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ESL learners' perceptions of the relationship between reading and speaking skill development

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Abstract

Reading and speaking are close skills of language learning, although they are usually not explicitly related to each other in language classes. This research aimed to investigate ESL learners' perception of the relationship between reading and speaking skill development, reading activities that contribute to speaking, and aspects of speaking that learners consider to be developed because of reading activities. Quantitative survey method was used with 44 English language learners recruited through convenient sampling. In this study there were 11 freshmen, 11 sophomores, 11 juniors, and 11 seniors. The data were gathered through 20-item questionnaire consisting of three parts: relationship between reading and speaking, reading activities that help to speak, and speaking aspects that learners consider to be developed through reading activities. The answers were provided using five-point Likert scale and analyzed using frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation through SPSS Version 25. Positive perception was found in general in this research. The first part had mean 3.98, the second 3.93, the third 4.05, and overall mean was 3.97. On the item level learners perceived very positively reading as source of vocabulary for speaking, support of idea development and appropriate expression, and support of speaking fluency. The research showed that reading can be linked productively with oral activities, such as discussion, summary, debate, role play, and reading aloud to provide learners with additional opportunities for oral practice.

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking can be considered one of the main goals that many learners of English pursue since speaking will help them communicate both academically and professionally as well as in everyday life situations. Speaking is not a separate linguistic skill, however, and successful speaking requires the usage of various interrelated skills including vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and organization/communication of ideas. As has been proven by recent research, vocabulary knowledge is related to second-language speaking skills including fluency and lexical resource (Janebi Enayat & Derakhshan, 2021). In turn, reading may facilitate the development of these resources by presenting the students with vocabulary, grammar, discourse organization, and ideas that can later be employed in speaking.

The traditional view considers reading to be a receptive skill, while speaking is considered a productive skill. This classification is valuable when describing language skills, but it does not imply that the skills develop separately. Reading is a process during which linguistic input is received by the learners, while speaking implies retrieval and usage of linguistic elements. In reading-to-speaking activities, the learners can utilize linguistic elements found in reading input as they summarize, discuss, explain or react to the input text. For instance, Kormos et al. (2022) offered empirical proof of how the speech generated from reading to speaking activity matches the input text, which indicates a clear relationship between input text and oral output.

Moreover, there are evidences from empirical research studies regarding vocabulary and the process of reading. Hayafune (2023), for instance, carried out a story retelling activity in spoken English to identify associations between lower-order reading processes and speaking performance. It was found that vocabulary knowledge accounted for a certain proportion of variance in overall speaking performance. It should be noted that these findings do not necessarily mean that reading makes one speak more successfully but point to some connections between reading and speaking.

Extensive reading has been widely discussed because it offers a chance for language acquisition through contexts. The advantages of reading extensively include reading fluency, motivation, and learning the language that have been proven in the studies devoted to extensive reading, though these advantages depend on the way how extensive reading is done and on a particular learner (Ateek, 2021; Bui & Macalister, 2021; Ali et al., 2022; Anggia & Habók, 2024). Nowadays, scholars explore the ways of combining reading and speaking tasks. Abdulrahman and Kara (2023) state that movie-based extensive reading has brought positive outcomes for vocabulary and speaking test results in TOEFL iBT, and Samaraweera (2024) notes that extensive reading with the use of reading tasks in class can bring positive speaking outcomes according to an intervention study. Sumardi (2025) states that combination of extensive reading and speaking tasks was perceived as beneficial for vocabulary, confidence, and communication skills by the participants.

Furthermore, the current study is based on the concept of teaching through integrative skills. Research on extensive and analytical reading has also emphasized the importance of diverse form of reading to aid second language acquisition (Muravev, 2023). The learner can analyze, make a summary, role play, argue, or express his/her views after reading the text in order to move from comprehension to production. According to Kormos et al. (2022), tasks that include reading-to-speaking activities establish a direct link between input in terms of texts and output in terms of speaking. According to Yang (2022), socially interactive activities should be incorporated in the reading classes, for instance, drama activities that are meaningful and participatory.

Therefore, the research under consideration is going to answer the following questions:

1. What are ESL learners' perceptions of the relationship between reading and speaking skill development?
2. Which reading activities do ESL learners perceive as most useful for supporting speaking?
3. Which aspects of speaking do ESL learners perceive as supported by reading activities?

Literature review

Overview

This section provides an in-depth review of the pertinent literature on the interconnection between the development of speaking and reading skills. First, this paper reviews literature related to the role and development of reading within second language acquisition and the significance of reading for learners' language development. Then, the theoretical perspectives regarding the connection between reading and speaking and, in particular, the possible contribution of input obtained through reading to oral language production will be discussed. The paper will then review reading activities which

could foster the development of speaking skills such as extensive reading, reading aloud, discussion activities based on reading, and reading-to-speaking exercises. Moreover, the speaking skills which can be fostered by various reading activities will be analyzed. This includes the development of vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, and expressing ideas. Finally, empirical studies related to this topic will be examined in order to identify previous findings in this area and thus define the research gap which the present study aims to address.

Reading as a source of language input

With the help of reading, the learners get to encounter a very large amount of language inputs in written form. Reading provides the opportunity to repeat vocabulary, grammar, collocation, and discourse through exposure. With the contribution of Grabe (2009), Nation (2001), and Vettori et al. (2024), the importance of reading and vocabulary inputs in second language acquisition has already been established. However, the present research is still trying to find out the effect of various reading strategies adopted by the learners. Intensive, extensive, and blended reading strategies have been studied by Ali et al. (2022) who have emphasized on reading as input of English, especially in contexts of less English exposure.

Extensive reading becomes highly pertinent since it stresses quantity, choice of the learner, accessibility of texts, and reading for comprehension (Day & Bamford, 2002). According to Ateek (2021), there were positive attitudes toward extensive reading in EFL learners. The same was reported by Bui & Macalister (2021) when the study on the outcomes of online extensive reading showed the generally positive results concerning reading fluency and attitudes of the learners. Anggia & Habók (2024) in their systematic review of online extensive reading came to a similar conclusion about its effectiveness. It was noted that it could help in achieving good results in reading and motivation (Yamashita, 2013).

However, the potential benefit of reading input is not confined to reading alone. The vocabulary acquired by reading can be used productively in the future. In support of this hypothesis, Janebi Enayat and Derakhshan (2021) report that both the size of vocabulary and productive vocabulary knowledge have been associated with some elements of L2 speaking ability. It is a reasonable account of why participants of the current study find reading beneficial to speaking: reading can expand the linguistic resources that learners draw on when expressing ideas orally.

The relationship between reading and speaking

The link between reading and speaking is made most evident when the learners have to change textual information into spoken language. Kormos et al. (2022) argue that this connection was demonstrated through reading-to-speaking activities performed by 128 Japanese learners of English that demonstrated the existence of connections between the lexical information contained in the text and the language used in speech by the learners. This indicates that reading can indeed affect the choice of language used by the learners in their oral speech. Hayafune (2023) revealed a similar result in terms of the connection between the knowledge of vocabulary and reading and speaking in story retelling.

Furthermore, reading can also help with oral fluency indirectly by exposing the learners to language forms and concepts. Through reading on the subject that they will talk about, the learners come prepared with concepts and language in their heads. This makes the task easier for them because they do not have to generate ideas and language simultaneously. In this way, reading can be seen as preparation for speaking rather than as a replacement.

Recent studies carried out in classrooms have verified the advantages that follow when both are combined. Samaraweera (2024) has carried out research on the extensive reading-based approach to teaching and has found significant differences between the development of speaking skills amongst participants taking part in reading-based activities and those not taking part. From his research, Sumardi (2025) has found that participants felt the connection of extensive reading and speaking activities to be helpful in learning contextual vocabulary, confidence, and communication competence. These intervention and qualitative results can explain why learners consider reading helpful for speaking.

Reading activities that support oral practice

It matters what kind of activities will take place either after or together with the reading as the process of reading itself does not imply the necessity of students' speech production. Activities like reading aloud presuppose speaking right from the start, being concerned with issues such as pronunciation,

rhythm, and intonation. According to Rodríguez-Fuentes and Calle-Díaz (2023), who studied read aloud procedures among adult English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners, there was observed a significant progress in the perception of fluency among the raters, who evaluated all of the performances positively. Moreover, Uchihara (2022) showed how different types of input could affect learners' form–meaning connections and pronunciation of the L2 words.

Another method for establishing connection between reading and speaking involves the cooperative activities. Cooperative reading followed by discussion, role-play, debating and summarizing provides students with opportunities to process the text either individually or collectively and then use the information obtained from the text in the course of oral communication. Yang (2022) notes that dramatic activities used in EFL reading classes may encourage participation, meaning making and social interaction. According to Abdel-Al Ibrahim et al. (2023), cooperative and scaffolded teaching may influence EFL intermediate students' reading comprehension, motivation and anxiety.

The employment of audio alongside reading might contribute additional assistance regarding pronunciation and oral processing skills. It was shown that the input which was based on both reading and listening had different impacts on pronunciation and form learning compared to reading input alone by Uchihara (2022). However, this fact does not imply that reading in conjunction with audio automatically enhance speaking skill, but it supports the pedagogical rationale for combining written and spoken input when the goal is oral communication.

Speaking aspects potentially supported by reading

There are four important aspects of language that are going to be useful in the current research: vocabulary, idea generation, proper articulation, and fluency. Vocabulary is one of the aspects that are essential in the process of speaking because it provides the speakers with the necessary vocabulary to communicate effectively. According to Janebi Enayat and Derakhshan (2021), some vocabulary variables help predict proficiency in speaking L2. Furthermore, it was found that there is a relationship between vocabulary and storytelling performance (Hayafune,2023).

However, reading materials can also serve as an example for generating ideas for learning. Reading academic texts and narratives can serve as introductions to certain topics as well as examples of how ideas can be related to one another and organized. When academic and narrative texts are used for the preparation for an oral task, there may be more content available for discussion. According to Kormos et al. (2022), learners can use the language of source texts in oral summaries of them which provides an empirical support for the idea that written input can become part of oral production.

Fluency is another pertinent aspect. A large amount of reading will expose the learners to repeated use of words, phrases, and syntactic structures. Rodríguez-Fuentes and Calle-Díaz (2023) identified improvements in fluency perception through read-aloud activity.

Research gap

There is much attention in the literature towards extensive reading, reading fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and speaking instruction. However, there seems to be less emphasis on learners' perceptions of the ways how normal reading practices help develop speaking from different perspectives. The recent empirical studies have employed either the intervention approach or direct measures of speaking (Abdulrahman & Kara, 2023; Samaraweera, 2024). In contrast, the current research invites learners to express their perceptions on the way how reading practices are related to speaking. This focus is important because students' perceptions can provide information about classroom practices that students find useful or meaningful. Research on informal reading and English achievement likewise indicates that reading experiences can be associated with learners' achievement and motivation (Meyer et al., 2024).

This study then provides a perception-driven perspective on the relation between reading and speaking, revealing the activities and aspects of speaking that are highly valued by 44 ESL learners. These results can be helpful to teachers in developing integrated reading-speaking lessons, as well as providing topics for further experiments.

METHODS

Research design

The research methodology involved the use of quantitative descriptive survey research design. The selection of such research design was based on the need to measure students' perceptions on the association between the reading and speaking skills through a structured questionnaire. This was accomplished by the use of Likert-scale questionnaire. In this approach, the responses of the subjects were measured against their level of agreement or disagreement with the issues under investigation.

Respondents

A total number of 44 participants who are undertaking their university courses at the Department of English Language and Literature were selected using convenient sampling. There were 11 freshman students, 11 sophomore students, 11 junior students, and 11 senior students. The respondents ranged from 17 to 30 years old. The distribution according to the levels of proficiency self-categorized in the questionnaire included 6 beginners, 11 intermediates, 8 upper intermediates, and 19 advanced learners.

Instruments

The instrument was based on 20 close-ended statements using a five-point Likert scale: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree. These questions were divided into three main sections. Questions 1 to 7 dealt with how the learners viewed the connection between reading and speaking. Questions 8 to 17 were about reading activities that the learners feel enhance their speaking skills, which included reading out loud, reading together in groups, reading silently with follow-up discussions or summarizations, role playing, debating, and reading along with audio. Questions 18 to 20 concerned speaking skills that learners feel are enhanced by reading, especially vocabulary, idea development and appropriate expression, and speaking fluency.

Validity and reliability

Validity was ensured through making sure that the content of the questionnaire matched the research questions and concepts of the study. The items in the questionnaire were examined for relevance, clarity and simple language by three experienced English teachers.

In order to ensure reliability of the questionnaire, all participant answered the same questions using the Likert scale. The use of structured questionnaire with clear and precise statements helped to ensure the reliability of the gathered data.

Data collection and analysis procedures

Questionnaire was administered by the use of Google Forms online survey tool and distributed through WhatsApp groups. Frequency and percentages were calculated for categorical variables while mean scores and standard deviations for Likert Scale data. Analysis of statistics was done with the help of SPSS 25.

Ethical considerations

The participation in the survey was voluntary. The participants were informed about the aims of the research and there were no personal data recorded in the presented dataset. The information obtained was considered confidential and would be used for academic purposes only.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile of participants

Demographics of the total 44 participants are illustrated in Table 1. The highest number of individuals belonged to the age range of 23-25 years (16 individuals, 36.4%), followed by 20-22 years (14, 31.8%). Nine individuals (20.5%) belonged to the age range of 17-19, and five (11.4%) belonged to the age range of 26-30. Academic level data were distributed in an exactly symmetrical way; there were 11 participants (25.0%) in each year. As regards proficiency level, 19 participants (43.2%) were classified as advanced, 11 (25.0%) as intermediate, 8 (18.2%) as upper intermediate, and 6 (13.6%) as beginners.

Table 1. Participant demographic information

1. Age		
Age	Frequency	Percentage
17-19	9	20.5%
20-22	14	31.8%
23-25	16	36.4%
26-30	5	11.4%
Total	44	100%
2. Class		
Class	Frequency	Percentage
Freshmen	11	25.0%
Sophomore	11	25.0%
Junior	11	25.0%
Senior	11	25.0%
Total	44	100%
3. Proficiency Level of Students		
English Level	Frequency	Percentage
Beginner	6	13.6%
Intermediate	11	25.0%
Upper Intermediate	8	18.2%
Advanced	19	43.2%
Total	44	100%

Descriptive findings by questionnaire section

Table 2 provides the mean scores of the three parts of the questionnaire. The first part, which deals with the relationship of reading to speaking, obtained a mean score of 3.98, which is a positive interpretation. The second part, dealing with the reading strategies that help in speaking, received a mean score of 3.93, which is also a positive interpretation. The third part, dealing with the speaking skills assisted by reading, scored the highest mean score among the three, which is 4.05. Overall mean score of 20 items was 3.97 which shows an overall positive perception.

Table 2. Descriptive findings by questionnaire section

No	Section	Items	Mean	Interpretation
1	Perceived Relationship Between Reading and Speaking	1–7	3.98	Generally positive
2	Reading Activities That Support Speaking	8–17	3.93	Generally positive
3	Speaking Aspects Supported by Reading	18–20	4.05	Positive
	Overall	1–20	3.97	Positive

Item-level findings

Table 3 provides the complete frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The mean value of Items 1-7 is 3.98. In Item 1, there were 32 respondents (72.8%) that agree or strongly agree on the statement that reading in English contributes to developing one's speaking ability. In Item 2, there were 33 respondents (75.0%) that agree on the possibility of improving one's speaking skills through reading out loud, while in Item 3, there were 35 respondents (79.5%) that agree on the possibility of having speaking chances through group reading. Item 4 and Item 5 each had 33 positive responses (75.0%).

The second part of the survey results was also positive. For question number 8, 30 respondents (68.2%) felt that reading out loud can help one with pronunciation. Question number 14 got the highest percentage of agreement among all questions in this part: 36 participants (81.8%) answered that silent reading combined with role play improves one's speaking skills. Finally, for question 17, 33 people (75.0%) thought that reading aloud followed by discussion was helpful.

Strongest perceptions were observed in the last three statements, having an average score of 4.05. In regard to Statement 18, 31 subjects (70.4%) strongly agree or agree that "reading allows you to learn new vocabulary which you can use while speaking." For Statement 19, 35 respondents (79.5%) strongly agree or agree that "reading allows you to develop ideas and to use appropriate vocabulary while speaking." Statement 20 had the highest number of strong perceptions – 36 subjects (81.8%) strongly agree or agree that "reading exercises allow you to become a fluent speaker."

Table 3. Item-level findings

Item No	Statement	Frequency and Percentage					Mean	SD
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
1	Reading English texts helps me improve my speaking skills.	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.3%)	11 (25.0%)	20 (45.5%)	12 (27.3%)	3.98	0.79
2	Reading aloud helps me improve my speaking skills.	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	11 (25.0%)	23 (52.3%)	10 (22.7%)	3.98	0.70
3	Group reading gives me opportunities to practice speaking English.	0 (0.0%)	2 (4.5%)	7 (15.9%)	25 (56.8%)	10 (22.7%)	3.98	0.76
4	Silent reading followed by discussion helps me develop my speaking skills.	0 (0.0%)	3 (6.8%)	8 (18.2%)	20 (45.5%)	13 (29.5%)	3.98	0.88
5	Reading English texts helps me express my ideas more clearly when speaking.	0 (0.0%)	3 (6.8%)	8 (18.2%)	20 (45.5%)	13 (29.5%)	3.98	0.88
6	Reading English texts helps me become more confident when speaking English.	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (27.3%)	21 (47.7%)	11 (25.0%)	3.98	0.73
7	Regular reading supports the development of my overall English-speaking ability.	0 (0.0%)	4 (9.1%)	7 (15.9%)	19 (43.2%)	14 (31.8%)	3.98	0.93
8	Reading aloud helps me improve my pronunciation when speaking English.	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	14 (31.8%)	19 (43.2%)	11 (25.0%)	3.93	0.76
9	Group reading followed by role-play helps me practice speaking English.	0 (0.0%)	2 (4.5%)	11 (25.0%)	19 (43.2%)	12 (27.3%)	3.93	0.85
10	Reading with audio helps me improve my pronunciation when speaking English.	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.3%)	13 (29.5%)	18 (40.9%)	12 (27.3%)	3.93	0.82
11	Silent reading followed by summarization gives me opportunities to practice speaking.	0 (0.0%)	2 (4.5%)	12 (27.3%)	17 (38.6%)	13 (29.5%)	3.93	0.87

12	Group reading followed by debates helps me develop my speaking skills.	0 (0.0%)	3 (6.8%)	11 (25.0%)	16 (36.4%)	14 (31.8%)	3.93	0.93
13	Reading aloud followed by debates helps me practice expressing my ideas orally.	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.3%)	11 (25.0%)	22 (50.0%)	10 (22.7%)	3.93	0.76
14	Silent reading followed by role-play helps me develop my speaking skills.	0 (0.0%)	2 (4.5%)	6 (13.6%)	29 (65.9%)	7 (15.9%)	3.93	0.70
15	Group reading followed by summarization helps me practice speaking English.	0 (0.0%)	2 (4.5%)	11 (25.0%)	19 (43.2%)	12 (27.3%)	3.93	0.85
16	Reading aloud followed by role-play helps me improve my speaking ability.	0 (0.0%)	2 (4.5%)	11 (25.0%)	19 (43.2%)	12 (27.3%)	3.93	0.85
17	Reading aloud followed by discussion gives me useful opportunities to practice speaking.	0 (0.0%)	2 (4.5%)	9 (20.5%)	23 (52.3%)	10 (22.7%)	3.93	0.79
18	Reading English texts helps me learn new vocabulary that I can use when speaking.	0 (0.0%)	2 (4.5%)	11 (25.0%)	14 (31.8%)	17 (38.6%)	4.05	0.91
19	Reading English texts helps me develop ideas and use appropriate expressions when speaking.	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.3%)	8 (18.2%)	23 (52.3%)	12 (27.3%)	4.05	0.75
20	Reading activities help me improve my speaking fluency.	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (18.2%)	26 (59.1%)	10 (22.7%)	4.05	0.65

Discussion

The results have shown that the majority of participants saw the connection between reading and speaking positively. The mean value of Items 1-7 was 3.98; the mean value of all items was 3.97. Such results are supported by the research showing that input in writing can be a resource for output in speech. Specifically, Kormos et al. (2022) revealed the existence of lexical alignment in the speech of the learners during the reading-to-speaking tasks, and Hayafune (2023) uncovered links among vocabulary, reading process, and speaking. While the current study does not explore these concepts, the results are consistent with the above-mentioned literature.

Moreover, the results reinforce the necessity of connecting the reading process with explicit oral tasks. The respondents found group reading, reading aloud, discussing, summarizing, role-playing, debating, and reading with audio to be effective strategies. It is significant that the questionnaire did not imply that the silent reading strategy was considered the only effective way. On the contrary, many of the highest evaluated strategies included the combination of reading with an oral task. Thus, 81.8% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the silent reading followed by the role-playing strategy helps to improve speaking. Also, 75.0% of the respondents positively evaluated the reading aloud followed by discussing. These results support an integrated-skills approach in which reading serves as preparation or input for subsequent speaking.

Furthermore, the results of the present study confirm some of the interventions which have been conducted lately in this area. For instance, as stated by Samaraweera (2024), the implementation of extensive reading-related tasks is associated with successful enhancement of learners' speaking abilities during reading-related lessons in the classroom. Besides, the impact of movie-enhanced extensive reading on vocabulary development and speaking performance of TOEFL iBT has been found out by Abdulrahman and Kara (2023). Such research provides more reliable evidence regarding improvement of learners' performance because they have speaking tests as opposed to the survey which is used in the current study. Thus, the survey indicates that learners perceive similar types of reading-based practices as useful.

Positive attitude to reading aloud can be justified by the results of the previously conducted studies about speaking fluency and pronunciation. A positive progression of fluency was seen in the work by Rodríguez-Fuentes and Calle-Díaz (2023), while pronunciation and vocabulary acquisition were influenced by the input mode in the work by Uchihara (2022). In the present study, 68.2% of participants positively assessed reading aloud in relation to pronunciation, whereas 75.0% positively assessed reading aloud followed by discussion. It can be seen that oral production is recognized as an element of reading activities.

The process of vocabulary and ideation was also adequately supported. The mean score of Item 18 was 4.05, whereas 70.4% of the participants indicated "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" response to the statement that reading helps them gain new vocabulary that they may use while speaking. It is in agreement with the results of research carried out by Janebi Enayat and Derakhshan (2021), who found that vocabulary size and productive vocabulary knowledge correlated with L2 speaking proficiency. Also, Hayafune (2023) revealed the correlation between vocabulary knowledge and story retelling ability. Therefore, it appears that reading can be regarded as a good source of lexical units for speech.

Item 19 was scored at a mean of 4.05, as 79.5% of the participants agreed that reading assists them in formulating their ideas and using proper expressions while speaking. This result could be viewed from the perspective of preparation of content and modeling of language. The process of reading provides a learner with information and models on how ideas can be structured and formulated. Kormos et al. (2022) discovered that it is feasible for learners to employ textual input during oral summarization; thus, the idea that reading provides linguistic input for oral language production is plausible.

Speaking fluency was the area where the largest number of positive answers were given in Item 20 - 81.8% of the respondents believe that reading exercises have a positive effect on speaking fluency. It needs to be analyzed in details. It implies the perception of high effectiveness without any real improvement in the areas of speaking rate, speaking pausing, lexical fluency or speaking fluency as a whole. According to Rodríguez-Fuentes and Calle-Díaz (2023), the interpretation of fluency measured quantitatively should be done in detail and in this particular case it is of utmost importance because of the lack of speaking test.

These findings thus lend themselves to a pedagogical explanation rather than a causal one. It would be sensible for teachers to adopt reading as a means of introduction to oral tasks, particularly if reading is succeeded by exercises that involve summary writing, discussion, debate, role-playing, or presentation of material. In fact, the pedagogical explanation given here meets the findings from the recent research of joint reading and speaking activities (Kormos et al., 2022; Abdulrahman & Kara, 2023; Samaraweera, 2024; Sumardi, 2025).

However, at the same time, it is clear that the results cannot show that all types of reading activities have the same effect on students. Second section mean, which amounted to 3.93, was lower than the means of the first and third sections. Certain respondents chose the Neutral or Disagree rating for some of the activity questions. Such inconsistency in the answers indicates that individual students can find certain classroom activities to be more helpful. However, the current data set does not include the measurement of such factors as motivation, culture or educational background of students.

CONCLUSION

This study assessed the perceptions of 44 ESL learners on the link between the reading and speaking skills development. In general, there were positive perceptions in all the three parts of the questionnaires with the averages of 3.98 on the perception of the relation between the two skills, 3.93 on the reading activities promoting speaking and 4.05 on the speaking elements fostered by the reading. The overall average perception was 3.97.

The most positive perceptions at the item level pertained to vocabulary, idea development and appropriate expression, and fluency of the speaking. Several integrated activities were also regarded positively by the participants including silent reading followed by role play, group reading, reading aloud, discussion and other activities that involve moving from the written input to oral output.

The perceptions of the learners were assessed in this study and, hence, they give valuable evidence that the learners perceive reading as a resourceful activity for the oral communication. Consequently, teachers may employ the reading texts as the input in conducting activities like discussion, summarizing, debating, role-play and reading aloud. The future researches may be conducted with the large and representative sample of the respondents, with the individual level data, using the reliable measuring instruments and the direct measures of speaking performance (experimental and longitudinal designs). Such studies may reveal if the positive perceptions revealed in this survey correspond to the development of the fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy and overall speaking ability.

Limitations

There were a number of limitations associated with the research. First, there was a small sample size of 44 male ESL students from a particular department. In other words, the results cannot be generalized for all university students. Second, the research was aimed at investigating perceptions of the students rather direct measurement of speaking performance. Finally, the use of convenience sampling may lead to selection bias. Future research could overcome those limitations using larger samples, students from various universities, as well as female students.

Pedagogical implications

This study indicates some implications of practical nature that should be considered when teaching ESL students. First, teachers can apply reading materials as an introductory part to the speaking class instead of separating them as two unrelated classes. Second, oral activities should take place after reading activities to provide an opportunity for learners to change their inputs into outputs. Third, activities like summarizing, discussing, role playing, and debating will be helpful for students to apply the vocabulary and concepts that are mentioned in the reading material. Fourth, reading out loud and with audio will be useful when pronunciation is the focus of instruction. Finally, teachers should change activities and observe students' reaction since one reading task is not likely to be useful for all the students.

Data availability

All data used in this research and corresponding to the findings could be obtained from the author on reasonable request. Considering the exploratory character of the research and involving participants' questionnaires, the raw datasets are not open to the public to protect the confidentiality of personal information. Still, anonymized survey responses and statistical analysis could be shared with researchers who are interested in the topic. All data were collected and analyzed following the principles of ethical research, thus ensuring their accuracy and integrity in reporting.

Conflict of interest

The author hereby states that there are no conflicts of interest in regard to this study. The study was conducted independently and objectively, and was not influenced in any way by any financial, institutional or personal relations. All conclusions and findings presented here are based solely on the collected and analyzed data.

Author contribution

There has been no other person involved in data collecting, instrument improvement and analyzing besides the author of this paper. Author contribution to this research should be taken into consideration in conception of design of the study, instrument improvement, data analyzation and the gathering and should be highlighted because the only thing that has been done is the statistical analysis. All the necessary steps have been undertaken independently by the author, which allows eliminating revisions, editing and final approval of the work.

Statement of ethics

This research was done following all ethical guidelines for doing research. Participation in the research was purely voluntary, and all the participants were told about the research purpose before answering the questions. All identifying information was kept private in order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality in the research. The collected data were only going to be used for academic purposes, and all responses from the participants were handled with utmost professionalism. The researcher acknowledges that all the ethical principles of integrity, fairness, and honesty were observed in the research process.

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