

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter contains explanation about: (1) Findings and (2) Discussion.

#### **A. Findings**

Following an exhaustitve two-month research period, the necessary data were finally obtained. The following data are:

##### **1. University Students' Viewpoints and Experiences on the Use of Self-Directed Learning to Develop Speaking Skill.**

###### **a. Viewpoints and reasons students use SDL**

Outside of the classroom, students' speaking abilities are enhanced through the use of self-directed learning. In this study, the researcher looked into how the students understood the usage of self-directed learning to enhance speaking abilities. The researcher discovered from the interviews that all four students had the same reason for using the self-directed learning approach.

Baila, a student from the Islamic Education program, said that there were not many English classes in her major. However, he had his initial exposure to English in 2022 during her first semester through the university's UPB program. She felt that the large number of students and limited class time (60-80 minutes per day) hindered her speaking development. To overcome this, Baila began to study independently. She views self-directed learning as taking full responsibility for her speaking development-deciding what, how and when to learn-emphasizing the importance of consistent

practice and autonomy in language learning (Baila, personal communication, 2025).

On the other hand, Shameera as an English education student explained that classroom learning often does not align with her personal learning needs, sometimes moving too fast or too slow which makes it difficult for her to adapt. Through independent learning, she felt more in control, able to focus on her weaknesses in speaking without external pressure. She has been implementing SDL since 2015 since she was in junior high school. She emphasizes that independent learning outside the classroom provides a safe space to practice without fear of judgment, which is crucial for building her confidence in speaking (Shameera, personal communication, 2025).

Hamizan shared that classroom learning often felt out of step with his abilities, sometimes progressing too quickly or too slowly, making it difficult for him to adjust. In addition, feelings of embarrassment and fear of making mistakes in front of his peers made him hesitate when speaking. Hamizan was inspired by his other friends and eventually he also applied SDL to make his learning process more comfortable. Through self-directed learning, he found a safe environment to practice without fear of judgment, which encouraged him to try and improve. Hamizan said that he applied SDL since 2019 when he was in senior high school and it is still going on until now. He described self-directed learning as the process of taking personal initiative to find

strategies, set goals, and practice independently to improve speaking skills (Hamizan, personal communication, 2025).

Another English education student, Rabbani revealed since the beginning of his semester in 2021 that the speaking materials in class often did not suit his personal needs, as the lessons focused more on grammar, while he needed practice in daily conversation. This mismatch prompted him to opt for self-directed learning, which allowed him to customize exercises to real-life situations. She defines Self-Directed Learning (SDL) as a conscious and active process of setting goals, choosing strategies, and evaluating speaking progress independently. For her, SDL offers the flexibility to learn anytime and anywhere, focusing on specific aspects of speaking such as pronunciation, fluency and confidence (Rabbani, personal communication, 2025).

#### b. Strategy and Technique

Researchers have examined participants' views on the use of self-directed learning and their reasons for choosing to use SDL. And through the research process, various strategies that students use in self-directed learning to improve their speaking ability were found. These strategies emerged naturally and as a result of the learning interventions implemented.

Baila described using role-play techniques as part of her self-directed speaking practice, particularly through TikTok videos with scrolling text. She practiced almost every day if she had free time, she could spend 20 minutes practicing with the TikTok app using the TikTok role-play content. She would

read along spontaneously, simulating real conversations. She also practiced with interactive videos that pause for user responses, enhancing the feeling of real-time dialogue. When encountering unfamiliar words, she used tools like YouGlish or dictionary apps to check pronunciation and meaning. She noted that reading aloud from TikTok scrolling texts was especially effective, as it encouraged quick thinking and speaking, mimicking real-life communication. For her, the fun and informal nature of this method helped maintain consistency in practice (Baila, personal communication, 2025).

Shameera shared that she uses self-directed learning to improve her speaking skills by utilizing applications like ELSA Speak. One of her preferred features is "Study by Topic," which provides various conversation themes such as education, holidays, and lifestyle. She explained that the app allows her to record her voice while reading the given texts, and its voice recognition feature helps detect pronunciation errors. Shameera learns through the Elsa Speak app quite often, in a week she can learn 3-4 times with this app. According to her, this method is both easy and enjoyable, offering targeted practice while giving immediate feedback to support speaking improvement (Shameera, personal communication, 2025).

Hamizan stated that his self-directed learning strategies include watching English videos such as interviews and vlogs and joining a speaking community. These methods exposed him to authentic language use and gave him opportunities to practice in real-life contexts. He emphasized that being part of a speaking community was the most effective for improving fluency,

as it allowed for regular interaction, meaningful conversations, and exposure to everyday topics that were both practical and engaging. He participates in speaking practice in this learning community once a week (Hamizan, personal communication, 2025).

Rabbani described using a “speaking journal” as a self-directed learning strategy to enhance speaking skills. This method involves speaking aloud daily for about 10 minutes to reflect on personal experiences or thoughts, initially without recording. Later, Rabbani began using a recording app to evaluate pronunciation, fluency, and sentence structure. Topics started with simple daily matters and gradually progressed to more complex issues like social topics or practice presentations. After listening to the recordings, he took notes on areas needing improvement and applied the feedback in the next session. He conducts this speaking journal activity twice a week (Rabbani, personal communication, 2025).

#### c. Impact and Preferences

At this point, the researcher asked them about the impact and preferences they felt after implementing self-directed learning to develop speaking skills. All four interviewees said the impact they felt after implementing self-directed learning was almost the same. However, they had different preferences regarding the comfort and ease of improving speaking skills through self-directed and teacher-taught learning.

Baila expressed that self-directed learning gave her greater flexibility in improving her speaking skills. Practicing at her own pace reduced anxiety

and allowed her to repeat exercises without fear of judgment, which significantly boosted her confidence and fluency, especially in everyday conversations. She also felt more prepared when delivering classroom presentations. While she acknowledged the value of teacher-guided learning, Baila preferred a blended approach—leaning more toward self-directed learning for its flexibility, while still appreciating teacher feedback to refine her progress (Baila, personal communication, 2025).

Also Shameera highlighted that self-directed learning allowed her to focus on specific areas needing improvement, such as speaking techniques for technical presentations. By using tools like voice recordings and participating in online discussions, she could practice more effectively without being limited by a standardized curriculum. She experienced the benefits during her final project presentation, where she felt more confident, calm, and structured in her speech. Shameera preferred self-learning over teacher-led instruction, as it allowed her to concentrate on her own progress without the distraction of varying student levels in a classroom setting (Shameera, personal communication, 2025).

And Hamizan also shared that self-directed learning allowed him to focus on specific speaking skills, such as techniques for technical presentations. He felt more confident in speaking after consistent self-practice, particularly within supportive environments like speaking communities, which helped reduce his anxiety over time. Despite these benefits, Hamizan acknowledged the value of teacher guidance. He believed

that a teacher could offer targeted feedback, useful strategies, and corrections that might not be easily discovered through self-study alone. For him, a balanced combination of both methods was ideal (Hamizan, personal communication, 2025).

Rabbani reported feeling more confident after applying self-directed learning, particularly through the use of a speaking journal. By recording himself daily, he was able to identify mistakes and track his progress, which helped him become more comfortable expressing ideas without fear of error. He appreciated having full control over his learning pace and preferred combining self-study with teacher guidance. While he leaned more toward self-study for its flexibility and personalization, Rabbani acknowledged that teacher feedback remained important to identify mistakes that might go unnoticed during independent practice (Rabbani, personal communication, 2025).

## **2. University Students' Challenges on the Use of Self-Directed Learning to Develop Speaking Skill.**

After finding out the views, reasons, strategies and impacts that students felt after using self-directed learning to develop speaking skills, this researcher tried to ascertain the challenges of the experience faced by the participants by asking questions to the participants.

### **a. Challenges**

It is an inevitable aspect of any given process that participants will experience difficulties. Upon asking the interviewees, there were various

challenges that they perceived, and the researcher has documented the difficulties experienced by the participants.

Baila acknowledged that one of her main challenges in self-directed learning was maintaining motivation, especially when progress felt slow or when comparing herself to others. She often struggled to see improvement, which affected her confidence. Additionally, balancing self-study with other academic responsibilities was difficult, particularly during busy periods. Despite this, she committed to at least 10–15 minutes of daily practice whether by repeating sentences or watching English content believing that consistent small efforts were better than doing nothing at all (Baila, personal communication, 2025).

Shameera identified her biggest challenge in self-directed learning as overcoming laziness. Unlike structured classroom settings that come with rules and schedules, independent study requires strong self-discipline and internal motivation. In terms of time management, she did not find it too difficult, as she chose to study only during her free time and when her physical condition was stable. She believed that forcing herself to study while tired would lead to unsatisfactory results, so she preferred to engage in self-study when she felt well and mentally prepared (Shameera, personal communication, 2025).

Hamizan noted that his greatest difficulty in self-directed learning was maintaining motivation, particularly due to laziness. Without external pressure or a structured schedule, he found it easy to delay or skip practice.



However, he managed to overcome this by joining a speaking community, which provided a fixed schedule and helped him stay organized despite having other commitments (Hamizan, personal communication, 2025).

Rabbani shared that his main challenge in self-directed learning was maintaining consistency, especially when progress was not immediately visible. The absence of external assessments or structured schedules often made him feel that his speaking development was slow, which affected his motivation. He also found time management difficult during busy periods. However, by using a flexible method like the speaking journal, which does not require long durations, he managed to stay consistent by practicing during free moments such as before bed or while traveling. For him, maintaining regularity was more important than the length of each session (Rabbani, personal communication, 2025).

b. Strategies to overcome barriers

In every challenge faced, of course, students also have strategies to overcome these challenges. In this paper, the researcher also conveys students' strategies for dealing with the challenges they feel when doing independent learning.

Baila admitted that she occasionally experienced boredom or discouragement during self-directed learning. To overcome this, she would switch activities—such as shifting from structured speaking practice to watching comedy skits or learning slang—to keep things interesting. She also motivated herself by reflecting on her initial goals and recognizing small

improvements. Baila used simple strategies like starting with a short video or repeating one sentence, which often led her to continue beyond her initial plan. For her, keeping the learning process enjoyable was key to staying consistent (Baila, personal communication, 2025).

Shameera acknowledged that repetitive activities can become boring, but she found that using the ELSA Speak application helped prevent this due to its variety of engaging features. Since she used the app only during her free time rather than daily, she rarely felt bored. To manage laziness and lack of discipline in self-directed learning, she reminded herself of her original motivation and goals. She reflected on the effort already invested and how difficult it would be to start over, which encouraged her to stay committed (Shameera, personal communication, 2025).

Hamizan admitted that he sometimes felt bored or discouraged when studying independently, particularly when progress was not immediate. To stay motivated, he reminded himself that speaking fluently was essential for both his personal and academic goals. To address laziness and maintain consistency, he joined a speaking community with regular weekly sessions. The fixed schedule and social support helped him stay committed and avoid skipping practice (Hamizan, personal communication, 2025).

Rabbani admitted experiencing boredom during self-directed learning, particularly when discussing repetitive topics. To stay engaged, he began selecting subjects that personally interested him, such as movies or daily experiences, and added new challenges like speaking without a script or

incorporating new expressions. To manage laziness, he created a daily schedule with reminder alarms to record his speaking journal, even if only for 5–10 minutes. He also set small goals, such as discussing one topic per day, and re-watched his recordings to monitor progress an approach that kept him motivated to continue learning (Rabbani, personal communication, 2025).

## **B. Discussion**

Based on the findings through the interview results above, the researcher will connect with the theory.

### **1. University Students' Viewpoints and Experiences on the Use of Self-Directed Learning to Develop Speaking Skill.**

The findings of this study indicate that all participants share positive perceptions of self-directed learning (SDL) as a method to enhance their English-speaking abilities. Their responses suggest that self-directed learning provides flexibility, autonomy, and a learner-centered approach which is especially valuable when classroom instruction alone is insufficient to meet individual needs. This is consistent with the concept of self-directed learning as defined by Cazan and Schiopca (2016) who explain that SDL allows learners to take full responsibility for their learning process by setting goals, choosing strategies, and evaluating outcomes independently.

#### **a. Viewpoints and experiences**

The participants commonly expressed that classroom environments often limit their opportunity to practice speaking, either due to time constraints or psychological barriers such as fear of making mistakes in front

of peers. Self-directed learning emerged as a solution to these issues by allowing students to manage their own learning at their own pace and according to their personal needs.

This aligns with Garrison's (2016) updated framework of self-directed learning, which emphasizes three core dimensions: self-management, self-monitoring, and motivation. Each participant demonstrated aspects of this model. Baila and Shameera emphasized the importance of self-pacing and taking control of their learning. Hamizan and Rabbani highlighted the motivational and emotional safety benefits of learning independently, which enabled them to speak more freely and confidently.

Moreover, these perceptions reflect the principles of constructivist learning theory, where knowledge is actively constructed by learners rather than passively received. Self-directed learning supports this view by encouraging learners to seek and apply language input independently, construct meaning, and reflect on their development.

This is also supported by Fadillah (2015), who pointed out that one of the key barriers in English learning is students' anxiety when speaking in front of others, which often results from fear of being judged or making mistakes. Creating a learning environment that reduces these emotional pressures encourages greater student confidence and willingness to participate.

When the researchers went out to collect data, they found a lot about why some students succeed or struggle with self-directed learning to improve

their speaking skills. It turns out there are two main factors: what's inside the student and what's around them. On the inside, motivation is really key. Students who have strong motivation and clear goals tend to manage their time better, pick the right learning methods, and keep track of their progress. This matches what Schunk, D. H., & DiBenedetto (2020) explain, that people who believe in themselves and have clear goals are more likely to stick with learning on their own and do well. But not everyone feels ready, some still get nervous, lack confidence, or fear making mistakes when speaking. For those students, self-directed learning feels more comfortable because they can learn at their own pace and in their own way without feeling pressured.

From the outside, students often feel like classrooms don't give enough chances to practice speaking in real situations. So, they look for other options, like apps such as ELSA Speak, YouGlish, or even TikTok, which offer instant feedback and make practicing more interactive. This fits with Kopcha's (2020) idea that technology can help make learning more independent and personalized. Also, practicing with friends or joining speaking communities really helps keep motivation up, which lines up with what Järvelä, S., Malmberg, J., & Koivuniemi (2021) say about the importance of learning socially and getting support from others.

#### b. Strategy and Technique

The study revealed kind of strategies used by participants to develop speaking proficiency through SDL. These included digital tools such as

ELSA Speak, YouGlish, and TikTok-based role-play, as well as participation in speaking communities and keeping a “speaking journal.”

According to Zhang and Xie (2017) the use of technology-enhanced tools in language learning increases learner autonomy and engagement, particularly in speaking practice. Shameera’s use of ELSA Speak, which provides immediate feedback through AI, exemplifies how technology can replace some of the feedback typically given by a teacher, thereby supporting independent learning. Additionally, Rabbani’s speaking journal reflects Zimmerman’s (2015) theory of self-regulated learning, which includes self-recording and self-evaluation as critical tools for reflection and progress. In the meantime, Rabbani's community-based speaking practices are in line with the ideas of collaborative learning, which holds that language growth is facilitated by peer contact and support. Teng (2017) emphasizes that through shared knowledge production, collaborative discussion in language learning situations improves learners' cognitive engagement and speeds up the acquisition of a second language.

#### c. Impact and Preferences

All four participants reported increased confidence, fluency, and motivation as outcomes of SDL. However, preferences for learning modes varied. Baila, Shameera, and Rabbani preferred a combination of SDL and classroom instruction but leaned toward SDL for flexibility and personal relevance. Hamizan, on the other hand, preferred the structure and guidance provided by teachers.

These findings resonate with the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci & Ryan (revisited in 2017), which suggests that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are key to intrinsic motivation. The students' experiences indicate that SDL supports autonomy and competence, while structured interactions, such as speaking communities or teacher feedback, help satisfy the need for relatedness and guidance.

This is in line with Fadillah (2014), who emphasized that motivation plays a crucial role in students' classroom performance, particularly in foreign language learning, where high motivation levels significantly contribute to better outcomes and sustained engagement.

## **2. University Students' Challenges on the Use of Self-Directed Learning to Develop Speaking skill.**

Students acknowledged the importance of SDL, but they also pointed out important difficulties. These included a drop in motivation, irregularity, sloth, and time management issues. According to Barnard-Brak et al. (2017), these are typical problems in self-regulated learning environments, where learners need to be very disciplined and persistent in order to maintain progress in the absence of external structure.

### **a. Challenges**

Baila and Rabbani noted difficulty maintaining motivation when immediate results were not visible. Shameera and Hamizan cited laziness as the primary barrier, especially without external accountability. These findings are consistent with Pilling-Cormick and Garrison (revisited in 2018), who

argue that motivation in self-directed learning must be supported by self-monitoring tools and social interaction to maintain learner engagement over time.

This reflects what Fadillah and Purnawarman (2024) also found in their study, where students admitted to frequently using their phones to access social media during English lessons due to boredom or lack of interest in class material, indicating how internal motivation can easily diminish without engaging and structured environments.

In terms of time management, most participants admitted to struggling with balancing self-directed learning with academic and personal responsibilities. This supports Kizilcec et al. (2016), who found that time-management skills are a critical success factor for learners engaging in autonomous online or blended learning environments.

#### b. Strategies to Overcome Challenges

To overcome these obstacles, the individuals displayed flexible coping mechanisms. Baila and Rabbani employed strategies like short-term goal-setting, reminders, and content variation. By remembering their original goal and participating in structured learning communities for accountability, Shameera and Hamizan concentrated on rekindling motivation.

These coping strategies are in line with Zimmerman's (2015) self-regulatory cycle model, which includes stages for performance control, and self-reflection. The students' attempts to monitor their development and modify their learning strategies demonstrate a high degree of metacognitive



awareness, which is necessary for effective self-directed learning. This reflects what Rusnadi, Fadillah, and Yusuf (2018) observed, where metacognitive strategies such as planning, self-monitoring, and evaluation significantly contributed to learners' ability to manage their own learning processes, increase awareness, and achieve language learning goals independently.

That said, problems like laziness, poor time management, and lack of discipline still happen a lot. Wang, Y., & Guan (2022) point out that to be effective at self-directed learning, students need good metacognitive skills—they need to be aware of how they learn best and adjust their strategies. Some students handle this by setting small goals, using reminders, or studying with friends to stay motivated.