The Relationship between English Language Learning Beliefs and English Academic Achievement among the English Major Students of IAIN Samarinda

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Abstract

English as an international language has been learned for various purposes. However, not all students can achieve their goals in learning English, one of many factors influencing their success in learning English is their own beliefs. This research aimed at investigating students' beliefs about English language learning and English academic achievement. Descriptive and correlation design, quantitative method was applied in this research. The English scores of 50 fifth-semester students of IAIN Samarinda and their responses to Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment correlation. The results showed that the beliefs about motivation and expectation were the one mostly held by the students, followed by the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, foreign language aptitude, and the difficulty of language learning. There was positive and strong correlation between students' beliefs about language learning and their English academic achievement (r = .597).

Keywords: *BALLI, English academic achievement, English language learning beliefs*

Abstrak

Bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa internasional telah dipelajari untuk berbagai tujuan. Namun, tidak semua siswa dapat mencapai tujuannya dalam belajar bahasa Inggris, salah satu faktor yang mempengaruhi keberhasilan mereka dalam belajar bahasa Inggris adalah keyakinan mereka sendiri. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui keyakinan siswa tentang pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dan prestasi akademik bahasa Inggris. Desain deskriptif dan korelasi, metode kuantitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Nilai bahasa Inggris 50 mahasiswa semester lima IAIN Samarinda dan tanggapan mereka terhadap Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan korelasi Product Moment Pearson. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keyakinan tentang motivasi dan harapan paling banyak dianut oleh siswa, diikuti oleh sifat belajar bahasa, strategi pembelajaran dan komunikasi, bakat bahasa asing, dan kesulitan belajar bahasa. Ada korelasi positif dan kuat antara keyakinan siswa tentang pembelajaran bahasa dan prestasi akademik bahasa Inggris mereka (r = .597).

Kata kunci: *BALLI, Prestasi akademik bahasa Inggris, keyakinan belajar bahasa Inggris*

1.   Introduction

Language learning is not a new thing in the world especially for learning English that is considered as an international language. Many people want to learn English and increase their English skills for various purposes such as getting better job, going abroad, having foreign friends, etc. Regarding the importance of English and the willingness of many people to learn English, many ways of learning it then provided by both formal and informal institutions.

However, not all students or learners can easily achieve their goals of learning English and follow the language learning process; many factors influence the outcomes of it. Lightbown & Spada (2001) provide intelligence, aptitude, personality, motivation and attitudes, learner preferences, learner beliefs, and age of acquisition as factors affecting second/foreign language learning.

Conducting research on English language learning beliefs and English academic achievement is fascinating for the researcher for some considerations. First, as an English teacher as well as an English student, the researcher thinks that it is best to learn English in English-speaking country then it leads her to try getting the opportunities to study abroad. Furthermore, the researcher has also interviewed some students and classmates about learning English, they stated, "People who can speak more than one language are very intelligent", "Speaking English is easier than writing English", or "I am shy speaking English to other people". Those caught the researcher's attention and got her understand that the students seem to have their own thinking which then might influence their achievement in language learning.

Another reason why the researcher is interested in

conducting this research is related to the importance of language learning beliefs for the success and effectiveness of language learning. In the classroom context, the perception, beliefs, attitudes, and metacognitive knowledge that students bring with them to the learning situation are some of the important contributory factors in the learning process and ultimate success (Breen, 2001 in Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005). Likewise, Horwitz (1987, as cited in Boakye, 2007, p.2) says, "the beliefs students have about language learning can affect how they go about doing it". Similarly, Pintrich & DeGroot (1990, as cited in Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006) state when learners find their study necessary and interesting, they will be more involved in the learning process and developed stronger desire academically. The importance of beliefs in language learning indicates that it is important for the teacher to know what beliefs of the students in learning language and encourage the students to hold positive beliefs in order to get success in learning language.

Another consideration for conducting this research is that some studies have been carried out on the relationship between students' beliefs about language learning and academic achievement but revealed different result. For example, a study conducted by Angelianawati (2012) who conducted the research on the eleventh-grade students of State Senior High School in Singaraja found that language learning beliefs was significantly correlated with the students' English academic achievement. However, Sioson (2011) found that beliefs about language learning was insignificantly predicted the students' academic speaking task.

In the light of the above considerations, the present study is an attempt to investigate the students' beliefs in learning English, also aimed to verify the relationship between language learning beliefs and the students' English academic achievement, whether this study will agree with those who found the two variables correlate significantly or insignificantly, positively, or negatively.

2.   Literature Review

2.1. Academic Achievement

Carrol (1974, p.238) defines achievement as "a measure of the quality and or the quantity of the success one has in the mastery of knowledge, skills, or understanding". In accordance, Good (1973, p.7) in Phye (1997) defines achievement as "knowledge gained or skills developed in the school subjects, usually designated by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers, or by both". Brown (2003, p.47) states, "An achievement test is related directly to classroom lesson, units, or even a total curriculum". Another definition is based on Collin Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary (2006) which states that achievement is something someone has succeeded in doing, especially after a lot of effort.

In Indonesian colleges, student's achievement in each subject is usually reflected by their scores on formative test– commonly given by the lecturers to the students after having studied one or two basic competences-, mid-semester test which usually conducted after three-month studying, and a test that is held at the end of the semester

which is called final or semester test. The final achievement of the students in each semester for each subject are usually measured based on their scores in study report namely *Kartu Hasil Study* (KHS). Moreover, final achievement of the students for all subjects in each semester are usually measured based on their Grade Point Average (GPA), and the final achievement of the students in overall subjects in overall semesters reflected by their Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). In this research, the researcher took the students' scores of English subjects on the fifth semester reflected on their study report (KHS) as the measurement of the English Department students' achievement.

2.2. Language Learning Beliefs

Nikitina & Furuoka (2006) state that language-learning beliefs are context-specific, so different cultures may have different opinion about learning a new language. Horwitz (1987) as cited in Suwaranak (2012) says that although language-learning beliefs may not always be clear or deliberately though out but language learners hold those beliefs. Further, Abraham & Vann (1987) in Liao & Chiang (2004) suggest that learners have their individuals' language learning philosophy, that is, their beliefs about how language operates and how it is learned. Moreover, the study conducted by Saminy & Lee (1997, as quoted in Saeb & Zamani, 2013) found that learners with higher grades had more confidence in their ability to learn foreign languages and were more willing to practice with native speaker.

Based on those perceptions, it can be understood that beliefs about language learning cannot be separated from the learning process itself because the beliefs that students bring in learning language may influence their actions to the process of learning and teaching. Then the actions can be positive or negative depending on what and how their thinking and understanding about language learning.

There are some definitions of beliefs about language learning proposed by the researchers. Horwitz (1987, as cited in Angelianawati, 2012) defines beliefs about language learning as "assumptions or ideas about various factors in language learning that students hold and bring into language learning". Banya & Cheng (1997, as cited in Li, 2004) define beliefs about language learning as an individual's opinion about language learning

Furthermore, Tognimi (2000) defines beliefs as personal theory, assumption, or general philosophy built on or developed from previous experience. Bernat & Gvozdenko (2005) view beliefs as everything that learners think and understand about themselves in relation to language learning.

Dealing with the definitions of beliefs about language learning, it can be concluded that beliefs about language learning are related to the assumption, idea, opinion, thinking, understanding, philosophy and or ideology students bring in learning language.

2.3. Classification of Beliefs about Language Learning

Horwitz (1987), one of pioneering researchers on

language learning beliefs (as cited in Altan, 2006; Sioson, 2011), lists possible language learning beliefs which are grouped into five categories, namely foreign language aptitude, difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivations and expectations.

The first category, foreign language aptitude is concerned with one's potential for language learning achievement, the belief that some people have a special ability to learn foreign languages. Ortega (2009, p.164) defines "language aptitude as the psychological formulation behind the institution that some people have a gift for additional language learning while others seem to struggle". In other words, one may have his/ her own thinking and understanding that some people in some cases, for instance, different gender and age might have potential to learn language and such understanding might then influence how they will learn the language. Vibulphol (2004) states that foreign language aptitude has been discussed in a few studies such as Horwitz (1985, 1987, 1988) and Mori (1999), they found that as possibly having negative effects on learners' language learning. The students might think that language learning ability is an innate ability that cannot be improved then probably they doubt their own ability as language learners and expect to do poorly in language study.

The second category, difficulty of language learning deals with the general difficulty of foreign language learning and the specific difficulty of the target language. For example, some people might think of how many hours they need to learn to be able to speak very well, which skill of English is easier than others, etc. Ones' thinking or understanding on the difficulty of language learning may be influenced by their experiences in learning the language, their learning environment, and their age. This belief can give negative effects to the students' language learning (Viburphol, 2004). Peacock (1999) revealed learners in his study who underestimated the difficulty of language learning tended to have lower proficiency than those who had a more realistic estimate. Meanwhile, Mori's (1999) study found learners who perceived the target language that they were learning as a difficult language tended to do worse than those who believed that they were dealing with an easy task.

The next category, the nature of language learning concerns with the nature of the process of language learning. Learning a language in the classroom is not the same as learning in natural context. As Lightbown & Spada (2001) state that many people believe that learning in the native speaking country is more effective, it may be because most successful learners have had exposure to the language outside the classroom". For example, some people might think that learning a foreign language in its speaking country and the language speaking cultures to speak in such language are important and it might be better for them to get success in language learning. Two kinds of beliefs in this category have been discussed in studies on beliefs about language learning about their negative effects on learners' success in language learning. These beliefs are beliefs about vocabulary learning and beliefs about grammar instruction. Horwitz (1987, cited in Viburphol, 2004) claims that learners who possess the beliefs about the importance of vocabulary and grammar in language

learning may spend a lot of time memorizing vocabulary lists and grammar rules at the expense of other language learning practices.

The fourth category is learning and communication strategies, which is linked to the actions of the language learners. Communication strategy relates to the mechanisms for the productive communication of information verbally or non-verbally (Brown, 2007). As previously mentioned, good language learners are those who can guess intelligently, are not afraid of making mistakes, and want to use all opportunities they have such as conversing with native speaker and using a relevant resource. It shows that learners' beliefs about those characteristics may influence their action in learning process. Accordingly, Boakye (2007) states that if the students believe that they should always get it right, they would not speak until they are it is right. Some researchers (Horwitz, 1989; Oh, 1996; Kunt, 1997; and Truitt, 1995) as cited in Viburphol (2004) attempt to claim that some beliefs about learning and communication strategies may undermine learners' success in second or foreign language learning. It might mislead the learners' expectations on their own language learning, inhibit their attempts, raise their anxiety, limit their perceptions about new approaches to language learning, and reduce their use of the target language.

Finally, the fifth category, motivations and expectations involve the students' association of desires and opportunities with language learning. For instance, students may be directly influenced by their perception of success in learning and level of expectancy (Yang, 1999). Additionally, Lightbown & Spada (1998) concludes that if learners need to speak the language in a wide range of social situations or to fulfil professional ambitions, they will perceive the communicative value of the language and will therefore be motivated to acquire proficiency in it.

However, regarding the differences of the students in terms of many aspects, we cannot generalize their beliefs about language learning, there might be another category of beliefs. Yang (1999) identifies another belief i.e. perceived value of learning spoken English where the students generally believed in the importance and usefulness of speaking English and expressed a strong interest in learning spoken English. In short, understanding the beliefs that the students hold in learning language is necessary, especially for the researcher, and generally for the teachers of English in order to gain the effectiveness and success of the language learning process.

2.4. Factors Affecting Beliefs about Language Learning

Previous studies have shown that learners' beliefs vary according to several factors. Lightbown & Spada (2001) state that older learner has strong beliefs and opinions about how their instructions should be delivered. It indicates that age can affect how the students think and understand about their learning.

Moreover, interpretations of prior repetitive experiences might also shape the learners' beliefs about language learning, for example, an unsuccessful learning experience could make them think that special abilities are

required to learn a foreign language but they do not have these abilities (Kojima, 2009). The rich learning experiences might have helped the learners to refine their belief about language learning (Mori, 1999).

Learning environment such as information learners obtain about their learning could be acquired unconsciously through observation and imitation, or consciously with advice about how to learn from teachers, parents, or peers (Wenden, 1999 in Kojima, 2009). In addition, language learners considered the country where the target language is spoken to be the best place to learn that language (Yang, 1999; Fujiwara; 2012).

Other than those factors, gender will also affect the students' beliefs about language learning, as Bernat & Lloyd (2007) found that women were more likely to perceive multilingualism as a feature of intelligence than men were, and enjoyed talking to natives less than their male counterparts did.

The factors mentioned above can positively or negatively affect the students' beliefs; therefore, teachers should consider those factors in order to shape the positive beliefs on the students' language learning, and in turn, can help the students to be successful language learners.

3.   Previous Studies

There have been many researches concerning with beliefs about language learning and the relationship between language learning beliefs and other variables. Conducting studies as the present one may contribute effectively on the better teaching of language to learners.

Using BALLI questionnaire, Saeb & Zamani (2013) found sixty-two high school students from different cities in Iran held stronger beliefs about the difficulty of language learning and motivation and expectation. In addition, Suwaranak (2012) questioned 35 Thai students about their beliefs about English language learning through closed and open-ended questions found that many students considered themselves to be unsuccessful English language learners and only a small percentage of the students rated themselves as high achievers. Furthermore, the study of Lan (2010) revealed 212 Taiwanese 7th graders responded that the belief about motivation and expectation was the highest one among the five categories of beliefs about language learning followed by belief of learning and communication strategies, belief of nature of language learning, difficulty of language learning, and foreign language aptitude.

Regarding the correlation between students' beliefs about language learning and their academic achievement, Khodadady (2009) conducted a research aiming to investigate the relationship of sophomore undergraduate students' beliefs about language learning and their academic achievement. In the study, four hundred eighteen students took part in completing Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). Having run the One Way ANOVA test by utilizing SPSS 16, the results revealed that among 34 items of BALLI, only 5 items (item number 2, 4, 19, 24, and 25) which were correlated significantly with the students' academic achievement.

Another study conducted by Lan (2010) to 212 Taiwanese 7th graders' foreign language beliefs about language learning, aimed to investigate its relationship

with the students' English academic achievement. Like the previous research, the researcher administered the Horwitz' BALLI in assessing the students' beliefs about language learning. Employing Pearson Correlation to examine the relationship between beliefs about language learning and English learning achievement, the study found that overall beliefs about language learning was significantly correlated with English learning achievement.

Another researcher, Sioson (2011) aimed to determine which among the subscales of beliefs about language learning was the strongest predictor of performance in an academic speaking context, and if there were significant relationships of the variables to the students' academic speaking. BALLI questionnaires were administered to the 300 first-year college students in Philippines. Using mean, standard deviation, and Pearson r correlation, the study showed that in general, language learning beliefs and strategies were insignificantly correlated to academic speaking task. Only the motivation and expectation subscale which had a significant correlation to the oral performance of the participants, but yielded a negative relationship.

Angelianawati (2012) conducted a research to understand the contribution of beliefs about language learning on students' English achievement. The research was done toward the eleventh-grade students of state senior high school in Singaraja semester 1, in the academic year 2011/2012. Using BALLI and English achievement from documentations, namely from students' school report book, and analyzing it using Pearson Product Moment correlation, it was found that beliefs about language learning was significantly correlated to English achievement of 160 eleventh-grade students.

The above researches showed different results about the students' beliefs about language learning specifically English language learning. In addition, the findings of Khodadady (2009), Lan (2010), and Sioson (2011) indicated the insignificant correlation but Jhaish (2010), Al-Hebaishi (2012), and Angelianawati (2012) found the significant correlation. It indicates that there is no guarantee that the two variables are correlated significantly or insignificantly, positively or negatively, so further research(s) is still needed to be conducted in order to know the correlation of the variables. This present study was conducted to the third-year students majoring English, and attempted to reveal the beliefs toward language learning and English academic achievement using BALLI. Unlike the six previous researches, the current research investigated the correlation of overall as well as each category of beliefs about language learning with English academic achievement.

4.   Methodology

4.1. Participants

This current study took the third-year students (fifth-sixth semester) of English Education Department of IAIN Samarinda as the target population of the research. The main reason was that the researcher assumed that they have learned English more specifically and longer than the others.

The first year (first-second semester) students of IAIN must take the boarding college program named *Pesantren Kampus* (PESKAM) where they intensively learn Basic of English and Arabic together with other students from other departments. They are grouped based on the placement test and not their department. In other words, while taking this program, the students cannot be considered as the real English Department students. The second-year students (third-fourth semester) still need an adaptation and more experiences in the real college life in their own department because they have just started learning English specifically based on their department after having the first-year boarding college program (PESKAM). While the fourth-year students (seventh-eighth semester) do not have the regular class anymore, they just focus on their teaching practice program or writing their S1 thesis. Therefore, the third-year students were appropriate with the current research.

The total number of the third-year students is 60 students which are grouped into two classes. Dornyei (2003) asserts that in correlation research, it is generally desirable to have a minimum of 50 participants. In selecting the sample, the researcher used stratified random sampling so that the sample taken was the representatives of each class. The researcher took 50 students as the samples, and the English fifth-semester scores were taken from their study report (KHS). For trying out the instrument, the researcher took 10 students as participants who were not taken as the research samples.

4.2. Instruments

The instrument employed in this study was an adaptation of Horwitz's (1987) Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) with a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. This questionnaire includes 34 items consist of 22 positive statements (item number 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34) and 12 negative statements (item number 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 19, 21, 22) about language learning beliefs.

The questionnaire was grouped under five indicators: foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivations and expectations. This questionnaire was firstly tried out to ten of the fifth-semester students majoring English in IAIN Samarinda, and considered valid and reliable with Cronbach's Alpha .817 which meant good.

4.3. Data Collection

The procedure of the data collection began with distributing the questionnaires to the students as participants of this research; the students were asked to complete the background information which consists of name, date of birth, class/local, and phone number. Then, the researcher informed that the students might circle one of the options: *Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA)* and

calculated the score of the participants' answers using SPSS.

4.4. Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the mean, descriptive statistic, including, maximum, minimum, mean, and standard deviation of BALLI was computed in order to assess the students' beliefs about language learning. Next, the researcher used the computation of the standard scores; and Pearson's product moment correlation was then employed to know whether there is a correlation between the results of BALLI with the students' English academic achievement.

5. Findings

5.1 English Language Learning Beliefs of The Fifth Semester of English Undergraduate Students

The mean scores the students perceived for overall BALLI was 3.42; while the mean score of belief 1 (Language Learning Aptitude) was 3.16, belief 2 (The Difficulty of Language Learning) was 3.07, belief 3 (The Nature of Language Learning) was 3.59 belief 4 (Learning and Communication Strategy) was 3.35, and belief 5 (Motivation and Expectation) was 4.04. It can be concluded that the highest one among the five factors of beliefs about language learning that the students held was motivation and expectation followed by the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, foreign language aptitude, and the last was the difficulty of language learning.

Students' Beliefs about English Language Learning
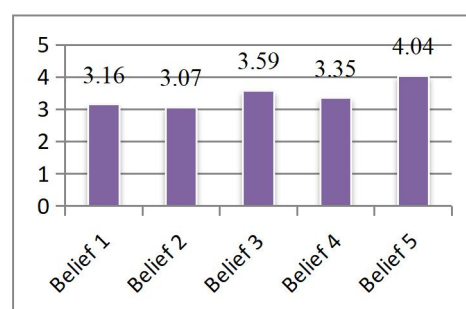
5.2 The Correlation between beliefs about English language learning and English academic achievement

Using Pearson Product Moment correlation, the researcher analyzed possible correlation between beliefs about language learning and English academic achievement. The table below describes the extent of the relationship between the variables:

Correlations		
	BALLI_Scores	English_Scores

BALLI Scores	Pearson Correlation	1	.597*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
English Scores	Pearson Correlation	.597	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As shown in the table, overall beliefs about language learning had positive significant correlation with the students' English academic achievement (r = .597, p = .000 < .05). The positive correlation meant that the more positive the students felt about the language learning, the higher the English academic achievement is. On the contrary, the less positive beliefs the students held, the lower their English scores would be.

As previously described, BALLI consists of five subscales; belief 1 (foreign language aptitude), belief 2 (the difficulty of language learning), belief 3 (the nature of language learning), belief 4 (learning and communication strategies), and belief 5 (motivation and expectation). To investigate the relationship between those variables and students' English academic achievement, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was also employed. The results showed, all the five scales of BALLI had positive correlation with students' academic achievement. Among the five BALLI categories, belief 5 (r = .540, p = .000 < .05) had the highest significant correlation with English academic achievement, while belief 1 (foreign language aptitude) had the weakest correlation (r = .206, p = .150 > .05). Similarly, belief 2 (the difficulty of language learning (r = .363, p = .010 < .05) and belief 4 (learning and communication strategies) where r = .328, p = .020 < .05 also showed positive and significant correlation with English academic achievement. However, belief 3 (the nature of language learning) with r = 267, p = .061 > .05 had positive, yet, insignificant correlation with English academic achievement.

6. Discussion

6.1 Students' Beliefs about English Language Learning

Like some researchers (such as Yang, 1999; Bernat, Carter, & Hall, 2009; Lan, 2010; Sioson, 2011; Saeb & Zamani, 2013) who have identified the beliefs that the students held about English language learning, this current research was also conducted to determine the students' beliefs about English language learning and found that the strongest beliefs students held by the students were motivation and expectation.

Most of the students were motivated to learn to speak English very well in order to have better job opportunities. The results corroborated other studies (e.g., Yang, 1999; Lan, 2010, and Saeb & Zamani, 2013) which provided possible reasons for such references. For instance, Lan

(2010) states "students' belief in motivation and expectation were strengthened if the environment stressed the importance of English". In this study, the students were motivated to learn English particularly to speak well, because their environment highlights the importance of English as they are in English Department who should have better performance, higher English scores, and English communication skill and so on than other students from other departments.

Additionally, the nature of language learning was the second belief held by the students. Some students agreed that learning new words were the most important part in foreign language learning, and English-speaking country was the best place for learning English. Furthermore, some of the students in this research might be influenced by traditional teaching methods which employed grammar-translation method.

The third belief held by the students was learning and communication strategies. The students agreed that it is important to repeat and practice English a lot using cassettes, tapes, CD rooms, as well as YouTube as they also said in the interview. Lightbown & Spada (1998) include this characteristic as one of twelve characteristics of good language learners. Likewise, Rubin & Thompson (1982, cited in Brown, 2007) report that good language learners will use or make their own opportunities to practice English. However, some of the students agreed that English learner should speak English correctly. They would use English comfortably in their English community, for instance, in their English club or English class.

The fourth belief of the students in terms of English language learning was foreign language aptitude. Students generally had positive belief that everyone could learn to speak English and that Indonesians were good in learning English. The further result might be also in correlation with motivation and expectation beliefs; the students seemed to be more motivated in learning English because they thought it is intelligent to be able to speak more than one language. Taking a closer look at this belief, the students thought that people who were good at Math or Science were not good at learning language, in this case English.

Moreover, the findings revealed that belief about the difficulty of language learning was the least favored among EFL students. Concerning on this belief, the students agreed that speaking English was easier than understanding it, but in general they said that English was difficult, in which they thought that they might not be able to speak English if they spent only one hour a day learning it. This finding corroborated with the finding of Sioson (2011) who also found the students' beliefs about difficulty of language learning as the least beliefs the students had.

In brief, the current research provided description of beliefs about English language learning of the third-year students of English Department of IAIN Samarinda. The overall results of the current study did not agree with the results of some previous studies such as Yang (1999) and Sioson (2011) whose most participants were university freshman, Lan (2010), Saeb & Zamani (2013) who conducted the similar research to the junior high school students, as well as Bernat, Carter, & Hall who investigated the ESL students. The reasons might be related to the different context (ESL and EFL context), different level of English learning (junior high school and

college level), and different English learning experience.

The current study suggested that different context, different level, and different learning experiences of English were factors which influenced the students' beliefs about language learning. The participants of the current study were EFL students unlike the participants of Yang's (1999) who were ESL students. Also, the participants were in a higher level than the previous ones as they were the third-year college majoring English who basically had more experiences in learning English. Those experiences then influenced their thinking and understanding about what or how English was, why, when, and where it should be learned. In this regard, teachers, and parents as the influential people in English learning process play an important role in establishing the valuable, creative, and interesting English learning experiences that will drive the students to hold or keep on the positive beliefs in order to improve their English language abilities. It is in accordance with Mori (1999) who states that rich learning experiences might have helped the learners to refine their beliefs about language learning. Furthermore, Horwitz (1987, as cited in Boakye, 2007) proves that the beliefs the students have affect how they go about doing it.

Dealing with the correlation between students' beliefs about English language learning and English academic achievement, the result of the current study revealed a significant positive correlation between the global scores of BALLI and the students' scores. This result was consistent with Su (2005) and Angelianawati (2012) who found that beliefs about language learning in general had significant positive correlation with English academic achievement. Horwitz (1987, as cited in Boakye, 2007) states that the beliefs students have about language learning can affect how the students go about learning it. Suwaranak (2012) emphasizes that learners' beliefs have an important role in students' experience, and their success or failure as language learners also supports their beliefs. Considering success in language learning, Stevick (1980, as cited in Rubio, 2007) argues that besides paying much attention to material, teacher also should pay more attention to psychological factors of the learners in the classroom.

More specifically, the current research also explored the correlation between beliefs about language learning score on the five subscales of BALLI (foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivation and expectation) and English academic achievement. The five beliefs about English language learning ranging from the highest to the lowest (motivation and expectation: $p = .000 < 0.05$, the difficulty of language learning: $p = .010 < 0.05$, learning and communication strategies: $p = .020 < 0.05$, the nature of language learning: $p = .016 > 0.05$, and foreign language aptitude: $p = .150 > 0.05$) had positive correlation with English academic achievement. It was also concluded that two out of five categories of beliefs had positive and insignificant correlation with the students' English academic achievement.

The highest positive and significant correlation was between motivation and expectation beliefs and English academic achievement. In other words, students with stronger belief in motivation and expectation tended to significantly perform better in English. The result was

consistent with Lan (2010) stating that the possible reasons for such strong and significant relationship might be because the students with strong belief of motivation and expectation usually inspired themselves to learn English, they might have the expectation to have English speaking friends, or to have opportunities of getting job eventually. Gardner (1985, as quoted in Lan, 2010) emphasizes that motivation encouraged greater overall effort, and resulted in greater success in terms of language achievement.

The result of the current study also revealed that belief of difficulty of language learning correlated significantly and positively with English academic achievement. Participants who were able to discern various levels of difficulty in learning English might pay more attention to the difficulty and be able to overcome it then they would achieve better in learning English. The finding was also supported by the findings of Peacock (1999, cited in Viburphol, 2004) where his participants who underestimated the difficulty of language learning tended to have lower proficiency than who had more realistic estimate. In contrast, Mori (1999) who found learners who perceived the target language that they were learning as a difficult language tended to do worse than those who believed that they were dealing with an easy task.

In terms of belief of learning and communication strategies, the result showed significant and positive relationship with English academic achievement. As stated by Brown (2007), communication strategy links with mechanism for the productive communication of information verbally or non-verbally. Additionally, students' judgments of the difficulty of language learning played a crucial part in the development of their expectation for and commitment to the learning task (Horwitz, 1998, as cited in Lan, 2010). Similarly, the current study found that the higher they believe about learning and communication strategies such as believing that they can guess the meaning of unknown words from the context and practice English with cassettes, tapes, or CD rooms, the higher their English achievement is.

The nature of language learning which concerns with the nature of the process of language learning had positive yet insignificant correlation with English academic achievement. Students who agreed that English speaking country was the best place for learning English and learning English was different from learning other academic subjects might achieve higher English scores than those who disagreed.

Finally, the belief about foreign language aptitude was the lowest belief which correlated positively yet insignificantly with the student's English academic achievement. Foreign language aptitude is defined as the beliefs that some people might have special ability to learn foreign language. It indicated that by believing that some people appeared to endow with abilities to succeed in learning English, students might study harder or practice English as often as possible to get better English achievement.

The indication was also in accordance with the characteristics of good language learner stated by Rubin & Thompson (1982, as cited in Brown, 2007) that good language learners are those who want to learn certain production strategies to fill in the gaps in their own opportunities. These might be the reasons why the

participants who held beliefs about English language learning aptitude could get good and excellent English achievement. However, since the correlation was insignificant with the English academic achievement, teachers should convince their students that those who rely on studying and thus meet educational requirements are more successful than those who depend on their linguistic inheritance and intelligence.

7.   Conclusion

Considering that students had their own beliefs about language learning and those had positive correlation with the student's English academic achievement, it is expected that the results of this research can give some contributions, particularly for educational setting.

The teachers who play significant role at school and parents with their crucial role at home need to provide supportive atmosphere to better encourage learners to think positively and help them in approaching and finding solution for their internal problems related to the negative beliefs in learning foreign language i.e., English.

Furthermore, this present study employed 50 participants of the third-year English Department students at IAIN Samarinda which is considered as the minimum number of samples for correlational research (Dornyei, 2003). Thus, the result of this current research can only be generalized to the group, not all students majoring English, so the future researchers might take more participants to obtain more significant findings.

It is recommended that future researchers explore factors affecting beliefs about language learning and language learning strategies such as age, gender, educational level, etc. to give deeper knowledge about beliefs and strategies in the area of language learning. Additionally, students' beliefs about language learning may not be the only factors related to the students' English academic achievement. Other variables might play a role in it, hence, elaborating English academic achievement, beliefs, and other factors may hopefully make the research more valuable.

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