

NATIVE TEACHER'S PERCEPTION ON STUDENTS' LANGUAGE LEARNING COMPETENCE

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Abstract

This qualitative case study explores native English teachers' perceptions of language learning competence among fifth-semester students in the English Education Department. Through semi-structured interviews with one native speaker from the United States participating in the guest lecture program, this research examines students' competencies across four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The findings reveal that students demonstrate excellent listening abilities but struggle with colloquial American expressions and culturally-specific phrases in structured classroom contexts. Their speaking skills are characterized as fluent with strong explanatory abilities, though confidence levels vary significantly due to Indonesian cultural values emphasizing humility and hierarchy. Reading competence is assessed as strong, particularly with narrative texts, while academic articles present greater challenges. Writing assessment was limited due to the curriculum structure, though students showed excellence in academic writing tasks. The study identifies six underlying factors shaping native speaker perceptions: dominance of formal academic language learning, influence of Indonesian cultural values on self-expression, limitations of unbalanced learning methodology, adaptive capacity in multi-skill communication, differences in cross-cultural expectations, and limited authentic learning contexts. These findings highlight the need for curriculum reform incorporating diverse authentic materials, balanced skill development, and cultural adaptation strategies to bridge the gap between formal academic learning and real-world communication needs in Indonesian English language education.

Keywords—English Education, Language Competence, Native Speaker Perception

Introduction

English has become a compulsory subject in Indonesian elementary schools, as mandated by the Minister of Education Regulation No. 12 of 2024, Article 33. This marks a significant shift in the national education system and reflects the growing importance of English in an increasingly globalized world. Early exposure to English is important to building strong language foundations, as early learners tend to develop higher proficiency levels, approaching native-like fluency (Larasaty et al., 2022; Burns & Jules, 2023). Despite this policy, most English teachers in Indonesia are non-native speakers. Non-native speakers learn English as a second or foreign language, unlike native speakers, who acquire it naturally in an English-speaking environment (Al Roomy, 2022). Their use of English is often influenced by their first language, especially in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary choices. They may also mentally translate from their native language before expressing ideas in English (Shi, 2022).

However, non-native teachers have unique strengths. Since they share similar learning journeys with their students, they can better understand and address common learning challenges. They also tend to create a more relatable classroom environment, making students more comfortable expressing themselves. Additionally, their ability to use the local language

effectively to explain complex ideas enhances learning (Tajeddin et al., 2023). The context where non-native teachers teach non-native learners creates a distinctive dynamic. These teachers are often more aware of frequent learner errors and can tailor strategies to the local context. However, as emphasized by Waghole et al., (2022), the success of such teaching depends heavily on teacher qualifications, teaching approaches, and students' exposure to English outside school. With high-quality instruction and appropriate strategies, students of non-native teachers can achieve proficiency comparable to that of students taught by native speakers.

Supporting this, a longitudinal study by Boonsuk et al. (2023) in Southeast Asia revealed that teaching effectiveness is less about whether the teacher is native or not, and more about the quality of interaction, consistency of practice, and the learner's opportunity to use English. Confidence and motivation, often better nurtured by culturally aware non-native teachers, also play a significant role in language acquisition. At the same time, the inclusion of native speakers through guest lectures in English Language Education departments contributes positively. These guest teachers, often from English-speaking countries like the United States, enhance students' understanding of pronunciation, intonation, and cultural nuances. Such programs offer students authentic linguistic exposure and boost their confidence in real-world communication.

Language learning competence itself consists of three dimensions: (1) linguistic competence; grammar, vocabulary, phonology. (2) communicative competence; functional skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and (3) metacognitive and cultural awareness; self-regulation, strategy use, and sensitivity to cultural contexts. (V. Abang & L. Paglinawan, 2024), Abang and Paglinawan's research shows that students' metacognitive skills, such as self-evaluation and strategy awareness, strongly predict success in language learning. Huang (2023) adds that cultural metacognition, reflecting on one's cultural assumptions, enhances intercultural competence in emotional, cognitive, and behavioral domains, even when it doesn't directly increase factual cultural knowledge. This supports the integration of reflective and affective aspects into language instruction.

The presence of native speakers in educational programs thus contributes not only to pronunciation and cultural understanding but also to fostering students' metacognitive growth. By encouraging learners to reflect on communication strategies and cultural dimensions, such exposure promotes deeper self-awareness, flexibility, and intercultural skills. Together, these elements enhance students' overall language competence. Research on native teachers' perceptions shows they often hold optimistic views about students' abilities but recognize challenges such as understanding idioms and native accents Dhomiri et al., (2020). Meanwhile, Estaji & Tabrizi, (2022) found that previous learning experiences shape students' perceptions of teacher competence. Positive past interactions with native teachers increase confidence, while negative ones can reduce motivation.

Nurhayati & Ganna, (2023) highlighted the effectiveness of communicative teaching methods like group discussions and role plays in building students' speaking ability and confidence. Teachers who use these methods help students overcome psychological barriers to language use. Nevertheless, gaps remain in research. Most studies focus on formal classroom settings, overlooking informal teacher-student interactions that also contribute to learning. There is still a lack of understanding of how students' cultural factors and socio-economic backgrounds influence their perceptions of the language competence taught by native teachers.

Given these gaps, this study aims to explore native English teachers' perceptions of 5th-semester students in the English Language Education Study Program. It will assess students' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills, evaluate the impact of native speaker programs on student competence, and identify effective teaching strategies from the perspective of native instructors.

The research problems to be answered in this study are:

1. What are the native English teachers' perceptions of the language competence of fifth-semester students in the English Education Department?
2. Why does the teacher have those perceptions?

Literature Review

Research on native speaker teachers' perceptions of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students' language proficiency continues to evolve, particularly in the context of higher education. According to Fahriani et al., (2020), teachers' perceptions of students' abilities are greatly influenced by their professional experience, cultural background, and expectations regarding the communicative use of English. A cross-cultural study involving native-speaking teachers in Asia found that students often demonstrate strength in understanding language structure and academic vocabulary, but face challenges in spontaneous oral expression due to limited exposure to authentic communication situations. This highlights a gap between language proficiency in formal contexts and language skills in real-world contexts.

On the other hand, the integration between skill-based learning approaches and metacognitive awareness is also an important focus. According to Dewaele & Leung, (2022), students' success in achieving language proficiency is determined by the presence of native-speaking teachers and learning strategies that foster students' self-awareness of how they learn language. Teachers who can facilitate students' metacognitive reflection, for example, through reflective feedback and open-ended questions, can enhance their self-confidence and communication skills. This strategy is particularly relevant in the Indonesian context given cultural values such as humility and respect for authority, which often make students reluctant to speak openly in class (Yuzar et al., 2022).

Furthermore, direct interaction with native speakers is also associated with improved cross-cultural competence and adaptive communication strategies. A study by (Chacón, 2022), shows that students who interact with native speakers regularly demonstrate significant progress in understanding idioms, pragmatic nuances, and speaking confidence. However, the success of such programs depends heavily on a balanced and contextual curriculum design. If learning remains overly focused on grammatical and academic approaches without authentic activities, students' opportunities to develop natural communication skills will remain limited (Tanihardjo & Stardy, 2022). Therefore, curriculum reform is needed that emphasizes balance among skills and teacher training for both native and non-native speakers to understand the social and cultural dynamics of local students.

Research Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the perceptions of native speaker teachers regarding the language learning competencies of fourth semester students in the English Language Education Study Program. The study involved one native speaker from the United States who participated in a guest lecture or visiting lecture program in the department. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured and in-depth interviews, each lasting approximately 90 minutes. The interviews were conducted face to face in a campus setting that was comfortable for the participant. They were recorded using a digital audio recorder with the participant's permission. All research procedures were conducted in accordance with research ethics principles, including maintaining the confidentiality of participant identities, providing complete information about the purpose of the study, and allowing participants the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences.

Interview questions were designed to uncover native speaker teachers' perceptions of factors that influence the development of students' language competence. The interview guide focused on four aspects of language competence: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. According to Kalsum et al., (2023), one skill is rarely used separately in real language. Many real-life communication situations involve the integration of two or more skills. Integration of skills is commonly used in everyday life. For example, someone reads a letter and replies to it by writing after reading and may talk about it after writing it. Two or more language skills are commonly integrated in everyday language use. Many English teachers, especially in the context of English Foreign Language (EFL), do not implement integrated learning; instead, they teach students separately, where they do not combine the four skills into one unit, but they teach based on subtopics such as grammar and writing. Classroom language skills should also be

integrated into the language teaching process, as in real life. To provide a more meaningful and purposeful learning environment, teachers should integrate language skills - reading, speaking, listening, and writing when teaching and practicing the language. In an ideal teaching and learning activity, teachers and students should involve reading, speaking, listening, and writing in their activities. Generally, people use language, especially speaking, to interact with others. However, it does not mean that the other three language skills (writing, reading, and listening) are not involved in the conversation.

Data analysis in this study was conducted following Miles and Huberman's qualitative data analysis framework, which consists of three parallel streams of activity: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing/verifying conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Following the collection of interview data from native speaker participants, analysis will begin with data reduction, in which the researcher will transcribe the recorded interviews verbatim and carefully review the transcripts to identify relevant information related to the four aspects of language competence (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). This process involved coding segments of the transcripts according to specific language competencies, challenges faced by students, and native speakers' observations of students' integrated language skills (Mohajan, 2018). The coding process will be iterative, involving deductive codes derived from the research questions and inductive codes emerging from the data (Pratt, 2023).

In the data presentation phase, the coded information will be organized into thematic matrices or networks to visualize patterns and relationships between different aspects of language competence as perceived by native speakers (Lester et al., 2020). This presentation will help identify how native speakers' perceptions align with or differ from the integrated language skills approach outlined in the literature. Each matrix will organize the data according to the four language skills while highlighting their interconnections in classroom and real-world contexts. The researcher will include direct quotes from participants to maintain the authenticity of the data and ensure that the native speaker's voice is maintained throughout the analysis (L. Haven & Van Grootel, 2019).

The final phase of drawing and verifying conclusions will involve synthesizing findings to develop comprehensive insights into native speakers' perceptions of students' language competence. The researcher will identify patterns and themes across the data, particularly focusing on how native speakers perceive language skill integration among students. These conclusions will be verified through member checking, where initial findings will be shared with participants to ensure accurate interpretation of their perspectives. Additionally, the researcher will engage in reflexive practices throughout the analysis process to acknowledge and minimize personal biases that may influence interpretation of the data. This three-phase analysis approach will ensure a systematic and rigorous examination of native speakers' perceptions while maintaining the integrity of the qualitative case study design.

Results and Discussion

The Based on the analysis of semi-structured interviews and in-depth interviews of interview data with native English teachers, this study produces important findings that provide a comprehensive picture of native speakers' perceptions of the language competence of fifth-semester students in the English Language Education Department.

1. Native Speaker Perceptions on Students' Language Competence

Based on data analysis, it was found that the native speaker had a perception of students' language competence as follows:

1.1 Excellent Comprehension Abilities in Structured Contexts

The 5th semester students demonstrated exceptional listening abilities when interacting with native speakers. The teacher was particularly impressed with their overall comprehension skills, stating:

"I thought it was very excellent I think for the most part they understood what I was saying, and they understood my directions. But overall I thought that their listening skills were very strong"

This indicates that students have developed solid foundational listening skills that enable them to follow classroom instructions and engage meaningfully with native speaker input. Their strong listening comprehension suggests that they have been adequately exposed to various English accents and speaking patterns, allowing them to process authentic English discourse effectively. However, this strength is more evident in structured classroom settings where context and visual cues can support comprehension.

Despite their strong listening abilities, students encountered difficulties with colloquial American English expressions and culturally specific phrases. The teacher identified this as a notable challenge:

"I think that as a native speaker and also as an American English speaker, because I come from America and that's different from Britain and different from Australia, I naturally have some words or some phrases that mean something for me, but don't always translate the same for Indonesians learning English"

A specific example was provided where the teacher used the phrase "got it?" meaning "do you understand?" but students were confused because they had not encountered this particular American expression before. This suggests that while students possess strong fundamental listening skills, they may struggle with informal, culturally-bound expressions that aren't typically taught in formal English education settings. The limitation here is not their ability to hear and process English sounds, but rather their exposure to diverse dialectal variations and colloquial usage.

Interestingly, the teacher noted that listening difficulties were minimal and easily addressed through adaptive communication strategies. When asked about strategies to help students with listening difficulties, the teacher responded:

"Like I said, I didn't notice too much difficulty with my students last semester in listening. Probably just what I was saying before about how if I used an English phrase or an American English phrase and I noticed that they looked a little bit confused, I would just think about 'okay, how can I say this in a different way?' how can I say that maybe is something that they have already heard before and that they will understand in the future"

This demonstrates that the students' listening challenges were not fundamental comprehension problems but rather gaps in exposure to specific varieties of English. The teacher's ability to quickly identify confusion and rephrase indicates that students were responsive to clarification and could adapt their listening strategies when given alternative expressions. This suggests that their listening foundation is strong enough to support learning and that difficulties can be overcome through increased exposure to diverse English varieties and expressions.

1.2 Fluent Expression Despite Cultural Hesitation

One of the main competencies of 5th semester students in speaking is their ability to explain things very clearly. This was evident from the native teacher's experience when students conducted a teaching project, where they demonstrated excellent performance. As stated by the teacher:

"I think explaining things. They were able to explain things very clearly. When they did the project where they were a teacher, they had a nice loud teacher voice, which I thought was great"

This ability shows that students can not only speak with appropriate volume but also convey information in an easily understandable manner. However, these competencies might be more apparent in formal contexts such as presentations or teaching, and may not necessarily be consistent in more casual everyday conversations.

Regarding speaking fluency, 5th semester students demonstrated a good communication ability without excessive pauses or difficulties. The native teacher observed,

"I think for the most part, the fifth semester students could talk comfortably without having to stop and think too much about what they needed to say. I think they were fluid in their conversation skills."

This indicates that they have achieved adequate fluency for effective communication. However, regarding confidence, there was significant variation among students. As expressed:

"I think there are some students who were very confident and always participated and liked to share their ideas, and then there were some students who were a little bit more shy and were hesitant to share their answer."

This shows that while technically capable of speaking fluently, not all students possess the same level of confidence in expressing their ideas.

Students' biggest challenge in speaking is not a language ability issue, but rather cultural factors that influence how they interact with native speakers. The teacher identified this cultural difference as significant:

"I think that Indonesia is a very different culture. People are more humble, and more hierarchy is essential, so sometimes I feel like some students were hesitant to share their opinions with full confidence because they wanted to show respect to me as the teacher."

Indonesian cultural values' respectful attitude and humility can hinder students from speaking confidently or expressing different opinions. This contrasts with the native speaker culture, which is more extroverted and direct in communication. While this is not a language-ability weakness, it can become a barrier to effective cross-cultural communication.

1.3 Strong Text Comprehension Across Various Genres

The 5th semester students demonstrated strong reading abilities and understanding of various English texts. Although the TESOL methodology class did not focus heavily on daily reading activities, the native teacher observed that students' reading skills were generally very good. As stated:

"Because it was TESOL methodology, we did not do that much. I mean, we did a small amount of reading but did not read every day. I think from what I remember, their reading skills were mostly pretty strong."

The teacher also deliberately used authentic articles written for native speakers because they believed it was important for students to have experience reading authentic materials. These competencies indicate that students have developed a solid understanding of English texts and can handle the challenge of reading more complex materials. However, this ability might be more evident in structured texts and not necessarily consistent across all reading materials.

Students' reading abilities varied depending on the type of text they encountered. The teacher identified significant differences between easy and difficult texts:

"I think it is easier or probably stories and narratives and things like fairy tales or fables, things like that. And then probably the most difficult would be any article written entirely in academic English content or academic English theories, because those can be hard for even native speakers to understand sometimes."

Students' ability to understand stories and narratives shows they have solid basic reading skills for texts with familiar structures. However, difficulties with academic articles indicate that they still need further development in understanding more complex and technical texts. This is reasonable because academic texts require understanding not only the language but also the underlying concepts and theories.

Regarding identifying the main ideas and understanding implied information, 5th-semester students performed well. The teacher observed that:

"I think they were quite strong. I can't specifically remember. I'm trying to think specifically about an article that we read. But for me, from what I remember, I think they understood the main idea and they did a good job explaining it."

This ability shows that students can read at a literal level and possess deeper comprehension skills. They can extract important information from texts and explain it well,

which indicates the development of critical reading skills. However, as mentioned earlier, challenges arise when they encounter phrases or words specific to American English, which can hinder complete comprehension of texts, although their basic ability to identify main ideas is already quite strong.

1.4 Detailed Academic Composition in Limited Assessment

The assessment of 5th semester students' writing abilities was significantly limited due to the nature of the TESOL methodology course, which did not emphasize writing as a primary focus. The teacher acknowledged this limitation, stating:

"I think about a writing activity we did. I do not think we did that much writing, to be honest. I think we mostly talked, read, and listened. I cannot remember that much writing that we did."

This indicates that the course structure prioritized oral communication, reading, and listening skills over written expression. While this approach may have strengthened other language competencies, it created a gap in evaluating students' writing capabilities. The limited writing practice suggests that students may not have had sufficient opportunities to develop and demonstrate their written communication skills, which could disadvantage their overall language proficiency development.

Despite the limited writing activities, when students were allowed to write, they demonstrated excellent performance in academic writing tasks. The teacher recalled a specific writing assessment from the final exam:

"Oh, now that I think about it, we did have on the final exam, we did have a short answer where I asked them to explain about, they read about a situation and then they told me what method, what teaching method they thought that the teacher should use. Moreover, they did a very good job with that."

The quality of their written responses was particularly impressive, as the teacher noted:

"It was very clear. They wrote excellent sentences to explain and give details to their explanation."

This evidence suggests that students possess strong foundational writing skills, particularly analytical and explanatory writing. Their ability to construct clear, detailed explanations demonstrates good command of written English structure and the capacity to articulate complex ideas effectively in writing.

The assessment of students' writing competency remains incomplete due to insufficient writing opportunities throughout the course. The teacher's inability to provide a comprehensive evaluation is evident in the statement:

"So with that assignment, they did great, but I do not think I can think of any other writing assignments that we did. It was more about talking."

This limitation in assessment creates uncertainty about students' full range of writing abilities, including creative writing, different genres, and various writing purposes. While the single example of academic writing showed excellence, it cannot represent the complete spectrum of writing competencies that students should develop. While valuable, the focus on oral communication inadvertently neglected the development of writing skills crucial for academic and professional success. This suggests a need for more balanced integration of writing activities in future course designs to assess better and develop students' comprehensive writing abilities.

2. Aspects Underlying Native Speaker Perception

After identifying various native speakers' perceptions of students' language competence, the next question that needs to be answered is why teachers hold these perceptions. To answer the second research question, data analysis revealed several factors that contribute to the formation of native English teachers' views

2.1 Dominance of Formal and Academic Language Learning

Native speakers hold positive perceptions of students' listening and reading abilities because the English education system in Indonesia emphasizes formal and academic learning. Students demonstrate excellent understanding of classroom instructions and strong comprehension of structured texts due to their familiarity with formal and academic learning contexts. However, this limitation also becomes apparent when students encounter colloquial American expressions or culturally specific phrases while listening and have difficulties with complex academic articles while reading. Focusing on formal language makes students less exposed to daily language variations and diverse registers, creating a gap between strong academic abilities and more authentic, natural language use.

2.2 Influence of Indonesian Cultural Values on Self Expression

Native speakers' perceptions of students' fluent speaking ability but varying confidence levels are heavily influenced by Indonesian cultural values emphasizing humility and hierarchy. Indonesian culture, which values respectful attitudes and humility, makes some students hesitant to express their opinions with full confidence, despite being technically capable of speaking fluently. This also affects writing ability, where students may use more formal and careful language to express their ideas. These cultural communication differences create psychological barriers that can hinder the development of more spontaneous and confident communication skills, even though their basic language competence is already adequate.

2.3 Limitations of Unbalanced Learning Methodology

Native speakers provide a detailed assessment of writing ability due to the curriculum structure not providing balanced portions for all language skills. The focus of TESOL methodology courses that emphasize speaking, listening, and reading creates limitations in comprehensively developing and evaluating writing skills. Although students perform excellently in limited academic writing tasks, native speakers cannot provide a comprehensive assessment due to a lack of varied writing activities. This imbalance is also evident in speaking ability, where students are more comfortable in formal contexts such as presentations or teaching projects. However, it may be less trained in more spontaneous, casual conversations.

2.4 Adaptive Capacity and Responsiveness in Multi-skill Communication

Native speakers observe that students have good adaptive ability when facing communication difficulties across language skills. When confusion occurs in listening due to specific American English phrases, students show responsiveness to clarification and can adjust their comprehension strategies. This ability is also evident in reading, where students can identify main ideas and understand implied information well, showing cognitive flexibility in processing information. In speaking, students can explain concepts clearly and use appropriate voice volume, demonstrating the ability to adapt to different communication contexts. This adaptive capacity indicates that students' language foundation is strong enough to support continuous learning.

2.5 Differences in Cross-Cultural Expectations and Assessment Standards

Differences also influence native speakers' perceptions of expectations and assessment standards based on their experience with native English speakers. Native speakers may have different expectations about spontaneity in speaking, speed in listening comprehension, and more direct writing styles. Indonesian students who are accustomed to more structured and careful learning approaches may show different patterns in language use, which can be interpreted as lacking confidence or being less natural by native speakers. These differences are also evident in reading, where students may be more comfortable with texts with clear structures like stories and narratives, but experience difficulties with texts with freer or informal writing styles common in native speaker culture.

2.6 Limited Learning Context and Lack of Authenticity

Native speakers have limited perceptions of students' comprehensive abilities due to learning contexts that do not fully reflect authentic communication situations. Although students demonstrate excellent listening ability in structured classroom contexts, their ability in more natural and spontaneous communication situations has not been thoroughly tested. Similarly, the limitation of diverse writing activities makes assessment incomplete, despite students showing good ability in limited academic tasks. The lack of exposure to authentic and diverse communication situations in all language skills creates a gap between abilities shown in academic contexts and abilities needed in real-world communication.

As discussion, the findings of this study reveal important insights into native English teachers' perceptions of Indonesian students' language learning competence, which align with and extend previous research in several significant ways. The native speaker's assessment of students' listening skills as "excellent". This finding is supported by Dhomiri et al., (2020) who noted that native speakers often hold optimistic views of students' language abilities. However, this study provides a more nuanced understanding by identifying students' challenges with colloquial American English expressions and culturally specific phrases, even when their fundamental listening comprehension is strong. This finding suggests that the dominance of formal and academic language learning in Indonesian educational contexts, while building solid foundational skills, creates gaps in students' exposure to authentic, informal language use that characterizes natural communication.

The perception of students' speaking abilities as "fluent" but with varying confidence levels illuminates the complex interplay between linguistic competence and cultural factors in language learning. This finding is in line with Maulana et al., (2020) observation that communicative teaching methods can improve speaking ability and confidence. However, it extends their work by highlighting how Indonesian cultural values of humility and respect for hierarchy can create psychological barriers to confident expression. The native teacher's observation that students could explain concepts clearly and use appropriate voice volume in formal contexts like teaching projects, but showed hesitancy in expressing opinions, suggests that cultural adaptation strategies should be integral to language learning programs. This challenges the traditional assumption that linguistic competence alone determines speaking effectiveness, emphasizing the need for intercultural competence development alongside language skills instead.

The assessment of reading skills as "strong" but with variations depending on text type provides important implications for curriculum design. Students' ability to handle authentic articles written for native speakers demonstrates the effectiveness of exposure to challenging materials, supporting the literature's emphasis on authentic input in language learning. However, the identified difficulty with academic articles compared to narratives and stories suggests that genre-specific reading strategies need more attention in English education programs. This finding extends previous research by highlighting the importance of gradually scaffolding students from familiar text structures to more complex academic discourse, particularly given the academic and professional contexts where English proficiency is increasingly required.

The limited assessment of writing abilities due to curriculum structure reveals a critical gap in current English education approaches. While students demonstrated excellence in their limited academic writing tasks, the lack of diverse writing activities represents a significant limitation in developing comprehensive language competence. This finding supported by the integrated language skills approach advocated by (Kalsum et al., 2023), who emphasized that language skills should be combined rather than isolated. The native teacher's inability to provide a comprehensive writing assessment highlights the need for a more balanced curriculum design that ensures equal development across all four language skills, particularly given the increasing importance of written communication in academic and professional contexts.

The underlying factors shaping native speaker perceptions provide crucial insights for improving English language education in Indonesia. The dominance of formal and academic language learning, while building strong foundational skills, limits students' exposure to authentic language use across various registers and contexts. This finding suggests that English education programs should incorporate more diverse and authentic materials that reflect real-

world communication situations, including informal conversations, multimedia content, and varied text types. The influence of Indonesian cultural values on self-expression, while not necessarily a weakness, requires explicit attention in language learning programs to help students develop code-switching abilities between formal academic contexts and more casual communication situations.

The identified limitations of unbalanced learning methodology have significant implications for curriculum development and teacher training. Focusing on speaking, listening, and reading at the expense of writing creates an incomplete language learning experience that may disadvantage students in academic and professional contexts where written communication is crucial. This finding supports the need for curriculum reform that ensures balanced development of all language skills while maintaining the strengths already evident in students' listening and reading abilities. Teacher training programs should emphasize integrated skills approaches and provide educators with strategies for creating meaningful writing activities that connect to students' interests and future needs.

The study's revelation of students' adaptive capacity and responsiveness in multi-skill communication offers encouraging insights for language education practice. Students' ability to adjust their comprehension strategies when faced with unfamiliar expressions, responsiveness to clarification, and ability to explain concepts clearly across different contexts demonstrate cognitive flexibility that can support continued language development. This finding suggests that Indonesian students possess strong foundational learning strategies that can be leveraged to address identified weaknesses, particularly in areas requiring more authentic and spontaneous communication.

The differences in cross-cultural expectations and assessment standards identified in this study highlight the importance of preparing students and native speaker teachers for effective cross-cultural communication. Native speakers' expectations for spontaneity, directness, and informal communication styles may not align with Indonesian students' culturally influenced communication patterns, which tend to be more structured and respectful. This finding suggests that orientation programs for native speaker teachers should include cultural competence training to help them understand and appropriately assess students' language abilities within their cultural context. It also helps students develop awareness of different communication styles and expectations.

The limited learning context and lack of authenticity in current language learning environments represent significant challenges that need addressing. While students demonstrate strong abilities in structured classroom contexts, their preparation for authentic communication situations across various real-world contexts remains unclear. This finding supports the need for more diverse and authentic learning opportunities, including interaction with various English speakers, exposure to different accents and dialects, and practice in unstructured communication situations. Language learning programs should incorporate experiential learning opportunities that bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world communication needs.

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the perceptions of native English teachers regarding Indonesian students' English language learning abilities, revealing strengths and areas for improvement in the English language education system. The findings indicate that fifth-semester students demonstrate strong basic skills, particularly in listening and reading, but still lack proficiency in everyday expressions, understanding cultural variations in English, and balancing mastery of the four language skills. Despite their technical fluency, cultural values such as humility and hierarchy also act as psychological barriers to confident oral expression. Therefore, curriculum reform emphasizing authentic materials and cultural adaptation strategies is necessary. This study also highlights that the dominance of formal and academic approaches limits students' exposure to authentic language use in various contexts. At the same time, writing skills have not developed optimally due to unbalanced teaching methods.

Students and foreign teachers must also receive cultural competency training to ensure more contextual assessments. Although students demonstrate good adaptive capacity, existing

weaknesses must be addressed through targeted interventions. However, this study's limitations, such as involving only one native speaker from the US, the limited scope of the course, and the focus on a single institution, limit the generalizability of the findings. Further research should involve more institutions, different levels of education, and participants from more diverse backgrounds to produce a more comprehensive understanding.

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