

English Learning Beliefs of English Majors and Non-English Majors

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Cho, Hyewon. (2016). English learning beliefs of English majors and non-English majors. *Modern English Education*, 17(4), 201-219.

The purpose of this study is to examine the dimensional structure of the beliefs about English language learning of Korean undergraduate students and to find if there are significant differences in beliefs of English majors and non-English majors in relation to gender and foreign country experience. The participants were one hundred sixty-nine Korean university students. The quantitative data from the “Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)” questionnaire were analyzed through a factor analysis and the analysis revealed six independent and interpretable dimensions of the items. Statistically significant differences between the beliefs of English majors and non-English majors were found on speaking strategies and the nature of language learning. The results suggest that the BALLI items can cluster into distinguishable and independent dimensions. This study supports the multidimensional characteristics of the BALLI. The findings of the study also suggest that learners’ beliefs about English learning relate to learner variables such as the field of study, gender, and foreign country experience. The conclusions of this study along with pedagogical implications and limitations are discussed.

[English learning beliefs /BALLI/English majors/Non-English majors/
/ / /]

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been research showing that language learners’ beliefs play a role in second or foreign language learning. Learner beliefs have been considered “more overarching and pervasive than perceptions” (Wesely, 2012, p. S100). According to

Horwitz (1988), beliefs are defined as “student opinions on a variety of issues and controversies related to language learning” (Horwitz, 1988, p. 284). Learners’ beliefs influence the process and product of learning (Ellis, 2008). To explore learners’ beliefs of language learning systemically, Horwitz (1985, 1987, 1988) developed the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). Horwitz’s BALLI has been used extensively to elicit agreement or disagreement with 34 items of language learning beliefs in five themes: foreign language learning aptitude, difficulty of learning a foreign language, the nature of language learning, learning and communicative strategies, and motivations and expectations about language learning (Diab, 2006; Fujiwara, 2011; Horwitz, 1987, 1988, 1999; K. J. Kim, 2012; Kuntz, 1996; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006; Sakui & Gaies, 1999; Zhang & Cui, 2010). Many of the studies based on large-scale survey data of the BALLI used descriptive statistics such as frequencies and means of learners’ responses in order to show their respondents’ beliefs and to compare differences between their beliefs in a specific context (Ariogul, Unal, & Onursal, 2009; Bagherzadeh, 2012; Li & Ruan, 2015; Zhang & Cui, 2010). However, the studies used the original themes without testing validity and reliability of the BALLI. Fujiwara (2011) pointed out the methodological constraint of using frequencies and the scarcity of empirical investigations on the dimensional structure of the language learning belief. Therefore, appropriate statistical analyses should be employed to show the multidimensional characteristics of Korean university students’ English learning beliefs and to verify the themes listed by Horwitz (1987, 1988).

In addition, little research has been conducted to find differences in English learning beliefs of English-majors and non-English majors. There have been a couple of studies focusing on the beliefs of English majors (Li, 2010) and non-English majors (Bagherzadeh, 2012). However, the studies did not attempt to compare English majors with non-English majors. Li (2010) investigated foreign language learning beliefs among English major sophomores of vocational colleges in China. However, statistical analysis to reveal the dimensional characteristic was not employed because the researcher used six factors from a previous study. Bagherzadeh (2012) investigated language leaning beliefs of students enrolled in various majors other than English and performed a descriptive analysis on the 34 items under the themes by listed by Horwitz (1987). There has been one study that compared German majors with English majors to see the differences in their beliefs of foreign language learning but the target learning language of each group was different (Rieger, 2009).

According to Horwitz (1999), a number of different learner variables (i.e., age, language proficiency, setting, and cultural background) influence their beliefs. However, as Wesely (2012) pointed out, very few subgroups of foreign language learners have been systematically represented in the previous research. It suggests that further studies need to address how subgroups of language learners with different learner characteristics vary in

their beliefs.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the dimensional structure of the beliefs about English language learning of Korean undergraduate students and to see if there are significant differences in beliefs of university students in relation to the field of study, gender, and foreign country experience. The present study has addressed the three following research questions:

- 1) What is the dimensional structure of the beliefs about English language learning held by Korean undergraduate students?
- 2) Do English majors and non-English majors significantly differ in their beliefs about English language learning in terms of the dimensions?
- 3) Are there significant differences in beliefs between English majors and non-English majors in relation to gender or foreign country experience?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Beliefs About Language Learning

Investigating students' beliefs about language learning is important in that such beliefs may influence students' expectation about their language learning as well as their attitudes and motivation (Horwitz, 1987). Horwitz (1985, 1987, 1988) developed the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory to identify language learners' beliefs in a systematic way. Based on free-recall tasks and focus group discussions with ESL teachers and students, she clustered 34 items into the following five themes: foreign language learning aptitude, difficulty of learning a foreign language, the nature of language learning, learning and communicative strategies, and motivations and expectations about language learning.

Recent research has employed Horwitz's BALLI to investigate foreign language learners' beliefs about language learning in specific contexts: for example, foreign language and English as a second language (ESL) learners in US (Horwitz, 1987, 1988, 1999; Kuntz, 1996) and English as a foreign language (EFL) learners in other countries (Diab, 2006; Fujiwara, 2011; K. J. Kim, 2012; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006; Sakui & Gaies, 1999; Zhang & Cui, 2010). These studies were based in large-scale survey data.

While many studies used the BALLI to investigate learners' beliefs, the multidimensional characteristics of the BALLI have received little attention from Horwitz and other researchers (Fujiwara, 2011; Kuntz, 1996). Instead of exploring the underlying dimensional structure of the BALLI through statistical analyses, many quantitative studies investigating learners' beliefs analyzed five themes presented by Horwitz, using

descriptive statistics such as frequencies and means of learners' responses (Ariogul, Unal, & Onursal, 2009; Bagherzadeh, 2012; Li & Ruan, 2015; Zhang & Cui, 2010). As Fujiwara (2011) pointed out, the methodological constraint of using frequencies makes difficult to verify the five themes proposed by Horwitz (1987). In fact, even three successive studies (1985, 1987, 1988) examined by Horwitz proposed slightly different items for each theme. For instance, "language difficulty," one of the five themes, included four items in 1985, six items in 1987, and three items in 1988.

A couple of previous studies have attempted to find independent dimensions of the BALLI through statistical analyses in Asian language learning contexts (B. Ahn & M. Yang, 2009; Amuzie & Winke, 2009; Fujiwara, 2011; K. J. Kim, 2012; Yang, 1999). Yang's (1999) study conducted a factor analysis to investigate the relationship between five hundred and five college EFL students' beliefs about language learning and their use of learning strategies in Taiwan. As a result of a principal components analysis, four factors including 6, 7 or 9 items were identified. However, the items had very low factor loadings and half factors had a low level of reliability (i.e., a Cronbach alpha of .52, .55). Likewise, B. Ahn and M. Yang (2009) used the BALLI questionnaire to investigate ninety-two Korean EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategies. They used a factor analysis to obtain the factor scores of the BALLI for the comparison with the data of learning strategies. While Cronbach's alpha was used to test the BALLI's reliability, the internal consistency reliability of each factor was not tested.

Fujiwara (2011) aimed to investigate the dimensional structure of the language learning beliefs of Thai learners and to determine if the conceptually developed themes of the BALLI were empirically identifiable. The data of five hundred forty-two college students were submitted to a factor analysis and a five-factor structure was identified. The study found that 17 BALLI items were conceptually and empirically identified as independent and continuing dimensions of the beliefs. However, the explained total variation was less than 50% (i.e. 40.8%) and all the internal consistency scores for each factor were less than .6. Similarly, K. J. Kim (2012) attempted to examine the factors of Korean high school students' beliefs through structural equation modeling. The participants were four hundred forty-seven students and the analyses on their responses to 26 questionnaires revealed five underlying constructs with a high level of reliability. The study, however, adapted only 9 items from Horwitz's study and added new items to investigate Korean high school students' culture- and context-specific beliefs. Thus, it was difficult to make a direct comparison between the items of the constructed factor of K. J. Kim's study with those of the original themes by Horwitz. Nonetheless, the two studies mentioned above show the independent underlying dimensions of college and secondary students' beliefs about language learning in Asian EFL contexts and they support the multidimensional structure of the BALLI items. Other researchers (Diab, 2006; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006;

Rieger, 2009; Truitt, 1995) have also employed statistical analyses to identify the components of the BALLI systematically. However, the internal consistency reliability of the identified factors was not tested in their studies.

2. Language Learning Beliefs and Learner Variables

The effect of learner variables on their language learning beliefs have been explored by previous studies. Many BALLI studies have investigated the relationship between beliefs about foreign language learning and learner variables such as gender (K. J. Kim, 2012; Rieger, 2009), language proficiency (Bagherzadeh, 2012), target language (Ariogul, Unal, & Onursal, 2009; Diab, 2006; Rieger, 2009), study abroad (Amuzie & Winke, 2009), learning strategies (B. Ahn & M. Yang, 2009; Li, 2010; Yang, 1999), language programs (Li & Ruan, 2015), and distance foreign language learning (Zhang & Cui, 2010). These studies reported the influence of learners' variable on their language leaning beliefs. However, the effect of gender seems to be inconclusive. For example, Rieger (2009) examined gender and target language effect on Hungarian university students' beliefs about language learning. The respondents were one hundred and nine university students studying at English or German departments. The study reported significant gender differences in relation to one factor "approaches." On the contrary, Bagherzadeh (2012) reported no significant effect of gender in English language learning.

Another study to investigate the relationship between the BALLI and learner variables was conducted by Amuzie and Winke (2009). They explored the effect of study abroad on the beliefs of seventy English language learners. The results of a comparison between pre- and during study-abroad beliefs showed that the learners' beliefs changed on "learner autonomy" and "the role of the teacher." It was suggested that foreign language learning context and the exposure of the context might affect learners' language learning belief.

A few studies have focused on the effect of the field of study to see if there are differences in language learning beliefs of students majoring different field of study. Bagherzadeh (2012) investigated language leaning beliefs of non-English majors enrolled in biology, geography, accounting or science. A statistical analysis revealed a significant effect of proficiency level on "motivation and expectations." To find out language leaning beliefs of English majors in Chinese vocational colleges, Li (2010) computed descriptive statistics but the dimensional structure of the questionnaire was not analyzed. The participants of the studies described above are either English majors or non-English majors and little research has explored differences between English language learning beliefs of English majors and non-English majors. Rieger (2009) compared German majors with English majors to see the differences in their beliefs but the target language of each major was different (i.e., German and English). For example, students learning German reported

their beliefs about learning German and English students showed their beliefs about English. The internal consistency reliability was not tested statistically.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

The participants of this study were one hundred sixty-nine EFL students at a university located in Korea. All participants were full-time undergraduate students and they were attending elective English language courses. The demographic information of 169 questionnaires was elicited, and, as a result, seventy-two students were majoring in English and ninety-seven were non-English majors. They were all Korean students, speaking Korean as their mother tongue. The participants in this study had prior experience in English language learning. By the time of the study, they had been learning English for an average of 11.0 years. The age of the respondents ranged from 20 to 27 years, with a mean of 22.9. Seventy-two students were male and ninety-seven students were female. Since the courses were not required but elective, students with different majors attended the courses. Their degree programs were various, ranging from English to Engineering.

2. Instruments

The data for this study were collected through a demographic questionnaire and Horwitz's (1988) BALLI. For a demographic survey, a short questionnaire containing background information questions was used. The questionnaire consisted of questions regarding age, major, gender, foreign country experience (i.e., experience of visiting or living in an English-speaking country), and prior experience in English language learning. The BALLI was used to elicit Korean undergraduate students' beliefs about English language learning. The inventory contains thirty-four items relating to beliefs about language learning within five areas: foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivation and expectations. This self-report questionnaire was based on a 5-point Likert scale. The Likert Scale ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). In this research, a Korean translated version of the BALLI was used to avoid the Korean respondents' misunderstanding of each question. Since the focus of this study was on English learning, "a foreign language" of the original inventory was substituted for "English language." However, the structure and design of the inventory were retained and no significant changes were made to the original BALLI.

3. Procedure

The BALLI questionnaire and demographic survey were administered to one hundred sixty-nine undergraduate students in their regular courses. Before answering the questionnaire, the students were told that their responses would remain confidential. They were asked not to consult their classmates while answering the questions. After completing the questionnaire, they returned the forms to the lecturer.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

The data for this study were collected through a demographic survey and the Likert-scale BALLI questionnaire. The data were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Descriptive statistics for the demographic data analysis were utilized to run for frequencies, mean and standard deviation. In order to identify the broader underlying dimensions pertaining to beliefs, quantitative data from the BALLI questionnaire were submitted to Exploratory Factor Analysis. A principal component method was applied. The factor analysis was used to determine which variables tend to cluster together into a smaller number of variables. The analysis helped to identify the underlying dimensional structure and to confirm the appropriateness of the items for each dimension. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy test and Barlett's test of sphericity were computed to allow for the application of a factor analysis. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to test the internal consistency of outcome measures and to check the reliability of the questionnaire. Once dimensions were established, their mean averages and frequency in percentages were calculated. An independent samples t-test was administered to explore statistically significant differences between English majors and non-English majors' scores on BALLI. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) at the .05 level of significance was carried out to understand the differences between English majors and non-English majors' beliefs in relation to gender and foreign country experience. Then, a post hoc test was computed to see the significant differences between the groups.

IV. RESULTS

1. Beliefs About English Language Learning

The first research question of this study was to identify the underlying dimensional structure of the beliefs about English language learning held by Korean undergraduate students. In order to decide which items formed interpretable dimensions, all Likert-scale

items were submitted to a factor analysis. Prior to further analysis, the KMO sampling adequacy test and Barlett's test of sphericity were performed to allow for the application of a factor analysis. The KMO sampling adequacy test statistic was .68. The Barlett's test of sphericity statistic was significant at .001 level, which indicated that the factor analysis was valid and appropriate for the data set. Cronbach's alpha of the BALLI questionnaire was .70, which showed a high level of reliability. According to the factor analysis, six factors

TABLE 1
Six Rotated Factors of the BALLI Items

Items	Factors					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. It is important to practice in the language laboratory.	.93					
7. It is important to speak English with an excellent accent.	.93					
13. It is okay to guess-if you do not know a word in English.	.91					
16. Learning English is mostly a matter of learning many new vocabulary words.	.60					
19. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.		.90				
9. You should not say anything in English until you can say it correctly.		.88				
32. People who speak English are very intelligent.			.74			
10. It is easier for someone who already speaks English to learn another language.			.70			
2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn English.			.67			
22. Women are better than men at learning English.			.40			
20. Learning English is mostly a matter of learning a many of grammar rules.				-.77		
26. Learning English is mostly a matter of translating from English.				-.65		
3. English is easier to learn than other languages.					.73	
6. I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak English very well.					.68	
31. I would like to learn English so that I can get to know its speakers better.						.82
23. If I speak English very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.						.80
27. If I learn to speak English very well it will help me get a good job.						.61
30. It is important to speak English.						.59
Eigenvalues	5.26	3.19	2.69	2.22	1.93	1.52
% of Variance	16.98	10.30	8.68	7.16	6.24	4.90
Cumulative %	16.98	27.27	35.95	43.11	49.35	54.24
Cronbach's α	.88	.87	.63	.60	.59	.74
KMO = .68, Bartlett's test $\chi^2 = 2255.41$ ($p < .001$)						

accounted for the variance scores in the BALLI data. Examination of the scree plot suggested retaining six factors. The six extracted factors explained 54.24% of the total variance. Then, direct oblimin rotation was used to reduce the number of variables and make the factors more interpretable. Table 1 describes the result of the factor analysis of the BALLI data. The items that loaded .40 and above on the six rotated factors are shown in the Table 1. In this study, loading of .40 or greater was considered as higher loading and items that loaded less than .40 were omitted from subsequent analyses.

The Cronbach's alpha values of the six factors were .88, .87, .63, .60, .59, and .74, respectively (see Table 1). A Cronbach alpha of .60 or higher is considered as an acceptable level of reliability. Although the value of Factor 5 in this current study was .59 that was a slightly low scale, it could be considered to be acceptable in its reliability coefficients.

The six extracted factors with consideration for the items with high loadings were labeled as follows: (a) Factor 1: learning strategies; (b) Factor 2: speaking strategies (c) Factor 3: English language aptitude; (d) Factor 4: the nature of language learning; (e) Factor 5: difficulty of English learning, and (f) Factor 6: motivations and expectation.

2. Belief Differences Between English Majors and Non-English Majors

An independent *t*-test was conducted to investigate if English majors' beliefs about English language learning significantly differ from non-English majors' in terms of the established dimensions. As seen in Table 2, the beliefs between English majors and non-English majors were significantly different in speaking strategies, $t = 2.49$, $p = .01$ and the nature of language learning, $t = 3.44$, $p = .00$. In speaking strategies, the majority of the non-English majors (90.7%) reported that they disagreed or strongly disagreed. More specifically, over half of non-English majors showed much stronger disagreement with the beliefs (60.8%) than English majors did (47.2%). This indicates that the most of the non-English majors did not believe that if they were allowed to make mistake in the beginning, it would be hard to get rid of them later on. They also disagreed with the idea that they should not say anything in English until they could say it correctly. However, 20.8% of the English majors neither agreed nor disagreed with the factor while only 6.2% of the non-English majors chose it.

The English majors were also significantly different from the non-English majors in Factor 4, the nature of language learning. 25.0% of the former group and 46.4% of the latter disagreed or strongly disagreed with the beliefs that leaning English was mostly a matter of learning grammar and of translating from English. However, 27.8% of the English majors regarded learning grammar and translating from English as the most important when learning English whereas only 9.3% of the non-English ones did. No

significant differences concerning learning strategies, English language aptitude, difficulty of English learning, and motivations and expectation were found.

TABLE 2
Statistical Results in Relation to Major Field of Study

		1 ^a	2	3	4	5	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
learning strategies	EM ^b	27.8 ^d	36.1	20.8	13.9	1.4	2.25	1.06	.35
	NEM ^c	11.3	52.6	23.7	10.3	2.1	2.39	0.90	
speaking strategies	EM	0.0	6.9	20.8	25.0	47.2	4.13	0.98	.01*
	NEM	1.0	2.1	6.2	29.9	60.8	4.47	0.79	
English language aptitude	EM	1.4	37.5	41.7	16.7	2.8	2.82	0.83	.10
	NEM	2.1	21.6	52.6	18.6	5.2	3.03	0.83	
the nature of language learning	EM	4.2	23.6	47.2	16.7	8.3	3.01	0.96	.00**
	NEM	0.0	9.3	44.3	35.1	11.3	3.48	0.82	
difficulty of English learning	EM	11.1	30.6	40.3	15.3	2.8	2.68	0.96	.77
	NEM	6.2	39.2	41.2	11.3	2.1	2.64	0.84	
motivations and expectation	EM	8.3	48.6	34.7	6.9	1.4	2.44	0.80	.24
	NEM	3.1	39.2	54.6	3.1	0.0	2.58	0.61	

Note 1. ^a 1, strongly agree; 2, agree; 3, neither agree nor disagree; 4, disagree; 5, strongly disagree.

^b English majors; ^c Non-English majors; ^d Response frequency (in percentage)

Note 2. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

3. Belief Differences in Relation to Gender and Foreign Country Experience

To find if there are significant effects of other learner variables on language learning beliefs in terms of the dimensional structure of the BALLI, a one-way ANOVA was conducted on the factor mean scores. Two sources of group variation were gender and experience visiting or living in an English-speaking country.

First, a one-way ANOVA was employed to test the influence of gender on the six factors and conducted among English learning beliefs of male English majors, female English majors, male non-English majors, and female non-English majors (Table 3). A significant difference among the groups was found on Factor 4, the nature of language learning ($F = 4.40$, $p = .01$). A post hoc test revealed that male English majors were significantly different from both female ($p < .005$) and male non-English majors ($p = .02$). As shown in Table 3, 26.5% of the male English group agreed that learning English was mostly a matter of learning grammar rules or translating from English. In contrast, male (45.9%) and female (46.9%) students of the non-English group disagreed with the beliefs.

A statistically significant difference was also found between female English majors and female non-English majors ($p = .02$). 29.0% of the female English group believed that learning English was mostly a matter of learning grammar rules and translating from English while only 6.1% of the female non-English group agreed with the beliefs. No significant differences concerning the other factors were found.

Second, to test the influence of foreign country experience, another one-way ANOVA

was conducted among English learning beliefs of English majors and non-English majors who either visited an English-speaking country or not. Table 4 presents the results regarding the influence of foreign country experience in terms of six dimensions.

The results showed that the groups were significantly different in speaking strategies, $F = 3.17, p = .03$ and the nature of language learning, $F = 4.66, p < .005$. A post hoc test on Factor 2 revealed that English majors without experience were significantly different from non-English majors with experience ($p = .02$) and without experience ($p = .01$). In terms of speaking strategies, 9.80% of the English majors without experience agreed while the non-majors with experience did not agree at all (0%). It was interesting that 23.5% of the English majors without experience reported that they neither agreed nor disagreed, which was high when compared with that of the other groups (0%, 0%, 2.5%). The non-English majors with experience showed a noticeable distribution on Factor 2. All students of the group reported disagreement on the speaking strategies (disagree = 41.2%; strongly disagree = 58.8%). They seemed to believe that permitting beginners to make mistakes or

TABLE 3
Statistical Results in Relation to Major Field of Study and Gender

		1 ^a	2	3	4	5	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
learning strategies	ME ^b	26.5 ^f	26.5	29.4	17.6	0.0	2.38	1.07	.49
	FE ^c	28.9	44.7	13.2	10.5	2.6	2.13	1.04	
	MNE ^d	16.7	47.9	20.8	14.6	0.0	2.33	0.93	
	FNE ^e	6.1	57.1	26.5	6.1	4.1	2.45	0.87	
speaking strategies	ME	0.0	8.8	20.6	20.6	50.0	4.12	1.04	.09
	FE	0.0	5.3	21.1	28.9	44.7	4.13	0.93	
	MNE	0.0	4.2	8.3	25.0	62.5	4.46	0.82	
	FNE	2.0	0.0	4.1	34.7	59.2	4.49	0.77	
English language aptitude	ME	2.9	35.3	44.1	14.7	2.9	2.79	0.84	.42
	FE	0.0	39.5	39.5	18.4	2.6	2.84	0.82	
	MNE	0.0	29.2	45.8	14.6	10.4	3.06	0.93	
	FNE	4.1	14.3	59.2	22.4	0.0	3.00	0.74	
the nature of language learning	ME	0.0	26.5	58.8	8.8	5.9	2.94	0.78	.01
	FE	7.9	21.1	36.8	23.7	10.5	3.08	1.10	
	MNE	0.0	12.5	41.7	39.6	6.3	3.40	0.79	
	FNE	0.0	6.1	46.9	30.6	16.3	3.57	0.84	
difficulty of English learning	ME	17.6	26.5	35.3	14.7	5.9	2.65	1.12	.83
	FE	5.3	34.2	44.7	15.8	0.0	2.71	0.80	
	MNE	6.3	41.7	41.7	10.4	0.0	2.56	0.77	
	FNE	6.1	36.7	40.8	12.2	4.1	2.71	0.91	
motivations and expectation	ME	2.9	58.8	35.3	0.0	2.9	2.41	0.70	.62
	FE	13.2	39.5	34.2	13.2	0.0	2.47	0.89	
	MNE	0.0	39.6	60.4	0.0	0.0	2.60	0.49	
	FNE	6.1	38.8	49.0	6.1	0.0	2.55	0.71	

Note. ^a 1, strongly agree; 2, agree; 3, neither agree nor disagree; 4, disagree; 5, strongly disagree.

^b Male English majors; ^c Female English majors; ^d Male non-English majors; ^e Female non-English majors; ^f Response frequency (in percentage)

allowing students to make errors in English speaking is acceptable.

A post hoc test on the factor, “the nature of language learning” showed that the English majors without experience were significantly different from the non-English majors either with ($p < .005$) or without experience ($p = .01$). The English majors visiting English-speaking country were also significantly different from the non-English majors with experience, $p = .01$. As described in Table 4, 23.8% of the English majors without experience responded that learning English was mostly a matter of learning grammar rules or translating from English.

On the contrary, approximately half non-English majors with or without experience did not agree with the beliefs (47.1%, 46.3%). Only 5.9% of the non-English majors with experience and 10.0% of those without experience regarded learning grammar rules and translating as the most important matter of learning English.

TABLE 4
Results in Relation to Major Field of Study and English-speaking Country Experience

		1 ^a	2	3	4	5	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
learning strategies	EF ^b	28.6 ^f	38.1	19.0	14.3	0.0	2.19	1.03	.49
	ENF ^c	27.5	35.3	21.6	13.7	2.0	2.27	1.08	
	NEF ^d	5.9	41.2	35.3	17.6	0.0	2.65	0.86	
	NENF ^e	12.5	55.0	21.3	8.8	2.5	2.34	0.90	
speaking strategies	EF	0.0	0.0	14.3	33.3	52.4	4.38	0.74	.03
	ENF	0.0	9.8	23.5	21.6	45.1	4.02	1.05	
	NEF	0.0	0.0	0.0	41.2	58.8	4.59	0.51	
	NENF	1.3	2.5	7.5	27.5	61.3	4.45	0.84	
English language aptitude	EF	0.0	42.9	38.1	14.3	4.8	2.81	0.87	.41
	ENF	2.0	35.3	43.1	17.6	2.0	2.82	0.82	
	NEF	5.9	11.8	64.7	17.6	0.0	2.94	0.75	
	NENF	1.3	23.8	50.0	18.8	6.3	3.05	0.86	
the nature of language learning	EF	0.0	23.8	52.4	19.0	4.8	3.05	0.80	.00
	ENF	5.9	23.5	45.1	15.7	9.8	3.00	1.02	
	NEF	0.0	5.9	47.1	11.8	35.3	3.76	1.03	
	NENF	0.0	10.0	43.8	40.0	6.3	3.43	0.76	
difficulty of English learning	EF	14.3	33.3	38.1	14.3	0.0	2.52	0.93	.38
	ENF	9.8	29.4	41.2	15.7	3.9	2.75	0.98	
	NEF	11.8	47.1	35.3	5.9	0.0	2.35	0.79	
	NENF	5.0	37.5	42.5	12.5	2.5	2.70	0.85	
motivations and expectation	EF	0.0	66.7	33.3	0.0	0.0	2.33	0.48	.49
	ENF	11.8	41.2	35.3	9.8	2.0	2.49	0.90	
	NEF	0.0	35.3	64.7	0.0	0.0	2.65	0.49	
	NENF	3.8	40.0	52.5	3.8	0.0	2.56	0.63	

Note. ^a 1, strongly agree; 2, agree; 3, neither agree nor disagree; 4, disagree; 5, strongly disagree.

^b English majors with English-speaking country experience; ^c English majors without English-speaking country experience; ^d Non-English majors with English-speaking country experience; ^e Non-English majors without English-speaking country experience; ^f Response frequency (in percentage)

V. DISCUSSION

1. Multidimensionality of Language Learning Beliefs

To determine which items of the Korean undergraduate students' responses to the BALLI formed independent and interpretable dimensions, this current empirical study employed a factor analysis. As a result of the analysis, six factors including items with high loadings were identified: learning strategies, speaking strategies, English language aptitude, the nature of language learning, difficulty of English learning, and motivations and expectation. Since this study attempted to find out the underlying dimensional structure of BALLI items empirically rather than to employ five themes proposed by Horwitz (1987, 1988), similarities and differences were revealed between the extracted factors and the original conceptual themes. First of all, some similarities were shown in the dimensional structure as seen in Table 5. Items that loaded on five factors matched Horwitz's separation of themes except for Factor 2. "Speaking strategies" was added in this study but was not a completely new factor. In fact, "learning and communication strategies" of Horwitz's (1988) study was subdivided into learning strategies (7, 13, 21) and speaking strategies (9, 19) as a result of the factor analysis of this study.

TABLE 5
Summary of Factor Analysis Results in the Light of Horwitz's (1988) Themes

	Factor	Items of this study	Horwitz's (1988) items
1	learning strategies	7 13 16 21	7 9 12 13 17 18 19 21
2	speaking strategies	9 19	
3	English language aptitude	2 10 22 32	1 2 10 15 22 29 32 33 34
4	the nature of language learning	20 26	8 11 16 20 25 26
5	difficulty of English learning	3 6	14 24 28
6	motivations and expectation	23 27 30 31	23 27 30 31

Unlike the similar pattern in the dimensional structure of the English learning beliefs, a major difference was found in items grouped under the factor, "difficulty of English learning." The original items listed by Horwitz (1988) were 14, 24, 28 while this study included 3, 6. On the surface, it seemed like all original items were eliminated and substituted by other ones for the language learning difficulty. However, in another study by Horwitz (1987), 3 and 6 were included as items of the theme related to language learning difficulty. It implies that the selected items (3, 6) could be considered as language learning difficulty of the BALLI as well as an independent factor because the items are not so different from the original conceptual theme.

43.3% of the items grouped into Horwitz's (1988) themes appeared to remain under the same categories in this research. For example, three original items (7, 13, 21) of "learning

strategies,” four (2, 10, 22, 32) of “English language aptitude,” two (20, 26) of “the nature of language learning,” and four (23, 27, 30, 31) of “motivations and expectation” loaded onto the same factors. These findings indicate that the original themes of the BALLI were empirically confirmed by the results of the factor analysis on Korean undergraduates’ beliefs about English learning. These findings are consistent with those of previous studies (Fujiwara, 2011; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2006). Like this present study, the previous studies using the BALLI confirm the grouping of the items empirically and support the validity of part of Horwitz’s themes. For example, Nikitina and Furuoka (2006) identified four factors, “motivation,” “aptitude,” “strategy” and “ease of learning”; Fujiwara (2011) identified five factors, “learning and communication strategies,” “important aspects of language learning,” “expectations and difficulty of learning English,” “nature and aptitude of language learning,” “difficulty and ability of language learning.” The findings of the previous studies and this current study support the multidimensional characteristics of the BALLI. In addition, they suggest that the theme patterns in Horwitz’s BALLI are cohesive and the items can cluster into distinguishable and independent dimensions.

2. English Learning Beliefs in Relation to Learner Variables

The English majors and non-English majors of this study showed statistically significant differences on two dimensions emerged from the factor analysis. In general, the majority of the respondents reported that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with beliefs about speaking strategies. That is, most of the students did not believe that they should not be allowed to make mistakes in the beginning or not say anything with errors in English. The finding is consistent with that of Diab’s (2006) study, which showed that half of students learning English disagreed on the same category.

Over 90% of the non-English majors disagreed with the beliefs that permitting beginners to make mistakes or allowing students to make errors in English speaking should be avoided. In contrast, 20.8% of the English majors neither agreed nor disagreed with the beliefs. This indicates that the most of the non-English majors have less fear of making errors than English majors do. On contrast, the English majors seem to believe that grammatical accuracy is very important in speaking or learning English. The beliefs about accuracy may increase the students’ anxiety about making errors.

Especially, the percentage of the English majors without foreign country experience who neither agreed nor disagreed was 23.5% whereas that of the non-English majors with experience who chose the same answer was 0%. It implies that some English majors without foreign country experience seemed to think that beginners’ mistakes and learners’ errors are somewhat acceptable but too many errors would not be permitted. On the contrary, the non-English majors with experience seemed not to be afraid of making errors

and mistakes in English speaking. They believed that avoiding making mistakes and errors in English speaking was not helpful for improving their speaking skill. Experienced students majoring in English did not agree with beliefs about speaking strategies at all whereas a small number of students without experience agreed with it. This suggests that English-speaking country experience may help reduce learners' hesitation, shyness, or fear of embarrassment of making mistakes and errors when speaking English.

Another dimension that showed significant differences between beliefs of English majors and non-English majors was the nature of language learning. 27.8% of the English majors regarded learning grammar and translating from English as an important matter when learning English. However, only 9.3% of non-English majors believed that leaning English was mostly a matter of learning grammar and of translating. This result indicates that the English majors are more concern about grammatical accuracy than non-English majors. As H. Kim (2009) suggests that spoken grammar needs to developed and included in the curriculum for English class, English majors might need more grammar courses to improve their accuracy.

In particular, male English majors were significantly different from female non-English majors. 26.5% of the male English majors agreed that learning English was mostly a matter of learning grammar rules or translating from English. In contrast, female (46.9%) students of the non-English group disagreed with the beliefs. 14.7% of the female students majoring in English disagreed with the factor while 34.2% of the male disagreed with it. It indicates that male students might have more concerns and stronger beliefs about importance of grammar and translation than female students.

Likewise, the impact of English-speaking country experience on the students' beliefs about the nature of language learning was found. 29.4% of the English majors without experience responded that learning English was mostly a matter of learning grammar rules or translating from English. On the contrary, approximately half of the non-English majors with experience did not agree with the beliefs. In particular, 35.3% of the experienced non-English group strongly disagreed with the beliefs about the nature of language learning while only 6.3% of the unexperienced non-English group did. This indicates that non-English majors visiting or living in an English-speaking country strongly believe that learning English is more than learning grammar rules and translating from English. In addition, they seemed to believe that grammar and translation were not enough to acquire English as a foreign language. This is compatible with the finding mentioned above, which non-English majors with experience seemed not to be afraid of making errors and mistakes in English speaking. That is, the group with experience less concern about grammar rules and less worry about making errors than the other groups. In the light of the findings, it is carefully suggested that foreign country experience may affect the student's beliefs about the nature of language learning as well as speaking strategies.

VI. CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study extracted 6 factors of beliefs about English language learning and identified 15 items classified under the same themes presented by Horwitz (1988). Approximately half of the items grouped into Horwitz's (1988) themes appeared to remain under the same categories in this research. The results show that the theme patterns in Horwitz's BALLI are supported and the items can cluster into distinguishable and independent dimensions. The findings help understand the multidimensional characteristics of the English learning beliefs.

Another finding of this study is a statistically significant effect of the field of study on two factors. Significant differences in the beliefs of English and non-English majors were found on speaking strategies and the nature of language learning. Specifically, English majors seemed to believe that some of beginners' mistakes and learners' errors were acceptable but too many errors would not be permitted. A possible effect of gender and foreign country experience was also found and the finding suggests that those variables may affect learner beliefs about English language learning. Furthermore, the findings support the proposition that background variables may be important sources of group variation in students' beliefs about language learning (Horwitz, 1999; Diab, 2006). This study sheds light on the impact of learner variables such as the study of field, gender, and foreign country experience on students' beliefs about language learning.

According to Ellis (2008), learners' beliefs influence the process and product of learning. In this sense, the findings of this study provide useful information for English instructors in that the instructors can understand different beliefs of English majors and non-English majors as well as students' beliefs about English language learning. If a teacher understands their students' beliefs, they can use the information in their teaching process and it may positively affect students' language learning in the class. For example, some English majors tend not to speak the English word until they can speak it correctly. Instead of forcing the students to speak English, the instructor who understands the differences in English leaning beliefs will try to reduce the students' fear of embarrassment of making errors. They also help the students understand that making errors is neither embarrassment nor shame, but it is part of learning.

The findings of this current study enhance our understanding of beliefs about English language learning, but there are some limitations. The number of respondents who have visited an English-speaking country was relatively small when compared with that of the students who have not. Thus, the small number of respondents might influence the statistical significant effect of experienced and unexperienced groups. Another limitation is that this study did not find a significant difference between male and female English majors or between male and female non-English majors. Even though there was the effect

of gender or foreign country experience, the effect of field of study cannot be ignored because a significant difference was found between English majors and non-English majors. This study employed one-way ANOVA to compare the mean scores of various groups and their interaction was not calculated. Further research should use two-way ANOVA to see if there is an interaction between the variables. Moreover, further research also needs to include a larger size of participants in order to find more conclusive results and investigate the different effects of other learner variables on learners' learning beliefs.

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Examples in: English**Applicable Languages: English****Applicable Levels: Tertiary**

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Received 15 September 2016

Revised 25 October 2016

Accepted 11 November 2016