

# Students' Perception of Explicit and Implicit Methods in Learning Tenses in SMP DDI Mangkoso

Winda Hartiwi Kuswanty

English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

Burhanuddin Arafah

English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

Andi Nurul Annisa Budiman

English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

Tria Ali

English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

Hasanuddin Fatsah

English Department, Faculty of Letters and Culture, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Indonesia

Fahmi Room

English Department, Muhammadiyah University, Bulukumba, Indonesia

**Abstract**—This study investigated students' perceptions of explicit and implicit methods of learning English tenses. It also sought to identify the learning method that is more effective in improving students' understanding of English tenses. The mixed method approach was applied to students of Junior High School (SMP) DDI Mangkoso in South Sulawesi of Indonesia. The samples comprised 18 students from class VIII/a learning English tenses through the implicit method and eight from VIII/b using the direct method. The results showed that the implicit way significantly increased understanding of English tenses. Students using this method were more actively engaged in the learning process. The observation result and students' responses indicated that implicit and explicit methods are equally enjoyable. However, learning with an explicit method made students unable to understand the materials delivered.

**Index Terms**—implicit method, explicit method, understanding tenses

## I. INTRODUCTION

As tenses become the essential ground of English in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, they should be mastered and fully understood by students. Each language has its rules and systems, which also apply to English tenses (Arafah et al., 2021). The use of language in communication refers to an expression regarding an action used by a speaker to the listener (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). A Language is a communication tool that attributes internal motives, intentions, goals, and life plans (Fadillah et al., 2022). Teaching grammar, especially tenses, is sometimes the most challenging part (Anggrawan et al., 2019). Therefore, teachers develop various communicative approaches to help students achieve learning outcomes (Arafah, 2018). These approaches have contributed to strategies that emphasize factors relevant to attaining communicative competence in teaching English. The approaches and strategies encourage scholars to design methods based on evidential data. A teaching method with a literary base has been recently suggested to correlate positively with English learning success (Sunardi et al., 2018). In line with this, Arafah et al. (2021) stated that literary works provide English grammar knowledge and meaningful messages through social texts. Language is a communication medium that makes literary works more interesting to readers (Afiah et al., 2022). Literary works could be learned in written forms, such as novels, or performed in theatres (Asriyanti et al., 2022). They have many benefits as lessons since they reflect human life (Mutmainnah et al., 2022), but they are difficult for teachers that do not master literature. Therefore, English teachers need help identifying considerably easy methods to apply in class. Teachers must understand the methods designed to underpin their subject and develop an appropriate pedagogy (Sunardi et al., 2018).

Teachers and students require appropriate methods to master and apply the learning material quickly. Education entails acquiring knowledge and abilities and developing character traits (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022). Therefore, different strategies are required for teaching English based on a needs analysis considered invaluable, though it

increases students' mastery ability (Arafah et al., 2020). The method applied also depends on the teacher and the purpose for which it is used. Most teachers apply explicit and implicit methods considered suitable for teaching English tenses.

An explicit method supports student learning processes to acquire declarative and well-structured procedural knowledge taught in steps (Trianto, 2009). This instruction method could also be interpreted in detail and more focused on understanding the forming process of the language used. In contrast, the implicit method is designed to help achieve the communication goal of understanding the meaning of utterances. Pragmatics also plays a significant part in providing an implicit and explicit context for determining meanings based on the interpreters (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019). According to Arafah and Kaharuddin (2019), learning through communication improves a person's sociocultural ability to use a language in a culturally appropriate manner. Communication has become a human habit that uses language as a sign or symbol of cultural background (Hasyim et al., 2020). It is because each language has a different form and a broader perspective and is built in a distinct cultural environment (Arafah et al., 2020). As a result, every language is meaningful and informative, which helps students improve their communication skills. Freeman (2022) posited that grammar is supposed to be taught to reach the communication role. In conveying meaning, there is a point closely related to the interpreters' responsibility to reveal the truth and their deceit to the audience. The aim is to influence a person's perspective in judging something based on the interpreter's words (Arafah et al., 2021). The language used in social life emphasizes the underlying situation because the speakers have a specific purpose of delivering using their thoughts and feelings (Takwa et al., 2022). Therefore, listeners must pay attention to the context to avoid misinterpreting while interacting.

SMP DDI Mangkoso, located at Barru of South Sulawesi Province of Indonesia, was chosen as the study location because it is an Islamic boarding school that requires students to communicate using Arabic and English in the dormitory. English speaking is the most needed skill for professionals in Indonesia (Arham et al., 2016). It aligns with the institution's vision to become a superior and competitive Islamic school. Additionally, people often prefer using a new language to their native one (Takwa et al., 2022). It shows that the involvement of science and technology development in daily human life has changed, including how society communicates (Siwi et al., 2022; Suhadi et al., 2022). Speakers express their meaning in a style and pattern distinctively different from what they intend to communicate (Yulianti et al., 2022).

Moreover, grammar has been one of the most controversial issues in foreign language teaching. Some language practitioners claim that learning is essential, while others think it is unnecessary (Kaharuddin & Arafah, 2017). Consequently, teachers are encouraged to teach the use of correct tenses using implicit and explicit methods they easily understand.

This study aimed to identify the most effective method for teaching English tenses. Besides, students' perceptions were explored to strengthen the explicit and implicit methods before being applied to teaching tenses in school.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Implicit Method*

Teaching grammar implicitly emphasizes diverse grammatical patterns of sentences. Richard and Schmidt (2013) stated that teachers discern grammatical patterns of sentences without explanation. However, it is still necessary to pay attention to language components (Richard & Schmidt, 2013).

The judgments of these experts reveal two types of language learning strategies. The first comprises teaching tactics that improve language learning experiences, exposure, or interactions with various resources. These may include reading newspapers, watching English-language broadcasts on TV, conversing with native speakers, and using the internet and social media (Arafah & Hasyim, 2022). The technique focuses on sentence meaning rather than structure or rhythm. People communicate meanings in various ways (Hasjim et al., 2020). Second, language instruction emphasizes meaning through implicit teaching tactics, including forms. However, when teachers have difficulty producing language, they pay close attention to the grammar employed, such as the sentence structure, listening to and mimicking how fluent people speak.

Schmidt in Cohen and Macaro (2007) stated that learning grammar is implicitly unconscious. Students need to be aware of the need to use particular grammatical techniques when learning languages. Also, they need help determining which learning strategies should be used when dealing with grammatical issues.

### B. *Explicit Method*

The explicit method is a teaching strategy that assists students in learning fundamental abilities and acquiring knowledge gradually, also known as the Direct Teaching Model. According to Arends in Trianto (2011), Explicit Instruction Model is designed to support the student in acquiring declarative and well-structured procedural knowledge taught gradually and in steps. Kardi in Uno and Mohamad (2012) stated that explicit instruction might take the form of lectures, demonstrations, training or practice, and group work. The technique is utilized to deliver material to the student after modification by the teacher.

Kardi and Nur in Trianto (2011) stated the stages or syntax of the explicit instruction model according to Bruce and Weil in Subana and Sudrajat (2011) as 1) Orientation, 2) Achievement, 3) Structured Training, 4) Guided training, and

5) Self-Training. Students greatly benefit when the teacher gives a learning framework and orientation to the provided subject before presenting and explaining new material. Orientation could be (1) preliminary exercises to discover the knowledge of what students already know; (2) discussing or informing the lesson's objectives; (3) explaining or guiding the activities to be conducted; (4) providing information about the content to be used and the activities during the learning; and (5) providing information about the lesson's structure. The teacher could provide topic information as concepts and skills throughout this phase. The material could be presented through (1) small steps to be controlled in a short time, (2) giving examples of concepts, (3) demonstration of skills or explanation of work steps on the task, and (4) re-explaining complicated matters.

Cohen and Macaro (2007) stated the two types of explicit learning methods as follows:

1. *L2 Learning (Explicit-Inductive)*

This learning method begins by understanding grammatical rules and analyzing specific sentence examples. The model was referred to as 'rule discovery' by De Keyser.

2. *L2 Learning (Explicit-Deductive)*

Students learn grammatical rules from books or tutors and apply the min sentences using this method, also known as 'rule delivery.'

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Design

This study aimed to examine the students' perception of explicit and implicit methods in learning tenses in SMP DDI Mangkoso using the mixed method approach. According to Purwaningsih et al. (2020), qualitative studies use primary data considered the existing and scientific written text. Combined quantitative and qualitative approaches help understand problems and complex phenomena better than when used independently (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

The study used classroom action research involving procedures in the cycle process. It was performed following the theory expressed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) that the process is a spiral-shaped self-reflection cycle. According to the theory, the cycle process aims to improve conditions and find new, better ways to achieve optimal results in classroom action research.

#### B. Study Subject

The study focused on two classes for taking the data analysis sample. Males and females are placed in separate classes. The male class is VIII/a, with 18 students, and the female class is VIII/b comprising eight students. Implicit and explicit methods were applied to teaching tenses in classes VIII/a and VIII/b, respectively.

#### C. Study Period and Location

This study was conducted at SMP DDI Mangkoso located in Mangkoso, Ajjakkang village, Soppeng Riaja regency, Barru district, South Sulawesi Province of Indonesia, from October to November 2020.

#### D. Data Collection Technique

Data were collected in three ways based on implicit and explicit methods. First, a pre-test was given to students in each class. Second, the formula of tenses was explained using a table in explicit and implicit methods. Third, students wrote a sentence using the tenses formula explained. In the implicit method class, the study showed a short audio-visual material about English daily conversation by Boston English Center. They were asked to read a conversation paper using the tenses based on what they saw and understood from the audio-visual material. Fourth, daily practice and post-tests were also given to students. The data obtained were analyzed to determine and present the results.

#### E. Study Instruments

##### (a). Pre-Test and Post-Test

The pre-Test was given to the students before implementing tenses materials using the explicit and implicit methods, followed by a post-test. The tests were conducted to compare the student's ability to learn tenses.

##### (b). Audio-Visual Material

Audio-visual materials were used to support the implicit method of teaching tenses. The video was about English daily conversation by Boston English Centre (2017) taken from YouTube. Boston English Center is a YouTube channel from the USA that helps learn conversational English. This channel joined YouTube on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017. A video source entitled "Everyday English Conversation" from the Boston English Center channel was used as a tool for implicit methods.

##### (c). Table of Tenses Formula

The Table of Tenses Formula was used to support the explicit method in teaching tenses class. This table was distributed to the students before the classes started.

##### (d). Speaker and Projector

Speaker and projector were applied to support the implicit method of teaching tenses.

(e). *Questionnaire*

A questionnaire was used to determine the students' satisfaction after learning tenses using explicit and implicit methods in each class.

#### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

##### A. *Pre-Test Result*

The pre-test was conducted on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, in SMP DDI Mangkoso in classes VIII/a and VIII/b under different schedules. It involved giving students multiple-choice questions about basic sentences. The students were given 25 minutes to fill in the blank spaces by selecting the choice under the sentence. They were not allowed to cheat to ensure that the results showed their ability before giving the material.

Similar ten multiple-choice questions about basic tenses were given to both classes. The students in each class showed a balanced average score, as shown in Table 1:

TABLE 1  
STUDENT'S SCORE PRE-TEST

Code Name Class VIII/a (Using Implicit Method)	Pre-Test Score	Code Name Class VIII/b (Using Explicit Method)	Pre-Test Score
Student A	20	Student A	50
Student B	80	Student B	20
Student C	30	Student C	60
Student D	40	Student D	50
Student E	20	Student E	50
Student F	30	Student F	30
Student G	40		
Student H	40		
Student I	50		
Student J	50		
Student K	40		
Student L	50		
Student M	50		
Average Score	50.8		50

The pre-test was only attended by 13 students from class VIII/a and six from class VIII/b, with an almost average equal score. The average score of class VIII/a was 50.8, and the average score of class VIII/b was 50. These data indicate that the understanding of the tenses between classes VIII/a and VIII/b was even. The pre-test scores were the basis for increasing the data on the achievement of students' tenses understanding. These scores were compared with the post-test results to determine the method most effective in improving students' ability to understand tenses.

##### B. *Learning Tenses Activity Using Implicit Method (Class VIII/a)*

The study conducted teaching tenses using the implicit method to students in class VIII/a. The observations started during the Covid-19 pandemic, which necessitated following health protocols.

The first meeting on teaching tenses using the implicit method was held on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Before starting teaching, the study prepared the teaching materials and checked the student attendance. A sheet of paper containing daily conversations was distributed to be heard through audio-visuals. The resources were taken from the Boston English Center about basic daily conversations that are easy for students to understand. Two conversations were given to students at every meeting.

Students were asked to group themselves in pairs to make it easier to have conversations. They were asked to listen to the audio-visual and pay close attention to each spoken passage. The audio-visual playback was repeated five times, and the meaning of each sentence in the conversation was explained. After that, students repeat the conversation with their partners and mention the meaning of each sentence in lessons 1 and 2. The opportunity to ask questions was also given to students when they could not understand a mention or meaning.

The students were very excited listening to learning English using audio-visual for the first time. There were some annoying obstacles, such as students needing to hear the sound from the audio-visual. However, they still listened and carefully matched each sentence from the audio-visual with the conversation sheet. Some students had difficulty understanding the native speaker's pronunciation from the speaker. Therefore, the students requested that the conversation be repeated several times. Some students also actively asked questions about the vocabulary they did not understand, such as the word "American." The meaning of the vocabulary was elaborated on, and elaboration was provided on adding S in the word "Months." Additionally, several forms of tenses in each sentence in conversation were explained.

Some students spoke with the phrasal verb, "Nice to meet you, kak," a sentence from the conversation in lesson 1. It was assumed that the students accidentally started practicing the material learned in teaching tenses using the implicit

method.

The second meeting on teaching tenses using the implicit method was held on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Before starting teaching activities, the study checked the students' attendance and prepared equipment for audio-visual listening. Some students were excited when they saw the speaker prepared.

After listening to daily conversations in lessons 3 and 4 through audio-visual speakers five times, students were asked to practice again in groups. Although they stammered when reading the conversation paper, they were still confident and courageous. The study also helped correct the students' pronunciation errors.

Students enjoyed conversing practice until class ended, and some spoke by mixing sentences in English and Indonesian with a Makassar accent, such as "Bisa ma' speak English very well." It was assumed that the students began practicing the tenses taught in their daily conversations.

The third meeting was held on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, where students were given daily exercises on previously taught material. The daily exercises measured the student's ability to understand tenses using the implicit method. The exercises were intended to help students answer post-test questions and facilitate teaching and research.

Students were asked to fill in the blank space on the question sheets according to the audio-visual conversation being played. They listened carefully to the audio-visual five times while being watched to ensure no cheating. Furthermore, the students were given daily exercises according to what they listened to and understood. After submitting the exercises, the students requested for the questions to be discussed. Practice questions were redistributed among the students randomly to minimize the chances of cheating. Some students were enthusiastic about their correct answers during the discussion, while others were disappointed. The scores achieved by the students at daily practice 1 were better than in the previous pre-test. Table 2 shows the daily exercise scores:

TABLE 2  
DAILY EXERCISE 1 IN LEARNING TENSES CLASS (USING IMPLICIT METHOD)

No	Code Name	Score
1	Student A	86
2	Student B	-
3	Student C	-
4	Student D	100
5	Student E	96
6	Student F	-
7	Student G	-
8	Student H	90
9	Student I	-
10	Student J	76
12	Student K	83
13	Student L	96
14	Student M	36
15	Student N	96
16	Student O	96
Average score		85.5

The fourth meeting was held on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020, where students were provided with the following material and daily practice questions. Question sheets for a daily exercise about previous conversations were distributed, followed by daily exercises. The daily exercises aimed to help students deal with similar listening questions on other occasions.

The students listened to the audio-visual conversation while filling in the blank space on the conversation sheets. They were more severe and careful when listening to the audio-visual because there was some new vocabulary. Furthermore, the students with difficulties writing the new words requested the audio-visual conversation to be repeated.

TABLE 3  
DAILY EXERCISE 2 IN LEARNING TENSES CLASS (USING IMPLICIT METHOD)

No	Code Name	Score
1	Student A	92
2	Student B	88
3	Student C	-
4	Student D	92
5	Student E	92
6	Student F	-
7	Student G	-
8	Student H	88
9	Student I	88
10	Student J	84
11	Student K	-
12	Student L	-
13	Student M	-
14	Student N	100
15	Student O	-
16	Student P	80
Average score		89.3

The scores achieved by the students increased despite a small quantity of difficulty solving the questions. The students were also delighted with their scores in the daily exercises.

After the daily exercises, conversation sheets containing lessons 5 and 6 were distributed. The students listened to the audio-visuals while adjusting the reading on their respective conversation sheets. Some students were assisted in translating the meanings of complex vocabulary and sentences in the conversation.

### C. Learning Tenses Activity Using Explicit Method (Class VIII/b)

Students in class VIII/b were taught tenses using the explicit method. Observations began during the Covid-19 pandemic, following health protocols. The primary material for tenses was provided based on the student's abilities on the previous pre-test questions and the limited time for study and observation. These included Simple Present, Simple Past, Simple Future, and Simple Past Future.

The first meeting on teaching tenses using the explicit method was held on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2020. The introduction of tenses and the explicit methods used were explained to help understand the material. Some students understood the basic tenses, while others did not because they had yet to be taught before. Therefore, a table sheet containing the tenses formula was distributed to guide the students in making sentences using tenses.

Some students wanted to know whether this tense formula table was needed in making English sentences. Explanations were given regarding easy-to-understand answers by comparing them with sentences in Indonesian. Before making simple present tense sentences, the study explained the placement of To Be, adding s/es to verbs, and adding s/es to plural nouns. The students began to understand after the confusion and difficulty distinguishing the words.

The students were asked to translate the sentence "Saya minum kopi" from Indonesian into English. Since the sentence was familiar, the students translated it quickly. When the sentence's subject was changed to "She," the students translated "She drinks coffee." Explanations were given regarding adding s/es to the verb. Moreover, the students had difficulty placing do in negative simple present sentences, necessitating explanations. As with the negative simple present sentence, students also needed clarification in making interrogative sentences in the simple present form. Therefore, they were appointed to write a simple present sentence to practice making tenses directly. Students made simple present sentences while following the direction from the formula tenses table. They were then directed to make sentences in the simple past form. Previously, several irregular and regular verbs were given, such as: Buy - bought - bought, Drink - drunk - drank, Eat - ate - eaten, Attend - attended - attended, study - studied -studied, Give - gave – given. It aimed to make it easier for students to construct simple past sentences. The students experienced little difficulty making simple past interrogative sentences but asked for assistance. Although they had made mistakes in the placement of will/shall, they had no difficulty making simple future and past, future sentences. Following the tense formula table, the students made simple future, past, and future sentences.

The second meeting was held on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020, where students were given daily exercises to help them answer post-test or other tense questions. The study made it easy for students to work on tenses by viewing the tenses formula table. Furthermore, students were encouraged to ask questions about confusion or unknown patterns and meaning. They experienced a score increase in daily exercises, though the formula tenses table assisted them. The scores are presented in Table 4:

TABLE 4  
DAILY EXERCISE IN LEARNING TENSES CLASS (USING EXPLICIT METHOD)

No	Code Name	Score
1	Student A	91
2	Student B	66
3	Student C	75
4	Student D	91
5	Student E	75
6	Student F	100
7	Student G	100
8	Student H	100
Average score		87.5

The third meeting was held on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, to review the daily exercise questions. Students were trained to make tense sentences without using a tense formula table. They needed help determining the tenses formula pattern, especially in interrogative sentences. Students were allowed to make sentences using the tenses taught by following the formula table and the directions provided.

#### D. Post-Test Result

The post-test was conducted to determine the student's achievement after being taught tenses using different methods. This test also evaluated the students' scores after teaching tenses using two different methods. The study also aimed to compare the methods effective in teaching tenses.

The Post-Test was conducted on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, for classes VIII/a and VIII/b using the implicit and explicit methods, respectively. The Post-Test material was different from the Pre-Test material given previously. The questions were given following the material and daily exercises per each method to help students answer and apply all the material taught. For class VIII/a, sheets containing several blank space conversations were distributed to students to fill in the answers they saw through the audio-visual. Class VIII/b students were given sentences to be changed to tense forms without using the formula table. The students were also discouraged from cheating or discussing answers.

The class VIII/a students' scores experienced an average increase compared to the pre-test and daily exercise scores. There were also improvements in spelling, translation, and vocabulary. For class VIII/b, the scores increased in daily exercise than the pre-test scores, though the post-test scores decreased. It was because students answered the post-test questions without using the tense formula table. The students' post-test scores are presented in the following table:

TABLE 5  
POST- TEST RESULT

No	Code Name class VIII/a (using the implicit method)	Score	Code name class VIII/b (using the explicit method)	Score
1	Student A	100	Student A	-
2	Student B	-	Student B	66
3	Student C	84	Student C	-
4	Student D	100	Student D	-
5	Student E	92	Student E	91
6	Student F	100	Student F	83
7	Student G	-	Student G	91
8	Student H	68	Student H	83
9	Student I	100		
10	Student J	-		
11	Student K	72		
12	Student L	-		
13	Student M	-		
14	Student N	72		
15	Student O	100		
16	Student P	-		
17	Student Q	96		
Average Score		90		83

#### E. Questionnaire Results

The study distributed questionnaire sheets, each with five questions, to students based on the methods they used in understanding tenses.

The students stated that learning tenses using the implicit method was fun and not dull. It was their first time learning tenses using audio-visual, and they also enjoyed it because they did not write much. Furthermore, students listened to the conversations easily through audio-visual, although sometimes some words were not heard. They also assumed that learning tenses using implicit methods helps them to babble.

Class VIII/b students initially needed help understanding the tenses using an exact method. After being taught and given several daily exercises, they began understanding the tenses material. It is because the tense table helped them

understand formula tenses. However, the students stated that making sentences without formula tenses takes much practice.

#### F. Study Limitation

The number of students treated with the implicit method exceeds those treated with the explicit method, meaning the comparison might need to be revised. Teaching a few students is more effective than teaching many students, which contradicts the findings.

### V. CONCLUSION

The students at SMP DDI Mangkoso showed an increased understanding of tenses using implicit and explicit methods. The daily and post-test scores indicated that VIII/a and VIII/b students' responses using the implicit and explicit methods effectively understand tenses. However, the students needed help comprehending using explicit methods at the beginning of the teaching. This study could help English teachers use implicit and explicit methods to teach tenses more effectively. Educationists and new academics could use the findings in studying different subjects and obtain broader and more beneficial results as information material. However, teachers should play a role in motivating students to learn. It is in line with Arafah et al. (2020) who stated that students with high motivation realize better learning outcomes.

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**Winda Hartiwi Kuswanty** obtained her Bachelor's degree from Hasanuddin University (UNHAS), Makassar, Indonesia. She completed her Bachelor's degree in English Literature at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, UNHAS, in 2021. Currently, she is continuing her study in English Language Studies Program, majoring in English Education in the Postgraduate Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, UNHAS. Her scholarly interests are teaching methods, structural grammar, and grammatical error analysis.



**Burhanuddin Arafah** obtained his Ph.D. in English (Australian) literature at the University of Newcastle, Australia, in 2003. He earned his master's degree in American literature at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta of Indonesia in 1995 and his Bachelor's degree in English literature at Hasanuddin University (UNHAS) in 1988.

He is currently a full Professor in English literature at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences of Hasanuddin University (UNHAS) Indonesia. He has published four books in the English language and literature and more than 50 research articles ranked in international journals published in the English language. He also has received 24 Intellectual Property Right Certificates from the Indonesian government. His areas of interest are English literature, language education, and cultural studies. He was the

Dean of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of Hasanuddin University from 2009 to 2017. Currently, he is actively involved at the National Accreditation Board-Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in his position as Assessor.

Professor Arafah is currently a member of the Indonesian Literature Scholar Association and the Linguistics and Literature Association of Indonesia and is actively involved in the Indonesian Linguistics Society Association.



**Andi Nurul Annisa Budiman** obtained her Bachelor's degree in English Education at the State University of Makassar (UNM) in December 2020. She was an exchange student at Pangasinan State University (PSU), The Philippines, for the SEA Teacher Project headed by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) in 2019. Among the participants, she achieved the highest score for her teaching training evaluation report.

She is currently a graduate student for a Master's degree in English with a concentration in education at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University (UNHAS).



**Tria Ali** Obtained a Bachelor's Degree in English Education at the Indonesian Muslim University (UMI) Makassar, Indonesia. He completed his undergraduate education in English Education, at the Faculty of Language and Literature, UMI, in December 2018. He was interested in developing structured learning methods and currently studying for a Master's in English with a concentration in education at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University (UNHAS).



**Hasanuddin Fatsah** obtained a Bachelor's Degree in English and Literature Department Faculty of Letters Hasan Uddin University Makassar in 1986. He has been teaching English and Linguistics since 1988. He studied master's degree in English Language Studies Postgraduate Program at Hasanuddin University in 1995 and Doctoral Program at the Postgraduate Program in English Education State University of Malang, Indonesia, in 2001. He attended e-learning training and management in Bonn, Germany, and Brunei Darussalam in 2002. He has written many articles on language, language teaching, and culture in national and international journals and some books related to language teaching, language assessment, and linguistics. He has achieved his professorship in English Education at the Faculty of Letters and Culture Universitas Negeri Gorontalo Indonesia since September 2006. He also has been a Vice Director of Post Graduate Program Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (2006-2012) and a Vice Rector of Cooperation, Planning, and Information Systems (2012-2019). He is

now a chairman of the Doctoral Program in Applied Linguistics Universitas Negeri Gorontalo.



**Fahmi Room** obtained his master's and doctoral degrees in English Literatures Study Programs at Hasanuddin University (UNHAS) Makassar, Indonesia, in 2007. His thesis was focused on the use of Language Function in the Communication of Indonesia Academician, written in 1996, and his dissertation concentrated on Developing Communicative Competence on a Pragmatic Approach Using Multimedia.

Currently, he is teaching some major English Language Teaching subjects to the English Department students at Muhammadiyah University in Bulukumba. He recently published an article titled "A Comparative Study between Extrovert and Introvert Personality of Students' Speaking Performance of Universitas Muhammadiyah Bulukumba.