Exploring student's perspective in improving their English productive skill: Existing competencies and Encountered challenges

Sri Aisyah, et.al.

EXPLORING EFL STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE IN IMPROVING THEIR ENGLISH PRODUCTIVE SKILLS: EXISTING COMPETENCIES AND ENCOUNTERED CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

This research is focused on the fundamental competencies of students majoring in English and Literature, with the objective of identifying and evaluating their productive language skills and addressing the challenges they encounter in enhancing speaking and writing skills.Quantitative analysis serves as the methodology for this study. The analysis of the data reveals two key findings. Firstly, there exists a diversity of proficiency levels among students, predominantly at the intermediate level. Notably, writing proficiency remains a challenge, with only 53% of students averaging between 1-4 on the scale, indicating a lack of mastery. Similarly, when it comes to writing skills, 60% of students fall within the range of 1 to 4 on the scale. Secondly, challenges stem from various factors, including limited exposure to English outside the classroom, difficulties in grasping cultural context, and a lack of confidence in public speaking. Proposed solutions include the incorporation of interactive learning methodologies, provision of supplementary speaking sessions, and the promotion of cultural sensitivity through diverse activities.

Keywords: English Proficiency, Productive Language Skills, speaking skills, Writing skills.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini difokuskan pada kompetensi dasar mahasiswa jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris, dengan tujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan mengevaluasi keterampilan bahasa Produktif mereka dan mengatasi tantangan yang mereka hadapi dalam meningkatkan kompetensi tersebut. Analisis kuantitatif digunakan sebagai metodologi penelitian ini. Analisis data mengungkapkan dua temuan utama. Pertama, terdapat keragaman tingkat kemahiran di kalangan siswa, terutama pada tingkat menengah. Khususnya, kemahiran menulis masih menjadi tantangan, dengan hanya 53% siswa yang memiliki rata-rata nilai antara 1-4, yang menunjukkan kurangnya penguasaan. Demikian pula, dalam hal keterampilan menulis, 60% siswa berada dalam rentang skala 1 hingga 4. Kedua, tantangan berasal dari berbagai faktor, termasuk terbatasnya paparan bahasa Inggris di luar kelas, kesulitan dalam memahami konteks budaya, dan kurangnya rasa percaya diri dalam berbicara di depan umum. Solusi yang diusulkan mencakup penggabungan metodologi pembelajaran interaktif, penyediaan sesi pembicaraan tambahan, dan peningkatan kepekaan budaya melalui beragam kegiatan.

kata kunci: Kemahiran Bahasa Inggris, Keterampilan Bahasa Produktif, Keterampilan Berbicara, Keterampilan Menuli

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INTRODUCTION

Mainly speaking and writing skills are considered as productive skills as learner need to produce words before writing or speaking (Marjan Islam, 2019). Speaking involves using language professionally through expressions and gestures to convey ideas or emotions, like writing, a language skill used for expressing thoughts on paper or through typing, adhering to proper language rules, accurate spelling, and appropriate word selection. Students need to acquire a broad vocabulary to effectively engage with individuals in their surroundings and to write in a manner that enables them to select the correct words and construct suitable sentences, encompassing both personal and institutional writing (Marjan Islam, 2019). Productive skills include speaking and writing abilities, proficiency in a language is achieved when an individual can effectively communicate through speaking and writing (Sharma, 2015).

Students majoring in English and Literature must master productive language skills. Being involved in the study and creation of literary works requires students to express emotions and ideas both orally and in writing. Productive language skills are very important because they function as a bridge between cultures, communicate, create written works, and provide insight into various perspectives. Apart from that, this also influences students' academic success and future career prospects. English and Literature students may face various challenges in improving their basic competencies especially in productive language skills. These challenges may include limited access to resources, lack of motivation, and difficulty in adapting to the academic culture of their institution. However, in achieving success there are always challenges or obstacles that must be faced, because students face various obstacles in mastering the language and understanding complex literary concepts (Martirosyan et al., 2015). This research assesses the proficiency level of English and Literature students, identifies the challenges encountered by English and Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar in enhancing their basic competencies, and suggests solutions to address these challenges.

There is research that also discusses the development of students' productive English skills, such as research conducted by (Riska et al., 2023) titled *"Training and Development of Productive Teachers in Improving Work Skills for Vocational High School (SMK) Level Students in Sigli"*. The findings of this research indicate that coaching through MGMP, IHT (in-house training), teacher coaching through supervision, and pedagogical and professional development competencies can enhance teacher skills and productivity at Sigli Vocational School, particularly in continuing education and implementing industrial internships. Moreover, the development and guidance of teachers to increase professionalism in developing learning strategies for students also significantly influences the development of students' productive English skills. Research conducted by (Samsudi et al., 2019) entitled *"The Implementation of Project-Based Learning in Productive Skill Programs for the Development of 21st Century Vocational School Students"*, which is based on the teacher's observations of students at the 21st Century Vocational School in Semarang, this study reveals that there are still several skills that students need to develop to master their productive skills. These skills include solving problems through analytical and critical thinking, being receptive to new and varied ideas, collaborating with others, and engaging in multimedia communication as a result, teachers must intensify their efforts in implementing learning models that according to these skills. Ultimately, research conducted by (Lysenko, 2023) entitled *"Enhancing an Effective Approach of the Productive Language Skills of Advanced Students"* has resulted in significant findings regarding productive skills, which are essential in language acquisition. Considering the significance of these skills, it is imperative that teachers

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integrate both writing and speaking into the language learning process to accelerate and enhance the learning experience. Specifically, the integration of engaging methods such as picture stories, information-gap activities, group work, mingling activities, discussions, problem-solving, drama, role-play, surveys, questionnaires, and storytelling can prove particularly effective in ESL and EFL settings.

The three previous studies above examined various methods employed by teachers to cultivate students' productive English skills in senior high schools or vocational schools. Despite the provision of diverse learning approaches by teachers to bolster the development of students' productive skills, a majority of students still grapple with issues such as lack of confidence in their Productive skills, difficulty in mastering the language, and lack of interest in learning English. This phenomenon is prevalent among students, including those studying English Language and Literature at UIN Alauddin Makassar. This prompted me to delve into the challenges encountered by students in enhancing their Productive English skills directly from UIN Alauddin Makassar students, particularly those majoring in English Language and Literature, in order to identify appropriate solutions to address these challenges and develop their competence further.

This paper explores the profile of English and Literature students by measuring their language skills through self-assessment to find out what challenges and solutions are desired in developing basic English and Literature competencies, so that I can provide information on what weaknesses need to be strengthened and what aspects are good to maintain.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Basic Competencies of English and Literature Students

English and Literature students require a range of basic competencies to succeed in their field of study. These competencies include proficiency in English grammar, reading comprehension, writing skills, and critical thinking. Students in this field of study should also have a strong foundation in literary analysis and interpretation, as well as an understanding of the historical and cultural contexts of English literature (Gradman and Hanania 1991; Kiliçkaya and Ergil 2023). English language students should have a strong command of the English language, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. They should be able to communicate effectively in both spoken and written English. (Bacus & Alda, 2023). as for the use of literature to improve students' English proficiency through a language-based approach. Assessment of EFL students' literary competence at Tiaret University using reading O'Brien's On the Rainy River as a data tool to measure their literary competence. The findings revealed that EFL student participants at Tiaret University lacked several basic skills essential for literary competence (Mehdaoui, 2022). Regarding the teaching of English and Literature, it is important to include the development of students' reading, writing, and critical thinking skills (Wyse et al., 2013). It helps language instructors identify learners' needs in English language teaching and investigates the factors that enhance their writing skills (Chicho, 2022).

Also, a deeper understanding of the procedures entailed in bilingual development, first language acquisition, second language usage, foreign language learning, and language attrition has been attained. (Dey, 2021). the modularity of the mind, speaking, writing, reading, and speaking itself, psycholinguistic theory has made significant theoretical advances to our knowledge of human language processing. (Schuier et al., 2008; Tatlılıoglu & Senchylo-Tatlılıoglu, 2020). English language students should have a strong command of the English language, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. They should be able to communicate effectively

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in both spoken and written English (Bacus & Alda, 2023). To master a language, there must be a strong foundation in oral English language proficiency, English text writing skills, English text reading, and comprehension skills. These skills in English are interrelated. All four must be studied simultaneously so that everything can be mastered evenly. These skills are divided into two categories: Productive language skills and Receptive language skills. The receiving information covers listening and reading skills whereas speaking and writing skills are productive skills (Sharma, 2015). The focus of this research is on productive language skills.

1. Speaking skill

Speaking is an interactive process between the listener and the speaker (Khansir & Zaab, 2015). Learning EFL language skills plays a crucial role, particularly in speaking skills, as speaking demonstrates an interactive process between the speaker and the listener for discussing ideas or materials and generating individual opinions based on facts, whether interactional or transactional (Mohammed, 2021). In terms of English proficiency, particularly in speaking skills, students need to acquire grammatical structures and master a vast vocabulary to avoid difficulties in spontaneously generating sentences (Rao, 2019). From the three statements above speaking is the ability to express opinions, comment on others' views, reject opposing opinions, and engage in question-and-answer interactions. In addition to that, the sentences generated must also adhere to the proper grammatical structure to avoid ambiguity

2. Writing skill

Writing is a social tool that facilitates interpersonal communication. It is socially constructed, social ties are formed, the writer's social presence is altered, shared meanings are created, and social action is accomplished. (Bazerman, 2015). Writers engage in social interactions through their writing. Writers write for context, to achieve goals and make claims in context. Several ethnographic studies of writers, both inside and outside of schools, demonstrate how people plan and write within certain contexts, based on their own assessments of those contexts and their roles and interests within them. For example, young children may use captions to describe photos (Hohti, 2016; Luttrell Wendy, 2010). Writing is a way to stay active in the forum; to stay active or get better at it, one must organize, schedule, and modify their writing to fit the opportunities and demands of the moment. (Bazerman, 2015).

To develop these competencies, it is important to understand the unique challenges faced by English and Literature students. One major challenge is the language barrier faced by international students. Research has shown that self-perceived English language proficiency is positively correlated with academic performance among international students (Martirosyan et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important to provide support to these students to help them improve their language skills and succeed academically.

B. Challenges Faced by English and Literature Students in Improving Their Productive Skills
1. Speaking skills

With the use of English in student communication, students often struggle with pronunciation, lack mastery of vocabulary, and encounter difficulties with grammatical structures (Hasanah, 2017). There are three interrelated elements that ESL students frequently encounter when developing productive skills, particularly speaking, which are self-confidence, motivation, and reducing their anxiety levels. High levels of anxiety can diminish students' self-confidence and motivation, ultimately impacting their speaking fluency (Paneerselvam & Mohamad, 2019).

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Students' speaking abilities are influenced by their topical knowledge, the ability to listen to sentences to respond to the person they are speaking to, self-confidence, and pressure or feedback to perform well, which can be an obstacle to developing speaking skills in the classroom (Shahnama et al., 2021).

English and Literature students is a lack of motivation is challenge most often faced by students. This may be due to a variety of factors, including a lack of interest in the subject matter, difficulty in understanding course material, and a lack of confidence in their abilities. The atmosphere in the classroom greatly influences motivation. Consequently, most EFL students feel comfortable during oral expression sessions (Bouhassoun Aziz Mostefaoui et al., 2020). International students may face additional challenges in improving their basic competencies, particularly regarding language barriers. Research has shown that language proficiency is a key factor in academic success among international students (Martirosyan et al., 2015). To address this challenge, educators can provide language tutoring and cultural orientation programs to help international students improve their language skills and adapt to the academic culture of their institution (Martirosyan et al., 2015).

2. Writing skill

English and Literature students may face difficulty in adapting to the academic culture of their institution. This may include learning how to write academic papers, participate in class discussions, and engage with course material in a critical and analytical way. To address this challenge, educators can provide targeted support to students, such as writing workshops and academic coaching, to help them develop the skills necessary for success in their field of study (Dussling, 2016). There are two primary reasons why EFL students encounter challenges when writing compare and contrast essays. Firstly, limited knowledge of the fundamental elements of writing, including content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics, hinders their ability to produce effective essays. Second, personal factors such as lack of writing practice, a dislike of writing, anxiety, negative attitudes towards writing, a lack of encouragement to write, limited time available, and ineffective teaching methods used by instructors to teach writing also contribute to these difficulties (Toba et al., 2019). Lack of interest in writing practice can be caused by various factors, including the overwhelming number of tasks to be completed, household and financial responsibilities, the absence of encouraging feedback, family background, and a general lack of interest. Furthermore, when students encounter difficulties in writing English, they often resort to using their native language as a substitute medium (Fareed et al., 2016).

Overall, developing basic competencies is essential for success in EFL programs. By understanding the challenges faced by these students and implementing effective strategies to support their development. English students may face a range of challenges in improving their basic competencies. By understanding these challenges and implementing effective strategies to address them, educators can help students achieve their academic goals and succeed in their chosen field of study.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was used an Exploratory data analysis, quantitative research method to investigate the challenges and solutions in developing basic competencies of English Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar. Exploratory data analysis, developed by Tukey, is a data analysis technique used to explore data for insights, reviews, conditions/trends, and patterns without drawing formal conclusions or conducting significance testing (bidin A, 2017). The

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research design for this study were be a cross-sectional survey. Participants were be asked to complete a questionnaire that were assess their productive skills (Speaking and Writing skills). The statements of the questionnaire were developed based on the theory of productive skills in literature review. This aims to obtain profile data of English and Literature subjects, challenges and solutions faced by students in developing their productive skills. These questions were given to students as many as 10 questions to see students' responses regarding their productive skills. The data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire based on the theory of English and Literature basic competencies.

The questionnaire was distributed to participants via Google form and was available online for two weeks. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire during this period. Variable measurements to be carried out in this research are: 1.) Competency Profile: The competency profile of English literature students can be measured using a self-assessment method. Students rated their proficiency levels in different competency areas using a semantic differential scale based on Oppenheim (1992) . The level in scale 1-8, 1 being the lowest and 8 being the highest. 2) Challenges and Solutions in Enhancing Competencies: Data on challenges and solutions was obtained through an open-ended questionnaire administered to students. Following the assessment of their proficiency in basic English Literature competencies as English and Literature students, they were asked to document the challenges they encountered during the development of their competencies and to provide recommendations for addressing these challenges or to report aspired solutions. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, based on Ronald Aylmer Fisher's theory (Wackerly et al., 2014). Statistics is the science of data, which involves collecting, classifying, summarizing, organizing, analyzing, and interpreting data, such as means and standard deviations, to describe the basic competencies of English Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics Distribution by Gender and Semester

Gender	Semester	Freq	%
Female (n= 82)	3	1	0,81%
	5	32	25,81%
	7	48	38,71%
	11	1	0,81%
Male (n=42)	3	1	0,81%
	5	22	17,74%
	7	19	15,32%
	11	0	0,00%

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| Total | 124 | 100,00% |

There was a total of 124 respondents, comprising 82 females and 42 males. The distribution of female respondents is highest in semester 7 with 48 individuals (38.71%), followed by semester 5 with 32 individuals (25.81%). Meanwhile, for male respondents, the highest attendance occurs in semester 5 with 22 individuals (17.74%), followed by semester 7 with 19 individuals (15.32%). There are no male respondents listed for semester 11, while only 1 female respondent is recorded for the same semester. From this data, it can be concluded that most respondents are in semesters 5 and 7, with a higher number of females compared to males
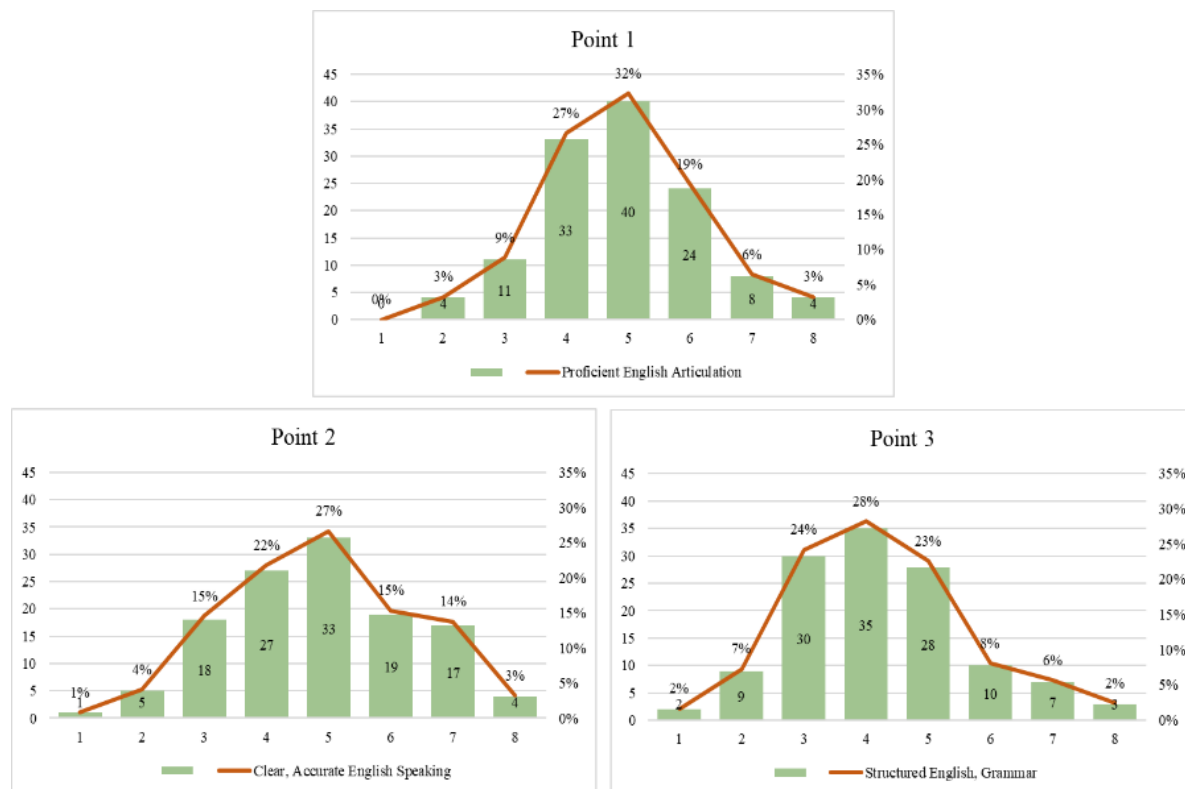
FINDING AND DISCUSSION

A. Student Mastery Level Profile in Productive Language Skills Through Students' Self-assessment

The primary basic competencies in English and Literature include English proficiency. Within this competency, students should master productive skills (Speaking, and Writing skills).

1. Speaking skills

There are three items that students should master in Speaking English proficiency, which are: (1) Having advanced proficiency in speaking English and articulating ideas clearly; (2) Being able to speak English clearly and accurately so that listeners can understand the argument, and (3) Being able to speak English with correct grammar.Graph 1. Illustrates the profile of students' English Proficiency in Speaking skill.

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The bar graph above depicts the students' mastery levels of speaking skills. Students who lack mastery of speaking skills are represented on the scale of 1-4, while students who have mastered the basic competencies are on the scale of 5-8. The data is presented as a percentage in the first graph point, illustrating students with advanced proficiency in speaking English and articulating ideas clearly. From a sample of 124 English and Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar, it is evident that 48 students (39%) on a scale of 1-4 lack mastery of the first competence, still haltingly speaking English and articulating ideas clearly, whereas 76 students (61%) on the scale of 5-8 have mastered this first basic competence and are able to speak English and articulate ideas clearly.

The second bar graph illustrates the level of students' proficiency in speaking English clearly and accurately, enabling listeners to understand the argument. Out of 124 students sampled, 51 students (41%) scored between 1-4, indicating a lack of mastery in speaking English clearly and accurately to ensure listener understanding of the argument, while 73 students (59%) scored between 5-8, demonstrating mastery in this competency.
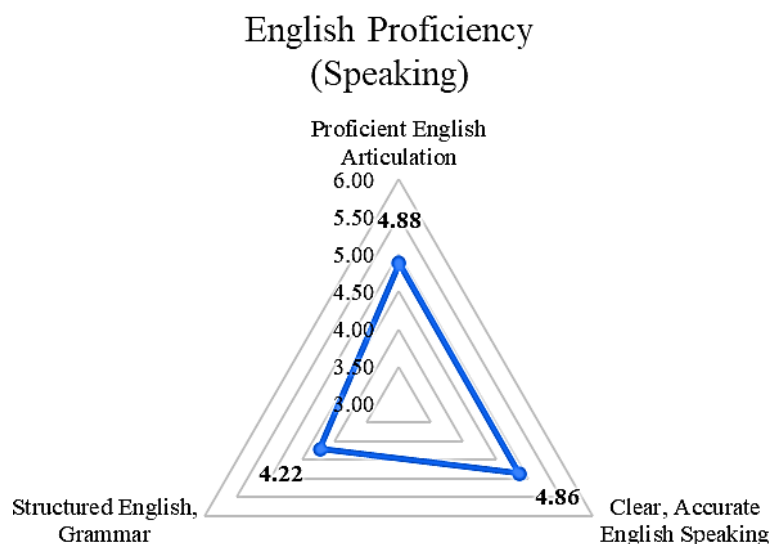
The third bar graph illustrates students' ability to speak in a structured manner (grammar). Of the 124 students sampled, the data shows that 76 students (61%) scored in the range of 1-4 lack of mastery in speaking English in a structured manner (grammar), while 48 students (39%) scored in the range of 5 -8 demonstrate mastery in speaking English in a structured manner (grammar).

Of the three points above the average student competence being on the scale 5-6, that shows English and Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar have good ability in Speaking but lacks mastery of speaking with structure manner (Grammar).

The relationship among student abilities from these three points can also be observed in the following graph.

Graph 2. Relationship between the three points of Speaking skills.

Chart source: (Saary, 2008).

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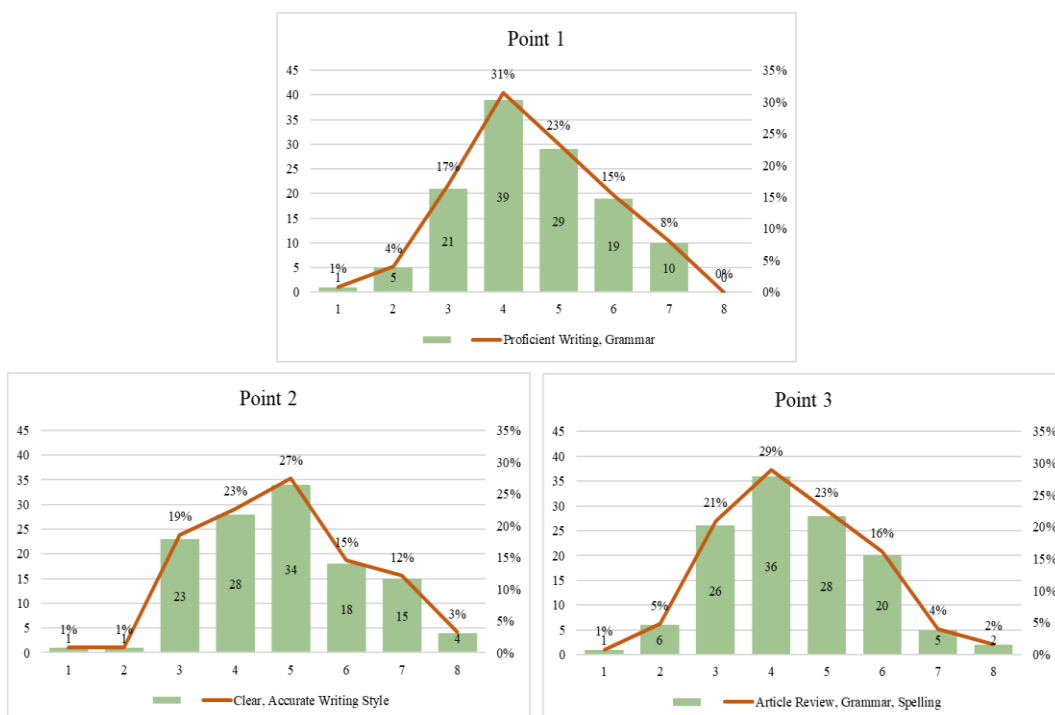*Encountered challenges*

From the graph provided in the first statement, the average students of English and Literature at UIN Alauddin Makassar in the last semester rated their competence in speaking English with clear and accurate articulation, averaging a scale of 4,88. This indicates that there are some sentences or words they cannot articulate clearly, similar to a native speaker. In the second statement, the average rating also falls on a scale of 4,86, suggesting that the competence of students' argumentative delivery can still be understood by listeners at a moderate level. However, on average, students often neglect grammar when speaking English, as evidenced in the third statement where their competence is rated at an average of 4,22, indicating that students perceive their competence to be slightly below a moderate level.

In oral language skills, students need to demonstrate proficiency in speaking English, which includes articulating ideas clearly and pronouncing words correctly and distinctly so that listeners can comprehend the spoken words. Effective articulation ensures that the intended message is conveyed accurately to the audience. Additionally, students must possess structural knowledge (grammar) to prevent misunderstandings, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of communication. Lacking a strong grasp of grammar, students may struggle to speak appropriately in English, which could lead to difficulties in conveying their message at the right context and time, resulting in potential misunderstanding by the audience.

2. Writing skills

There are also three items that students should master's in writing English proficiency, which are (1) Students should have proficiency in writing English texts with grammatical accuracy and coherence; (2) They should possess a clear and accurate writing style so that the reader can understand the purpose of their writing, and (3) They should be capable of reviewing an article for sentence-level items, such as grammar, pronunciation, spelling, word choice, and minor writing errors.

Graph 3. Illustrates the profile of students' English Proficiency in Writing skills

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The bar graph above illustrates the proficiency levels of students in mastering basic competencies in English writing. Those who lack mastery are categorized within the scale of 1-4, while those who have mastered the basic competence fall within the scale of 5-8. The data is presented as a percentage, depicting proficiency in writing English texts with grammatical accuracy and coherence. Out of 124 students majoring in English and Literature at UIN Alauddin Makassar, the sampling collected indicates that 66 students (53%) fall within the scale of 1-4, indicating a lack of mastery in this first competency, thus not yet proficient in writing English texts with grammatical accuracy and coherence. Conversely, 58 students (47%) are within the scale of 5-8, indicating mastery of this first competence and proficiency in writing English texts with grammatical accuracy and coherence.

The second bar graph shows the level of writing clearly and accurately so that the reader can understand the purpose of the text. From 124 students sampling collecting shows that (43%) 53 students being on the scale of 1-4 are lacking mastery to write clearly and accurately so that the reader can understand the purpose of the text, and (57 %) 71 students being on the scale of 5-8 are mastery and their writing can be understood by readers.
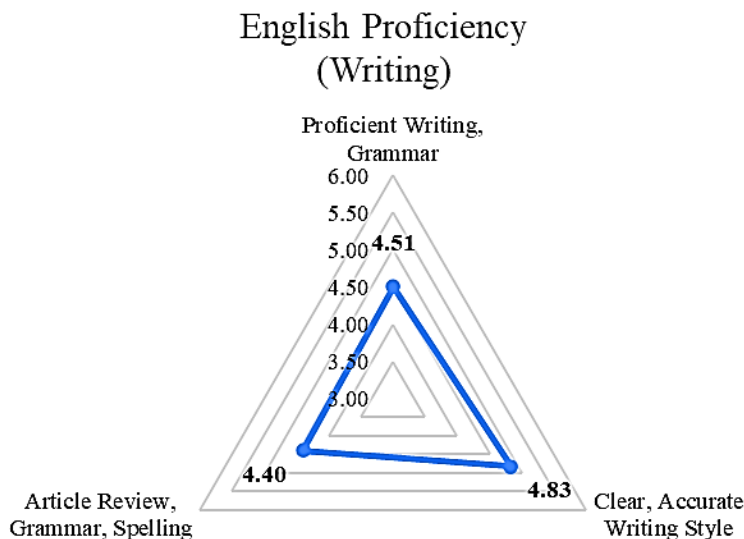
The third bar graph depicts students' competence in reviewing articles for sentence-level items, including grammar, pronunciation, spelling, word choice, and minor errors in writing. The sampling collected from 124 students shows that 69 students (56%) scoring between 1-4 lack mastery in reviewing articles for sentence-level items, while 55 students (44%) scoring between 5-8 demonstrate mastery in reviewing articles for sentence-level items. level items.

Among the three points, the average competence of students falls within the 5-6 scale, indicating that the majority of English and Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar can write clearly and accurately enough for readers to understand the text. However, many also exhibit deficiencies in mastering grammatical writing and article reviews at the sentence level, including grammar, pronunciation, spelling, word choice, and minor errors in writing. While most students have attained proficiency in writing, a significant portion still struggles to achieve mastery in writing competencies.

The relationship among student abilities from these three points can also be observed in the following graph.

Graph 4. Relationship between the three points of Writing skills.

Chart source: (Saary, 2008).

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(Writing)

In terms of writing skills, average students rate their competence in writing English text with grammatical accuracy and coherence slightly below a moderate level. In the first statement, the average rating is on a scale of 4,51, indicating that students can write in English; however, their grammatical accuracy and coherence have not been entirely appropriate, although they still demonstrate some ability. In the second statement, the average student rating of competence is on a scale of 4,83, indicating that readers can still understand the purpose of their English writing, as they use familiar words in their environment. In the third statement, students rate their competence on average as a 4,40 on the scale. Although all students are able to review an article for sentence-level items such as grammar, pronunciation, spelling, word choice, and minor errors using familiar sentence-level items, they are not yet able to review higher-level language sentences, as found in classic novels.

Writing entails the skill of expressing ideas, opinions, and feelings in written form. A well-structured sentence with accurate grammar, spelling, and word choice forms contextual meaning, enabling readers to understand the text's purpose. Writers should strive to make their texts easily comprehensible to readers by employing well-structured sentences. Students studying English and Literature should be capable of reviewing articles for sentence-level items, such as grammar, pronunciation, spelling, word choice, and minor errors, as this understanding of reviews aids in editing writing and assessing sentence effectiveness from the reader's perspective.

B. Challenges and Solutions in Developing Productive Skills

1. Speaking skills

Every student always faces challenges in developing their basic competencies. After collecting data, it was found that English and Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar encountered several challenges in improving their speaking skill . These challenges include a lack of basic competency in speaking, such as difficulty in memorizing vocabulary, which makes it difficult for students to string sentences together and a lack of practice when they want to speak. Additionally, students lack insight into the subject matter when speaking. They also experience less confidence and feel nervous whenever they start speaking due to the fear of making mistakes, which leads to

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forgetting vocabulary. Furthermore, students' confidence is undermined by an unsupportive environment where they are sneered at and laughed at when speaking in English.

Lacking mastery of grammar, many students are hesitant to speak English until they have mastered grammar, fearing incorrect verb usage or sentence structure, which makes it difficult to convey their thoughts. The next challenge lies in mastering conversation to achieve a higher level of fluency in spontaneous dialogue. Additionally, refining pronunciation for native-like intonation and navigating cultural subtleties can be challenging. Lack of motivation and time constraints hinder practice, especially among the Z generation, who predominantly spend their time on social media. As a result, students often encounter challenges with verb tenses, word order, and articles when speaking English. These challenges may manifest as pronunciation issues, hesitation, lack of confidence, and difficulty expressing ideas coherently.

The following are several examples of students' responses that exemplify each challenge frequently encountered in developing these speaking skills:

Vocabulary *"I still struggle to speak English in front of the class or want to express my opinion, but when it comes to speaking English for everyday conversation or writing what I understand, I feel that a lot of progress is starting to happen because some classes in four and five force me inevitably I have to speak English, or I will fall behind. On the other hand, I also felt lacking in terms of vocabulary and grammar."*

Confidence *"Kinda difficult to speak clearly English because I often the grammar, and shy to speak with my friends."*

Pronunciation *"There some challenges in speaking are sometimes it's difficult to pronounce some words in English, then I just know how to talk in a basic thing because my vocabulary not enough to speak about big issue or big topic in English then the big challenge for me is the grammar structure because that's really hard to make good grammar when it comes to speak."*

Grammar *"After filling 3 statements I can find my challenges face when I am speaking English like a grammar rule which can be hard to remember and apply correctly to apply when I'm speak."*

Dialogue *"I feel like those challenges of speaking English is just the lack of practice when talking to each other, especially if it's a foreigner."*

Environment *"Topics or objects discussed, lack of mastery of new vocabulary, unsupportive environment."*
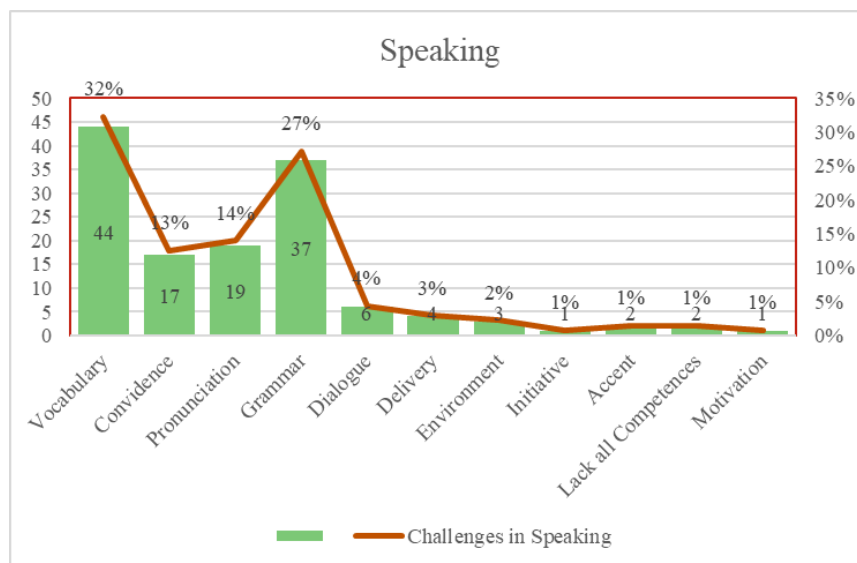
Initiative *"I don't give myself time to learn English more."*

Accent *"There are lots of accent and when they change, I find it very difficult to understand them."*

Lack all competences *"I didn't have basic knowledge about English language."*

Motivation *"Motivation is one of the challenges for use right now, as we can see as Z generation, we mostly spend our time in social media."*

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Graph 10. Students challenges in developing English Proficiency (Speaking)

Based on the questionnaire data, it can be concluded that English and Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar face various challenges in developing their speaking competencies. These challenges include mastering vocabulary, confidence, pronunciation, grammar, dialogue, delivery, dealing with an unsupportive environment, taking initiative, managing accents, lacking all competencies, and maintaining motivation. The most significant challenges encountered by students are mastering vocabulary affecting 32% (44 students), grammar affecting 27% (37 students), pronunciation affecting 14% (19 students), and confidence affecting 13% (17 students).

Improving speaking skills in English is actually not a difficult task; it simply requires regular and consistent practice. There are several solutions for developing basic competence in English Proficiency (Speaking). One approach is to expand one's vocabulary daily, which contributes to better English-speaking abilities. Additionally, using social platforms such as Duolingo and YouTube for English learning, reading English texts on social media and in books, watching English movies, listening to podcasts, and even singing along to English music can help identify unfamiliar vocabulary. Using Google Translate to initially guess the meaning of unknown words and understanding the context aids in vocabulary and pronunciation development. Furthermore, consistently thinking in English helps students in constructing sentences more easily, making it effortless to convey thoughts, including updating social media stories with English captions.

Theory _–from (Hasanah, 2017) writes that with the use of English in student communication, students often struggle with pronunciation, lack mastery of vocabulary, and encounter difficulties with grammatical structures. Apart from that, (Paneerselvam & Mohamad, 2019) states that high levels of anxiety can diminish students' self-confidence and motivation, ultimately impacting their speaking fluency. And English and Literature students are a lack of motivation is the challenge most often faced by students. This may be due to a variety of factors, including a lack of interest in the subject matter, difficulty in understanding course material, and a lack of confidence in their abilities. The atmosphere in the classroom greatly influences motivation. As a result, most EFL students feel comfortable during oral expression sessions

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(Bouhassoun Aziz Mostefaoui et al., 2020). So, in this research found that concerning students' speaking productive skills, subsequent to assessing the fundamental competency skills of English Language and Literature students, researchers identified the prevalent challenges encountered by students in improving their basic competencies, which include mastering vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and confidence.

The solution to developing students' confidence in speaking and reducing nervousness involves speaking to oneself in English using a mirror at home and practicing speaking in front of it. Sharing stories or personal experiences in English can enhance speaking skills through the process of retelling. It is essential to narrate the story in English from one's own perspective, focusing not only on translating word-for-word but also on understanding the context of the story and familiarizing oneself with various accents. To address challenges in developing basic competency in speaking, students propose that the learning environment should enforce strict rules requiring the use of English within the scope of the English and Literature major. They express the hope for intensive speaking classes and suggest that lecturers teach or introduce new words to students, going beyond the commonly used vocabulary. To address this challenge, educators can provide language tutoring and cultural orientation programs to help students improve their language skills and adapt to the academic culture of their institution (Martirosyan et al., 2015).

2. Writing skills

The challenges that most students face in improving their basic competence in writing skills include a lack of vocabulary, which leads students to rely heavily on dictionaries, difficulties in using formal language in essay writing, and comprehending articles for reference in writing. Additionally, struggling with learning grammar, especially parts of speech, and finding it challenging to determine grammatical categories hinder students from writing coherently and accurately. Verifying the appropriate expressions in writing also poses a challenge in developing writing skills.

There are also several challenges students face in writing, such as difficulty in generating ideas or concepts, issues with coherence or logic in writing, predicting outcomes, and struggling to develop supporting ideas or arguments. To address these challenges in writing skills, students suggest some solutions, such as incorporating additional activities where students write their stories in a diary daily. This approach aims to ensure that students can learn how to write effectively.

The following are several examples of students' responses that exemplify each challenge frequently encountered in developing writing skills:

Vocabulary *"My lack of advance English vocabulary has been quite a challenge especially writing my own thesis. I understand and recognize advanced vocabulary when I see or read them, but I could not quite use them in my own writing. Those are what is called active and passive vocabulary. Moreover, it is very apparent that academic writing is different than writing simple essays or messaging friends through our phone. Thesis needs advanced vocabulary to be academically appropriate."*

Grammar *"My challenge in writing English text is ensuring clarity and consistency of the message without grammatical errors. Sometimes, understanding the nuances if context can be complex, but I am Continually improving to provide better and more informative responses."*

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Idea *"1) String together sentences, 2) Get good idea, 3) Use words according to time."*

Translate *"Differences in the mention of words in both Indonesian and English."*

Motivation *"I'm so lazy for reading some article so I have trouble to review some of that."*

**Abbreviation** *"The writing must be appropriate; it must not be abbreviated."*

Spelling of word *"Did not know about the vocabulary before, so sometimes I was typo or miss typing or write the text."*

Conjunction *"Vocabulary selection, use of conjunctions and grammar."*

Punctuation *"The challenges I face in English text writing include maintaining coherence, adapting tone appropriate, and ensuring clarity for diverse audiences."*

Idiom *"Commonly I use basic words when writing rather than an improve word or such an idiom to make my writing looks academical writing."*

Graph 11. Students challenges in developing English Proficiency (Writing)
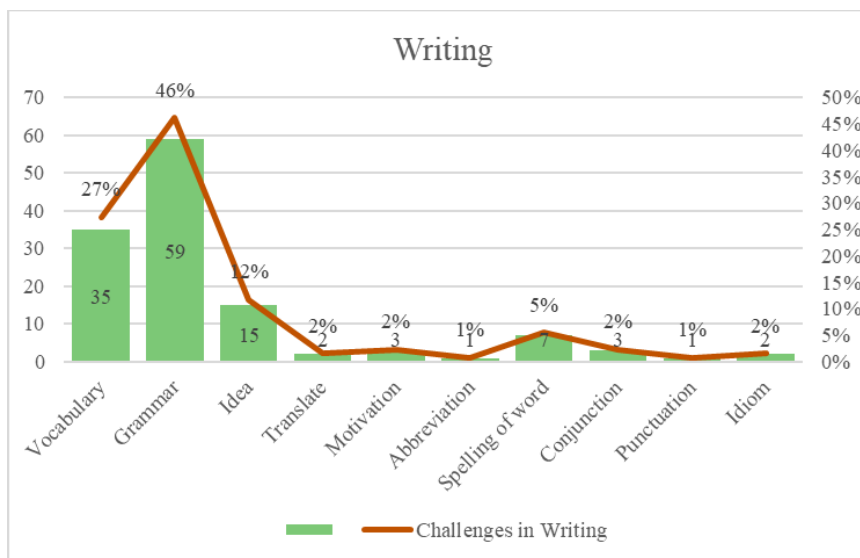
Based on the questionnaire data, it is concluded that the challenges encountered by English and Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar in developing writing competencies revolve around mastering vocabulary, grammar, generating ideas, translation, abbreviation usage, spelling, conjunctions, punctuation, idioms, and motivation. The most significant challenges reported by students were related to grammar, with 46% (59 students) facing difficulties, followed by vocabulary mastery at 27% (35 students), and generating ideas at 12% (15 students).

When facing the challenges of writing texts, several solutions can be applied. Firstly, to enhance vocabulary skills, develop a habit of reading various types of texts and use vocabulary-building resources. Engage in specific exercises aimed at introducing new words into your writing. Second, regarding sentence structure, implement simpler grammar exercises to reinforce the

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fundamentals of grammar skills. Seek feedback from peers or teachers to help refine sentence structures. Thirdly, in the context of cultural sensitivity, enhance your understanding by exploring English-language media and participating in discussions. Ensure to seek feedback to make your cultural representations more accurate. Fourthly, regular expressive writing exercises can help improve the ability to convey ideas clearly.

Experiment with various writing styles and enhance the use of expressions in your writing. Fifth, collaborate with classmates or write friends for mutual reviews, providing beneficial feedback. Lastly, stay actively engaged in learning, follow language developments, and regularly read a variety of materials to remain informed and proficient in English writing. If students consistently practice all these techniques, they will be able to write English text with grammatical accuracy and coherence, allowing readers to understand the purpose of the text and review articles for sentence-level items such as grammar, pronunciation, spelling, word choice, and minor errors in writing.

Likewise with English Language Proficiency (Speaking), in general the students' abilities here are still at a medium level, indicating that students still lack mastery in the field of English speaking. 60% of students are at a level of lacking competence in speaking, especially in mastering language structures in English speaking and dialogue. Apart from that, students' proficiency in writing English is generally at a medium level, with one level higher than less mastery level. What is highlighted and what must be paid attention to is that there are still around 50% of students whose writing skills are below the average level. Students' understanding of the writing section is still low, especially in organizing sentences based on sentence structure (grammar) and reviewing articles for sentence level elements, such as grammar, pronunciation, spelling, word choice, and small errors in writing.

Among the competencies above that must be mastered in English Proficiency, the abilities that many students still lack are Speaking Competence and Writing Competence. English Proficiency is very important for students to master English and Literature first to further improve student competence as a strong foundation and by mastering high levels of English proficiency, students can open the door to wider career opportunities. In addition, mastering English Proficiency allows them to actively participate in academic discussions, explore literary works and criticism in greater depth, and bridge cultural gaps between various international communities.

limited knowledge of the fundamental elements of writing, including content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics, hinders their ability to produce effective essays. Second, personal factors such as lack of writing practice, a dislike of writing, anxiety, negative attitudes towards writing, a lack of encouragement to write, limited time available, and ineffective teaching methods used by instructors to teach writing also contribute to these difficulties (Toba et al., 2019). In this research the most common challenges encountered by students in developing writing productive skills include crafting appropriate sentence structures (Grammar), mastering vocabulary, and generating ideas for writing. The challenges faced by students in improving English Proficiency (Reading) are similar to those encountered in other fundamental competencies in speaking. The primary challenge stems from insufficient command of vocabulary, grammar, and nuances, with a particular difficulty in Reading being the comprehension of idiomatic expressions. (Dussling, 2016) explains that English and Literature students may face difficulties in adapting to the academic culture of their institution which may include learning how to write academic papers, participate in class discussions, and engage with course material in a critical and analytical way. That practice can be caused by various factors,

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including the overwhelming number of tasks to be completed, household and financial responsibilities, the absence of encouraging feedback, family background, and a general lack of interest. Furthermore, when students encounter difficulties in writing English, they often resort to using their native language as a substitute medium (Fareed et al., 2016). To address this challenge, educators can provide targeted support to students, such as writing workshops and academic coaching, to help them develop the skills necessary for success in their field of study (Dussling, 2016)

CONCLUSION

The study indicates that English and Literature students at UIN Alauddin Makassar display many students exhibit moderate proficiency, a notable portion struggles with vocabulary mastery, language structure, and comprehension. The research identifies various challenges encountered by English and Literature students in developing their productive language skills, including Speaking, and writing skills. These challenges arise from factors such as limited exposure to English outside the classroom, difficulty in understanding accent, and diminished confidence in public speaking. Proposed solutions include integrating interactive learning methods, offering additional speaking classes, and fostering cultural sensitivity through diverse educational activities. Furthermore, collaboration with experts and the integration of technology into teaching can enhance student engagement and motivation.

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