across both high- and low-improvement groups. Furthermore, Lee and Ju (2020) confirmed that students in an intensive TOEIC program with higher motivation and expectations exhibited greater use of learning strategies, underscoring the role of motivation and self-efficacy in fostering effective language learning. Additionally, Rha (2011) found that intrinsic motivation to communicate with people from other cultures was positively correlated with English proficiency, whereas instrumental motivation (e.g., for employment or grades) was negatively correlated. In contrast, Shin (2013b) observed that both high- and low-performing students exhibited stronger extrinsic motivation than intrinsic motivation (e.g., personal interest or a sense of achievement), while Park (2017) similarly identified reward-driven motivation and concentration as key factors contributing to TOEIC score improvements.

In summary, these studies suggest that short-term programs can effectively enhance English proficiency and confidence, while also demonstrating that learning strategies, motivation, and beliefs are interrelated factors influencing proficiency gains. Despite the insights these studies provide, most have focused on factors like strategies or motivation, with limited attention given to language learning beliefs and their links to proficiency. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the relationship between changes in beliefs and proficiency, thereby offering insights to support more effective learner guidance and curriculum design.

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants

This study involved 41 undergraduate Business Administration students from University A in Gyeonggi Province, Korea, who participated in a short-term English program during the winter break. The average age was 21.8 years, with a nearly equal gender distribution: 19 males (46.3%) and 22 females (53.7%). Participants had a grade point average (GPA) of

3.36, with eligibility for the program requiring a minimum GPA of 2.0. English study habits were generally minimal: 28 students (68.3%) studied for less than five hours per week, 12 (29.3%) did not study English at all, and one (2.4%) studied for more than five hours per week. Regarding overseas experience, 20 students (48.8%) had spent less than 1 month abroad, 10 students (24.4%) had 1 to 6 months of experience, 7 students (17.1%) had more than 6 months, and 4 students (9.8%) had no overseas experience.

3.2. Short-Term English Program

The short-term English program in this study comprised three weeks of English instruction and four days of overseas cultural exploration. English classes were held at University A during the winter break, with cultural exploration occurring immediately after three weeks of study. Students traveled either to Singapore or Hong Kong for four days. Although the overseas program was short, it was designed to encourage student engagement and provide a real-world context for using English. The entire program, including the cultural exploration, was funded by University A.

Daily classes were held from 9 AM to 1 PM, totaling four hours per day, five days a week, for three weeks, amounting to 60 hours of instruction. Students were divided into two classes based on the results of a mock TOEIC done before the program: a beginner class (below 600 points) with 21 students and an intermediate class (600 points and above) with 20 students. Each class was allocated four hours per day, with two hours dedicated to listening practice and two to reading practice. The classes were taught by two TOEIC instructors who had previously received high satisfaction ratings from students at University A. One instructor was responsible for listening practice, whereas the other focused on reading. The curriculum emphasized TOEIC vocabulary and commonly tested expressions, along with practicing with past exam questions and various types of questions. The listening sessions incorporated shadowing exercises to enhance listening skills, whereas the reading sessions integrated grammar instruction. Both beginner and intermediate classes used popular TOEIC textbooks published by domestic publishers. Students commuted individually and were assigned one to two hours of problem-solving homework daily. Course evaluation was conducted using a mock TOEIC test after the program was completed.

All 41 students participated in overseas cultural exploration, with 20 students visiting Hong Kong and 21 Singapore. The itinerary primarily included visits to popular tourist attractions with a guide. However, one day was allocated as a free day, allowing students to plan their own activities in groups.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

This study used three instruments: a learner background survey, a paper-based TOEIC test, and the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) designed by Horwitz (1988) (see Appendix for the BALLI questionnaire). A learner background survey was administered before the program to collect participants' demographic information. The TOEIC test was administered before and after the program to measure English proficiency. The pre- and post-tests both used mock TOEIC test sets that mirrored the actual TOEIC test in format and duration, consisting of 200 questions (100 listening and 100 reading) in 120 minutes. The BALLI was administered before and after the program to assess language learning beliefs. The BALLI was rated on a 5-point Likert scale and composed 34 items in five areas: difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivations and expectations. Cronbach's alpha for the BALLI was .75 in this study, similar to or slightly higher than previous findings ranging from .61 to .75 (Jung & Kim, 2017; Lee & Ju, 2020; Nam, 2013; Park, 1995).

Data from the learner background survey, TOEIC tests, and the BALLI were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Learner background survey data were analyzed using frequency analysis and descriptive statistics. The TOEIC test scores were analyzed using a paired-sample *t*-test to assess changes within the group. The BALLI responses were analyzed using frequency analysis and descriptive statistics, and a paired-sample *t*-test was used to assess pre- and post-program differences. Additionally, Pearson's correlation analysis was used to explore the relationship between changes in English proficiency and language learning beliefs.

Consistent with previous research (Kil, 2017; Lee & Ju, 2020; Nam, 2013; Park, 2017) that examined the relationship between proficiency in short-term English programs and individual difference factors, such as motivation, self-efficacy, anxiety, strategies, and beliefs, this study aimed to identify the characteristics of belief changes among learners with varying levels of proficiency improvement. Participants were categorized into two groups based on their TOEIC score improvements: those whose score increases were above the group's average were classified as the high-improvement group (HIG) (n = 20), and those whose score increases were below the average were classified as the low-improvement group (LIG) (n = 21). The results and discussion focused on statistically significant belief changes within each group and the major differences between the two groups. These differences were determined by comparing the mean differences in beliefs before and after the program for each group, using a threshold of greater than ± 0.2 between the two groups.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Changes in English Proficiency

To evaluate the effectiveness of the short-term English program on English proficiency, a paired-sample *t*-test was performed to compare TOEIC scores before and after the program. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Pre-Post TOEIC Scores Paired *t*-test

Section	Pre/Post	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*M* Diff.	*t*	*p*
Listening	Pre	41	311.10	74.70	59.14	-9.480***	.000
	Post	41	370.24	61.92			
Reading	Pre	41	274.27	80.48	60.36	-6.771***	.000
	Post	41	334.63	64.34			
Total	Pre	41	585.37	133.70	119.51	-10.712***	.000
	Post	41	704.88	111.95			

Note. *M* Diff. = Post *M* – Pre *M*.
***$p < .001$.

The paired-sample *t*-test revealed significant improvements in TOEIC scores following the short-term English program. The listening score increased by 59.14 points, from an average of 311.10 before the program to 370.24 after. The reading score increased by 60.36 points, from an average of 274.27 to 334.63. The total score increased by 119.51 points, from an average of 585.37 to 704.88. The increases in listening, reading, and total scores were all statistically significant at the .001 level. Thus, the short-term English program effectively enhanced English proficiency, as shown by the TOEIC score improvements.

4.2. Changes in Language Learning Beliefs

The participants were divided into two groups based on their level of improvement in English proficiency: HIG and LIG. The major findings comparing the changes in beliefs before and after the short-term English program are summarized in Table 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

4.2.1. Difficulty of language learning

A paired-sample *t*-test was conducted to assess the statistical significance of the changes in beliefs regarding the difficulty of language learning in each group. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2. The results indicated no statistically significant changes in

either group. However, the two groups exhibited differences in changes in beliefs for three items (Items 3, 4, and 28).

TABLE 2

Changes in Beliefs About the Difficulty of Language Learning

Group	Pre/ Post	%			*M*	*SD*	*M* Diff.	*t*	*p*
		1, 2	3	4, 5					
3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.									
HIG	Pre	0.0	10.0	90.0	4.30	0.66	-0.30	1.453	.163
	Post	0.0	20.0	80.0	4.00	0.65			
LIG	Pre	0.0	19.0	81.0	4.14	0.73	0.24	-1.558	.135
	Post	0.0	0.0	100.0	4.38	0.50			
4. The language I am trying to learn is: : (1) very easy, (2) easy, (3) medium difficulty, (4) difficult, (5) very difficult									
HIG	Pre	45.0	15.0	40.0	2.95	1.23	0.15	-0.590	.562
	Post	25.0	35.0	40.0	3.10	1.07			
LIG	Pre	47.6	28.6	23.8	2.76	0.83	-0.09	0.491	.629
	Post	52.4	33.3	14.3	2.67	1.02			
28. It is easier to read and write this language than to speak and understand it.									
HIG	Pre	15.0	15.0	70.0	3.75	0.97	-0.40	1.798	.088
	Post	25.0	25.0	50.0	3.35	1.14			
LIG	Pre	14.3	38.1	47.6	3.48	0.93	0.00	0.000	1.000
	Post	19.0	23.8	57.1	3.48	1.21			

Note. HIG = High-improvement group (n = 20); LIG = Low-improvement group (n = 21).
1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree.
M Diff. = Post *M.* – Pre *M.*

Notably, BALLI Items 3 and 4 involved the general difficulty of learning a foreign language and the specific difficulty of the target language, respectively. For Item 3, students generally believed that the difficulty of learning varied by language. However, after the program, this belief weakened in the HIG but slightly strengthened in the LIG (HIG's *M* Diff. = -0.30, LIG's *M* Diff. = 0.24). Regarding Item 4, which assessed the difficulty of learning English, the HIG perceived English learning as more difficult after the program, whereas the LIG perceived it as slightly less difficult (HIG's *M* Diff. = 0.15, LIG's *M* Diff. = -0.09). Item 28 assessed the relative difficulty of written language (reading and writing) versus spoken language (listening and speaking) in English. The HIG showed a weakened belief that reading and writing were easier than listening and speaking, whereas the LIG showed no such changes (HIG's *M* Diff. = -0.40, LIG's *M* Diff. = 0.00).

4.2.2. Foreign language aptitude

Regarding changes in beliefs about foreign language aptitude, the paired-sample *t*-test results are presented in Table 3. The results showed no statistically significant changes in beliefs in the HIG, whereas the LIG exhibited a significant change in one item (Item 15).

The changes in beliefs between the groups varied across four items (Items 2, 10, 29, and 32).

TABLE 3

Changes in Beliefs About Foreign Language Aptitude

Group	Pre/ Post	% 1, 2	% 3	% 4, 5	*M*	*SD*	*M* Diff.	*t*	*p*
	Post	19.0	23.8	57.1	3.48	1.21			
2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.									
HIG	Pre	0.0	5.0	95.0	4.50	0.61	-0.20	1.453	.163
	Post	0.0	0.0	100.0	4.30	0.47			
LIG	Pre	9.5	14.3	76.2	3.95	0.92	0.15	-0.679	.505
	Post	4.8	14.3	81.0	4.10	0.83			
10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.									
HIG	Pre	10.0	25.0	65.0	3.75	1.07	-0.40	1.566	.134
	Post	15.0	25.0	60.0	3.35	0.99			
LIG	Pre	0.0	19.0	81.0	4.05	0.67	0.09	-0.623	.540
	Post	0.0	19.0	81.0	4.14	0.73			
15. I have a foreign language aptitude.									
HIG	Pre	45.0	40.0	15.0	2.65	0.81	0.30	-2.042	.055
	Post	25.0	55.0	20.0	2.95	0.69			
LIG	Pre	28.6	47.6	23.8	2.95	0.92	0.48	-3.211**	.004
	Post	14.3	38.1	47.6	3.43	0.87			
29. People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.									
HIG	Pre	75.0	25.0	0.0	1.85	0.81	0.30	-1.301	.209
	Post	70.0	15.0	15.0	2.15	1.04			
LIG	Pre	81.0	19.0	0.0	1.81	0.75	0.09	-1.000	.329
	Post	76.2	19.0	4.8	1.90	0.89			
32. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.									
HIG	Pre	10.0	20.0	70.0	3.85	0.93	0.15	-0.719	.481
	Post	5.0	10.0	85.0	4.00	0.73			
LIG	Pre	4.8	23.8	71.4	4.00	0.89	-0.24	1.227	.234
	Post	9.5	28.6	61.9	3.76	0.94			

Note. HIG = High-improvement group (n = 20); LIG = Low-improvement group (n = 21).
1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree.
M Diff. = Post *M.* – Pre *M.*
**p < .01.

Item 15 assessed belief in an individual's English aptitude. The mean score increased by 0.48 points, with a statistically significant change at the .01 level (t = -3.211, p = .004). The mean score of the HIG increased by 0.30 points, but this change was not statistically significant. Items 10 and 29 addressed common beliefs regarding language proficiency and their associations with other skills. For Item 10, students generally believed that knowing one foreign language made it easier for them to learn others. However, the HIG showed a mean score decrease of 0.40 points, whereas the LIG showed no noticeable changes. Item

29 examined the belief that individuals skilled in math and science might not excel in English. The HIG showed an increased belief in this notion, whereas the LIG showed little change (HIG's *M* Diff. = 0.30, LIG's *M* Diff. = 0.09). Item 2 was related to beliefs regarding the innate talent in language learning. The HIG showed decreased belief that some people were born with a special aptitude for language learning, whereas the LIG's belief in this idea was slightly strengthened (HIG's *M* Diff. = -0.20, LIG's *M* Diff. = 0.15). Item 32, which assessed the belief that individuals proficient in foreign languages are intelligent, showed varying results. The HIG's mean score increased by 0.15 points, whereas that of the LIG decreased by 0.24 points.

4.2.3. Nature of language learning

To examine changes in beliefs about the nature of language learning, the results of a paired-sample *t*-test are presented in Table 4. The analysis revealed a statistically significant change in one item (Item 26) for the HIG, whereas the LIG showed no significant change. No notable differences in belief changes were observed for the other items. For Item 26, the HIG initially held a strong belief that learning English primarily involved translation from an individual's native language. However, this belief significantly decreased, with a mean score drop of 0.70 points after the program ($t = 3.199$, $p = .005$). On the other hand, the LIG showed only a slight change in this belief, with a mean score decrease of 0.10 points.

TABLE 4

Changes in Beliefs About the Nature of Language Learning

Group	Pre/ Post	%			*M*	*SD*	*M* Diff.	*t*	*p*
		1, 2	3	4, 5					
26. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from Korean.									
HIG	Pre	5.0	15.0	80.0	4.30	0.92	-0.70	3.199**	.005
	Post	15.0	20.0	65.0	3.60	1.05			
LIG	Pre	14.3	33.3	52.4	3.48	1.03	-0.10	0.357	.724
	Post	23.8	23.8	52.4	3.38	1.12			

Note. HIG = High-improvement group ($n = 20$); LIG = Low-improvement group ($n = 21$).
1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree.
M Diff. = Post *M.* – Pre *M.*
**$p < .01$.

4.2.4. Learning and communication strategies

The paired-sample *t*-test results showed significant changes in beliefs regarding several items on learning and communication strategies. The results are presented in Table 5. The HIG showed statistically significant changes in three items (Items 12, 18, and 19), whereas

the LIG showed a significant change in one item (Item 12). The degree of belief change varied in three items (Items 7, 18, and 21).

TABLE 5

Changes in Beliefs About Learning and Communication Strategies

Group	Pre/ Post	% 1, 2	% 3	% 4, 5	*M*	*SD*	*M* Diff.	*t*	*p*
7. It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent.									
HIG	Pre	20.0	20.0	60.0	3.60	1.05	0.20	-1.000	.330
	Post	15.0	10.0	75.0	3.80	0.95			
LIG	Pre	4.8	14.3	81.0	4.10	0.83	-0.24	1.558	.135
	Post	0.0	33.3	66.7	3.86	0.73			
12. If I heard someone speaking the language I am trying to learn, I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking the language.									
HIG	Pre	65.0	20.0	15.0	2.45	1.15	0.55	-2.342*	.030
	Post	35.0	30.0	35.0	3.00	1.03			
LIG	Pre	47.6	28.6	23.8	2.67	1.11	0.66	-3.005**	.007
	Post	19.0	38.1	42.9	3.33	1.06			
18. I feel self-conscious speaking the foreign language in front of other people.									
HIG	Pre	10.0	15.0	75.0	4.00	0.97	-0.60	3.269**	.004
	Post	25.0	20.0	55.0	3.40	0.99			
LIG	Pre	14.3	9.5	76.2	3.71	0.85	-0.04	0.271	.789
	Post	19.0	9.5	71.4	3.67	0.97			
19. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.									
HIG	Pre	15.0	10.0	75.0	3.85	0.99	-0.55	2.342*	.030
	Post	20.0	30.0	50.0	3.30	0.98			
LIG	Pre	9.5	9.5	81.0	3.90	0.83	-0.38	1.793	.088
	Post	19.0	23.8	57.1	3.52	0.98			
21. It is important to practice in the language laboratory.									
HIG	Pre	0.0	25.0	75.0	4.10	0.79	0.00	0.000	1.000
	Post	0.0	20.0	80.0	4.10	0.72			
LIG	Pre	0.0	42.9	57.1	3.76	0.77	0.38	-2.019	.057
	Post	0.0	23.8	76.2	4.14	0.79			

Note. HIG = High-improvement group (n = 20); LIG = Low-improvement group (n = 21).
1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree.
M Diff. = Post *M.* – Pre *M.*
*p < .05. **p < .01.

For Item 12, both groups showed a statistically significant increase in the belief that they would approach foreign speakers to practice English. The HIG had a mean score increase of 0.55 points (t = -2.342, p = .03), whereas the LIG had a mean score increase of 0.66 points (t = -3.005, p = .007). For Item 19, both groups exhibited a decrease in the belief that initial mistakes in language learning are difficult to correct later. The HIG's mean score decreased significantly by 0.55 points (t = 2.342, p = .03), whereas the LIG's mean score decreased by

0.38 points without statistical significance. Item 18 assessed self-consciousness while speaking English in front of others. The HIG felt significantly less self-conscious after the program, with the mean score decreasing by 0.60 points (t = 3.269, p = .004). In contrast, the LIG showed no significant change. Differences in belief changes were also observed for Items 7 and 21. For Item 7, which concerned the importance of a good accent, the HIG demonstrated a strengthened belief, whereas the LIG exhibited a weakened belief (HIG's *M* Diff. = 0.20, LIG's *M* Diff. = -0.24). For Item 21, which was related to the importance of studying in the language laboratory, the HIG showed no change in beliefs, whereas the LIG showed a mean score increase of 0.38 points.

4.2.5. Motivations and expectations

Table 6 presents the results of a paired-sample *t*-test examining changes in beliefs about motivation and expectations. The results revealed a statistically significant change in one item (Item 27) for the HIG, whereas no significant changes were observed for the LIG. Belief changes differed for two items (Items 27 and 31).

TABLE 6

Changes in Beliefs About Motivations and Expectations

Group	Pre/ Post	%			*M*	*SD*	*M* Diff.	*t*	*p*
		1, 2	3	4, 5					
27. If I learn to speak this language very well, it will help me get a good job.									
HIG	Pre	0.0	0.0	100.0	4.70	0.47	-0.40	2.179*	.042
	Post	5.0	10.0	85.0	4.30	0.86			
LIG	Pre	0.0	14.3	85.7	4.43	0.75	-0.14	0.767	.452
	Post	4.8	4.8	90.5	4.29	0.78			
31. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.									
HIG	Pre	0.0	10.0	90.0	4.35	0.67	0.10	-0.698	.494
	Post	0.0	0.0	100.0	4.45	0.51			
LIG	Pre	4.8	4.8	95.2	4.48	0.75	-0.15	1.369	.186
	Post	0.0	4.8	95.2	4.33	0.58			

Note. HIG = High-improvement group (n = 20); LIG = Low-improvement group (n = 21).
1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly agree.
M Diff. = Post *M.* – Pre *M.*
*p < .05.

For Item 27, both groups initially held a strong belief that adequate English skills would help them secure high-profile jobs. However, this belief declined after the program. The HIG showed a significant mean score decrease of 0.40 points (t = 2.179, p = .042), whereas the LIG showed a smaller mean score decrease of 0.14 points, which was not statistically significant. Item 31 concerned integrative motivation. Initially, both groups agreed that they

wanted to learn English to understand people from English-speaking countries better. After the program, the mean scores of the HIG increased slightly, while the LIG's mean score decreased slightly (HIG's *M* Diff. = 0.10, LIG's *M* Diff. = -0.15).

To summarize the analysis of changes in language learning beliefs, the HIG showed statistically significant changes in five items (Items 12, 18, 19, 26, and 27). In contrast, the LIG showed significant changes in two items (Items 12 and 15). Additionally, there were differences in belief changes between the two groups. Specifically, for 13 items (Items 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 18, 21, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, and 32), the two groups exhibited somewhat different changes in beliefs (based on HIG's *M* Diff. – LIG's *M* Diff. > ± 0.2).

4.3. Correlation Between Changes in Language Learning Beliefs and Changes in English Proficiency

To investigate which changes in language learning beliefs were correlated with changes in English proficiency, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated between changes in language learning beliefs and TOEIC scores. Table 7 presents the items that demonstrated statistically significant correlations.

TABLE 7

Correlation Coefficients Between Changes in Language Learning Beliefs and Changes in English Proficiency (*N* = 41)

Area	Items	Listening	Reading	Total
DLL	3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.	-.26	-.36*	-.43**
FLA	2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.	-.34*	-.10	-.26
FLA	10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.	-.33*	-.06	-.23
FLA	29. People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.	.33*	-.02	.17
NLL	26. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from Korean.	-.37*	.00	-.21
LCS	18. I feel self-conscious speaking the foreign language in front of other people.	-.20	-.37*	-.41**
ME	31. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.	.12	.48**	.45**

Note. DLL = The Difficulty of Language Learning; FLA = Foreign Language Aptitude; NLL = The Nature of Language Learning; LCS = Learning and Communication Strategies; ME = Motivations and Expectations.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

The analysis revealed statistically significant correlations for seven items. Among these, three items were found in the area of foreign language aptitude, while one item was identified in each of the remaining four areas.

First, in the area of the difficulty of language learning, Item 3, 'Some languages are easier to learn than others,' exhibited a statistically significant negative correlation with changes in reading scores at the .05 level and with changes in total scores at the .01 level. This indicates that, as the belief that some languages are easier to learn became stronger, the increase in both reading and total scores became smaller. Conversely, as this belief weakened, the increases in reading and total scores were larger. The correlation coefficient between changes in belief for Item 3 and reading scores was -0.36, reflecting a low level of correlation, whereas the correlation with changes in total scores was -0.43, indicating a moderate level of correlation.

Next, in the area of foreign language aptitude, Item 2, 'Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language,' showed a statistically significant negative correlation with changes in listening scores at the .05 level. This implies that as the belief in innate talent for learning a foreign language strengthened, improvement in listening scores decreased; conversely, as this belief weakened, improvement in listening scores increased. The correlation coefficient was -0.34, indicating a low level of correlation. Item 10, 'It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one,' also showed a statistically significant negative correlation with changes in listening scores at the .05 level. This suggests that as the belief that knowing one foreign language makes learning another language easier strengthened, the increase in listening scores was smaller; as this belief weakened, the increase in listening scores was lager. The correlation coefficient was -0.33, indicating a low level of correlation. Item 29, 'People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages,' showed a statistically significant positive correlation with changes in listening scores at the .05 level. This means that, as the belief that individuals who excel in math and science are not adept at learning foreign languages became stronger, the increase in listening scores was greater. However, the correlation coefficient was 0.33, indicating a low level of correlation.

In the area of the nature of language learning, Item 26, 'Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from Korean,' showed a statistically significant negative correlation with changes in listening scores at the .05 level. This indicates that as the belief in the importance of translation from one's native language in learning English weakened, the increase in listening scores was greater. The correlation coefficient was -0.37, reflecting a low level of correlation.

In the area of learning and communication strategies, Item 18, 'I feel self-conscious speaking the foreign language in front of other people,' exhibited a statistically significant negative correlation with changes in reading scores at the .05 level and with changes in total

scores at the .01 level. This suggests that reduced self-consciousness when speaking English is associated with a greater increase in both reading and total scores. The correlation coefficient for Item 18 with changes in reading scores was -0.37, indicating a low level of correlation, whereas the correlation with changes in total scores was -0.41, indicating a moderate level of correlation.

Finally, in the area of motivations and expectations, Item 31, 'I would like to learn this language so that I can communicate with its speakers better,' showed a statistically significant positive correlation with changes in both reading and total scores at the .01 level. This indicates that, as integrative motivation to understand people from English-speaking countries increased, improvement in reading and total scores increased. Conversely, as this motivation decreased, improvement in reading and total scores decreased. The correlation coefficient for Item 31 with changes in reading scores was 0.48, and with changes in total scores was 0.45, both indicating a moderate level of correlation.

In summary, the correlation analysis revealed statistically significant correlations between changes in language learning beliefs and English proficiency for the seven items. Changes in beliefs for Items 29 (listening scores) and 31 (reading and total scores) were positively correlated with changes in English proficiency, whereas changes in beliefs for Items 2 (listening scores), 3 (reading and total scores), 10 (reading scores), 18 (reading and total scores), and 26 (listening scores) were negatively correlated with changes in English proficiency. Additionally, changes in beliefs for Items 3 (total scores), 18 (total scores), and 31 (reading and total scores) showed moderate correlations with changes in English proficiency, whereas the remaining items showed low correlation.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. Discussion

5.1.1. Changes in English proficiency

The analysis revealed statistically significant improvements in TOEIC scores across all areas: listening (an increase of 59.14 points), reading (an increase of 60.36 points), and total scores (an increase of 119.51 points). These findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that short-term educational interventions can lead to substantial improvements in language proficiency (Grey, Cox, Serafini, & Sanz, 2015; Kim & Kim, 2017; Lee, 2011; Llanes & Muñoz, 2009). The effectiveness of such programs may emanate from creating an immersive language learning environment, as indicated by Serrano, Llanes, and Tragant (2011), who argued that intensive short-term courses helped consolidate previously learned

materials. In this study, daily, repetitive 4-hour classes over three weeks likely provided a conducive environment for language immersion and proficiency improvement. Furthermore, similar levels of score changes in listening and reading indicate that a balanced curriculum in short-term English programs could result in comparable improvements in both skills.

5.1.2. Changes in language learning beliefs

The analysis of belief changes before and after the program showed that participants in the HIG and LIG experienced statistically significant changes in five and two belief items, respectively. Thus, the group with more significant belief changes also experienced greater changes in English proficiency.

In the HIG, significant belief changes were observed in confidence and self-efficacy. Specifically, beliefs related to self-consciousness when speaking English and difficulty in correcting initial mistakes significantly weakened. This reduction suggests increased confidence and self-efficacy in using the language, corroborating previous studies that reported similar increases in these areas through short-term English programs (Joe, 2005; Lee, 2011; Tanaka & Ellis, 2003). Bandura (1977) emphasized that direct experience has the most significant effect on self-efficacy. Therefore, the HIG's success in the learning process likely enhanced their confidence and self-efficacy, leading to reduced self-consciousness and weakened belief in the difficulty of correcting mistakes.

Another significant belief change observed in the HIG was a substantial decrease in the perceived importance of translation in English learning. This shift is consistent with Truitt's (1995) finding that Korean students prioritize vocabulary learning over translation and grammar. This reduction can be attributed to the program's exclusive focus on listening and reading skills with no emphasis on writing. Consequently, students valued vocabulary acquisition over translation during listening- and reading-intensive curricula. This shift may represent a positive adjustment in learning beliefs, as an overemphasis on specific aspects such as translation can hinder overall language acquisition (Horwitz, 1988).

However, a reduction in instrumental motivation did not significantly affect proficiency. In the HIG, belief in instrumental motivation significantly decreased. Research has generally demonstrated a stronger relationship between integrative motivation and English proficiency than between instrumental motivation and English proficiency. Rha (2011) found integrative motivation positively correlates with proficiency, whereas instrumental motivation correlates negatively. Allen (2010) noted that learners with high instrumental motivation often regarded studying abroad as a travel opportunity rather than a learning experience, whereas those with high integrative motivation engaged extensively in language and maintained a stronger desire to learn. These findings suggest that integrative motivation, which involve a deeper commitment to the cultural and communicative aspects of language,

is likely a more influential factor in achieving higher proficiency.

In contrast, the LIG experienced a significant increase in their belief in innate aptitude for English. Although this belief was strengthened in the HIG, the change was not statistically significant. Strengthening the belief in inherent talent can be perceived as a positive change, but perceived aptitude may differ from actual language ability. Language aptitude, defined as an innate and relatively fixed trait that influences effective language acquisition (Carroll, 1990; Skehan, 1989), is not easily altered through training (Carroll, 1981). Therefore, it is unlikely that practical language aptitude changed significantly in a short one-month period, and a gap may exist between perceived and actual aptitudes. Thus, changes in beliefs regarding aptitude for English were less likely to be related to changes in proficiency.

Finally, both groups exhibited a positive shift in their beliefs regarding approaching foreigners to practice English. The study's curriculum, conducted in a domestic EFL environment, offered limited opportunities for communication with foreigners. However, a brief cultural exploration trip to Hong Kong and Singapore provided students with opportunities to actively engage in English conversations with locals. The three weeks of consistent English practice likely fostered a positive shift in students' beliefs regarding actively practicing English.

5.1.3. Relationship between changes in language learning beliefs and changes in English proficiency

An examination of the relationship between shifts in language learning beliefs and changes in English proficiency revealed significant correlations across seven belief items. Among these, three items displayed moderate correlations, whereas the remaining items were associated with low levels of correlation.

For items with moderate correlations, changes in the belief that some languages are inherently easier to learn were negatively correlated with proficiency improvement. Specifically, the HIG experienced a significant reduction in this belief, whereas the LIG exhibited an increase. This finding indicates that reducing the perception of inherent difficulty among languages may facilitate greater proficiency improvements. Learners inevitably experience various difficulties during their learning. However, by reflecting on these challenges and developing appropriate strategies, learning outcomes may be enhanced (Yoon & Maeng, 2024). However, a strong perception of language difficulty may hinder effective self-regulation by attributing difficulties to the language's inherent difficulty. Therefore, reducing comparative perceptions of language difficulty and fostering confidence in an individual 's ability to succeed in any language can benefit language learning.

Another belief change that demonstrated a negative correlation with proficiency change was the idea that speaking English in front of others leads to self-consciousness. Notably,

the HIG showed a significant weakening of this belief, reflecting a positive increase in confidence. This result is consistent with Park's (1995) observation that higher confidence levels are associated with more proactive language use and proficiency. This suggests that short-term English programs can effectively influence beliefs related to learners' confidence, thereby enhancing their English proficiency.

In contrast, changes in the belief that learning English is necessary to adequately understand people from English-speaking countries were positively correlated with proficiency improvement. Although the changes did not reach statistical significance, a notable trend was observed. The HIG exhibited a stronger belief in integrative motivation post-program, whereas the LIG showed a decline in this belief, highlighting a clear distinction in belief shifts between the two groups. Previous research, such as that of Allen (2010) and Rha (2011), has demonstrated a relationship between integrative motivation and improved language proficiency or foreign language learning benefits. Ellis (2008) further elaborated that integrative motivation tends to have a more substantial impact on language learning than instrumental motivation. He explained that, although integrative motivation might not directly affect language outcomes, the learning behaviors it fosters can mediate successful learning results. In this study, a significant decrease in instrumental motivation was observed in the HIG, whereas a change in integrative motivation was positively correlated with proficiency gains. This indicates that the declining instrumental motivation may have a less pronounced effect on proficiency improvement, whereas increasing integrative motivation may facilitate greater proficiency enhancement.

Regarding items with low correlations, changes in the beliefs that a natural talent for learning English exists and knowing one foreign language facilitates learning another were negatively correlated with proficiency improvements. These beliefs pertain to the perceived advantages and disadvantages of language learning in specific groups. Horwitz (1988) argued that believing in inherent advantages or disadvantages can affect an individual's learning capacity. For example, if an individual believes that they lack natural talent for learning English, may lead to negative self-assessment and consequently lower proficiency. Similarly, Mori (1999) found that learners who subscribed to the notion of innate aptitude for language learning generally exhibited lower proficiency. Thus, strong beliefs regarding inherent talent or ease of learning additional languages do not seemingly contribute to enhanced English proficiency.

Another negative correlation was found between changes in the belief that English learning primarily includes translating from an individual's native language and proficiency improvement. The analysis showed that the HIG initially prioritized translation than vocabulary and grammar; however, their belief in the importance of translation significantly decreased afterward. As previously discussed, an overemphasis on translation as the foundation of language learning can hinder its overall acquisition. Therefore, for the HIG, a

reduction in the belief that translation is crucial likely facilitated a more balanced approach to language learning, thereby contributing to improved proficiency.

By contrast, a positive relationship was identified between changes in the belief that excelling in math and science could hinder English learning and improvements in proficiency. Mathematics and science emphasize problem-solving and inquiry based on conceptual understanding, whereas English prioritizes communication skills (National Curriculum Information Center, 2023). Key factors of language aptitude include vocabulary, language analysis, and auditory skills that relate sounds to text (Stansfield, 1988). Therefore, the prioritized skills and competencies vary depending on the subject. Rubin (1975) argued that successful language learners exhibit traits such as not avoiding ambiguity and effectively using guesswork and inferences. Mori (1999) found that learners who preferred explicit and simple answers had lower proficiency levels. Thus, learners who excel in math or science may apply similar problem-solving approaches to language learning, potentially reducing their effectiveness. Additionally, the HIG in this study likely recognized that the strategies required for subjects such as math or science might not align with effective language learning approaches. Despite the statistical significance of these relationships, caution is warranted when interpreting the four items with low correlation between belief and proficiency changes. Further research is needed to validate whether these belief changes truly influence proficiency improvement.

While prior studies have generally explored the relationship between beliefs and proficiency outcomes, Tanaka and Ellis (2003) extended this inquiry by examining the impact of belief changes on proficiency. They discovered no significant correlation between changes in TOEFL scores and shifts in belief areas such as analytical learning, experiential learning, self-efficacy, and confidence, suggesting that changes in beliefs may require more time to affect learning behavior and proficiency outcomes. Nevertheless, the findings from this study illustrate that a four-week English program can induce changes in beliefs, with some of these changes being associated with improvements in English proficiency.

5.2. Conclusion

This study investigated changes in English proficiency, shifts in language learning beliefs, and the correlation between these factors among Korean university students enrolled in a short-term English program. The principal findings were as follows:

First, the study revealed significant improvements in English proficiency, specifically in TOEIC listening, reading, and total scores. All observed changes were statistically significant, indicating that substantial gains in English proficiency could be achieved through a brief but intensive course during a vacation period.

Second, an examination of the changes in language learning beliefs revealed notable

differences between the high- and low- language improvement groups. In the high-improvement group, there was a marked reduction in self-consciousness when using English, an increase in self-confidence, and an enhanced sense of self-efficacy regarding error correction. Additionally, there was less emphasis on translation as a major aspect of English learning, and a decline in instrumental motivation linked to the belief that English proficiency helps secure a high-profile job. Conversely, the low-improvement group exhibited an increased belief in their innate aptitude for learning English. However, both groups demonstrated increased enthusiasm for practicing English with their native speakers.

Third, a correlation analysis between changes in belief and proficiency improvement revealed several patterns. Changes in the belief that some languages are easier to learn and belief in self-consciousness while speaking English had moderately negative relationships with proficiency changes. By contrast, changes in the belief associated with integrative motivation, such as improving English to adequately understand people from English-speaking countries, showed a moderate positive correlation with proficiency improvements. Weak negative correlations were revealed for changes in the beliefs regarding innate talent for language learning, ease of acquiring additional languages if one already knows another, and the perception that English learning primarily involves translations. Conversely, changes in the belief that excelling in math or science might impair English learning was positively correlated with changes in proficiency, although at a low level.

These findings have several implications. First, the changes in learners' beliefs observed over the one-month program were significant, with the high-improvement group showing substantial changes in five belief items and the low-improvement group in two. This finding supports previous research suggesting that beliefs are dynamic and can shift over a short period (Amuzie & Winke, 2009; Peng, 2011; Tanaka & Ellis, 2003; Yang & Kim, 2011; Yoon & Maeng, 2022). The notable differences in changes in beliefs between the high and low proficiency improvement groups suggest that shifts in beliefs may significantly affect proficiency outcomes.

Furthermore, the analysis highlighted that changes in confidence, self-efficacy, and integrative motivation were explicitly associated with proficiency improvement. These results are consistent with previous studies that emphasized the importance of confidence and self-efficacy in language learning (Amuzie & Winke, 2009; Hong, 2006; Huang & Tsai, 2003; Kim, 2011; Tanaka & Ellis, 2003; Yang, 1999; Yoon & Maeng, 2022) and Gardner's (1980) assertion that integrative motivation is more critical than instrumental motivation for successful language acquisition. These findings underscore the significant role of teaching methods and instructor guidance in shaping learners' beliefs. To cultivate positive language learning beliefs, instructors should foster environments in which students can use English confidently, support the development of self-efficacy, and promote integrative motivation by emphasizing their understanding of English-speaking cultures.

This study extended the existing research by demonstrating that language learning beliefs can evolve in a short period and that these changes are associated with improvements in English proficiency. Despite this contribution, the study has some limitations, such as a lack of sample size and diversity, as it comprised students from a single major at one domestic university, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research should expand the sample size and scope and explore belief changes among participants across different durations and formats, such as regular semester classes or student exchange programs. This would help determine whether the type or length of the program influences changes in language learning beliefs that contribute to proficiency improvement. Additionally, incorporating qualitative methods could provide extensive insights into the specific contexts of belief changes.

Applicable level: Tertiary

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APPENDIX

Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)

Read each statement and indicate (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) agree, or (5) strongly agree.

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.
2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.
3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.
4. The language I am trying to learn is: (1) very easy, (2) easy, (3) medium difficulty, (4) difficult, (5) very difficult
5. The language I am trying to learn is structured in the same way as Korean.
6. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well.
7. It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent.
8. It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.
9. You shouldn't say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly.
10. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.
11. It is better to learn a foreign language in the foreign country.
12. If I heard someone speaking the language I am trying to learn, I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking the language.
13. It's okay to guess if you don't know a word in the foreign language.
14. If someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take him/her to become fluent? (1) less than a year, (2) 1–2 years, (3) 3–5 years, (4) 5–10 years, (5) You can't learn a language in 1 hour a day

15. I have a foreign language aptitude.
16. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.
17. It is important to repeat and practice a lot.
18. I feel self-conscious speaking the foreign language in front of other people.
19. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.
20. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.
21. It is important to practice in the language laboratory.
22. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.
23. If I get to speak this language very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.
24. It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.
25. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.
26. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from Korean.
27. If I learn to speak this language very well, it will help me get a good job.
28. It is easier to read and write this language than to speak and understand it.
29. People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.
30. Koreans think that it is important to speak a foreign language.
31. I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.
32. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.
33. Koreans are good at learning foreign languages.
34. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.