



EXPERIENTIAL WRITING

A GATEWAY TO LIFELONG ENGLISH LEARNING



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KATA PENGANTAR

English grammar is an essential aspect of English language learning. As a lingua franca, this aspect is a demand to be presented in language classrooms, so the learners are aware of constructing language accurately. Studying grammar is a never-ending process of knowledge. The complexities of the advanced grammar proved to be a formidable nightmare for some learners. Despite not being native English speakers, they embraced the complications over the journey to improve their grammar structure, precise sentence construction, and tense usage. The journey reached its zenith in writing which emphasizes more structured and comprehensive sentences to go into the students' language development journeys.

The inspiration for this transformative work arose from the 2007 drama *"Freedom Writers"* is one of the most heart-warming dramas. A few months before the final assessment, the learners initiated a creative exploration into the depths of grammar, drawing parallels with the film's theme and resulting in a book, a compilation of the local A2 narratives that reflect their grammar knowledge as well as English learning experiences. For the readers, as you immerse yourself in these pages, you will find more than a word collection. Each story unfolds a tapestry of growth, persistence, joy and indomitable human spirit that accompanies them on the road to language proficiency. Through the eyes of these learners, you will witness the universal struggles that bind language learners across borders and backgrounds.

To the contributors of this anthology, your willingness to open your hearts and share your linguistic journey is truly commendable. Through your narratives, you have not only illuminated the diverse road of learning English but also contributed to a collective pool of wisdom that will undoubtedly guide and inspire others on a similar path. Embark on this literary expedition, and may the stories within these pages resonate with you, offering valuable insights on the pathway to English proficiency.

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WHEN THE ROAD IS TAKEN, GO FOR IT!

"All our dreams can come true if we dare to pursue them."—Walt Disney.

The Story Begins

When I woke up today, I found myself as an English lecturer. The journey began when graduating from secondary school, and still had a desire for what wanted to be. That was my suffering while making a decision. The internal strife reinforced my ambition to be an army officer or sailor. Unintentionally, it changed to be a nurse or doctor. One day, I decided to visit Makassar and apply to the *Polytechnics* of Makassar Merchant Marine (PIP), but the registration was unavailable. Because of that, searching for information crossed in mind about enrollment in state universities, and unfortunately, they were also closed. My elder sister and her husband went to Makassar for work the following month. I joined, and along the road, a unique blue building attracted my sight. It was Universitas 45 Makassar, currently well known as Universitas Bosowa. I intended to apply to math or chemistry, but those departments were missing from the list, so another option was English literature. That unfavourable major was a selected program. However, I had to get into that program, although still had a plan to register the following year and study at State University like what my other friends experienced. Time by time, I started to feel comfortable having friends and accepting the situation. What has been experienced raised a wisdom that the vividness of dreams can lead to confusion, blurring the line between the dream world and reality, leading individuals to act based on their dream experiences (Wamsley et al., 2014; Carr et al., 2020).

Living without an addiction to smartphone can offer benefits such as improved mental health, reduced addiction risk, enhanced productivity, better school adjustment, and a greater sense of purpose in life. Smartphone addiction can have negative effects on mental health and negative effects (Kim et al., 2022), linked to addiction, which can impact individuals' daily lives and well-being (Montag et al., 2021). Therefore, reducing smartphone usage or living without a smartphone may mitigate the risk of addiction and its associated consequences. However, technology is rapidly increasing and demands us to reduce smartphone usage or eliminate smartphone dependency may lead to a more balanced and fulfilling life. At that time, we found no addiction to smartphones, social media, or other technological

advancements that could provide pleasure and distract our day. Beside attending the class, we spent the time in the library reading, discussing any topics, or making chitchat. We also used to discuss our course in the park on campus.

It was a cheerful moment to share ideas and feelings among friends because we only had a gadget for making calls and receiving messages. We rarely went anywhere because there were no extra costs for accommodation and transportation. Moreover, we also joined extracurricular curricula like martial arts, the Islamic community, and language groups, which helped us build our character and mental and physical health, expose our English skills and boost our confidence. With passion and perseverance, the experience of failure was the reason to learn and improve, and the predictor of our achievement was the willingness to learn quickly. These experiences proved to students that the impact of student organisations is multifaceted, encompassing individual development, organisational capacity, societal benefits, and leadership training. It can benefit the organisations themselves (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2019), a mutually beneficial relationship between students and the organisations they engage with (Gazley et al., 2012), providing peer interaction and leadership roles (Smith & Chenoweth, 2015), potential future personal growth (Kern & Selamat, 2022). Sometimes, I was demotivated by the city's atmosphere, the burden of study, and the treatment of friends, but I dreamt of transforming and making my parents, family, and neighborhood proud of me. I had a speaking class one day, and the female lecturer applied an open-ended interview technique. She asked what I would be in the future, and I had no idea what to say. One word to respond was to become a lecturer. What I said was a wish for a future life. In 4 years, I finally graduated as the best alumnus of the university. That achievement pushed me to chase more opportunities.

Commitment Leads to the Next Journey

While working in a telecommunication company, I registered at the State University of Makassar and took up English language teaching in the graduate program. That was my survival period because I had to work shifts while attending class regularly. It required a lot of energy, focus, and time. However, I learned to be a grit and organised employee and student. I also built independence and determination to strive and have faith. At this university, I met some friends whose backgrounds were different but had the

same goal. I also met my English teacher in my first senior high school, and she became my classmate in the Graduate program. At the end of the study, I attempted to keep in touch with my previous university. I collected the research data in Universitas 45 and met two classes, control and treatment classes. That was my first experience standing as an English instructor at a university. The students warmly welcomed me, and I felt courageous in my class. That testimony was appealing and energising to be what I was dreaming of. The dean recognised the student's successful learning story and welcomed me to develop my career there. My dream found the way. Two years of study have been through challenges and up and down levels, and with happiness, we obtained the Master's degree in English Education in 2012. After that, I met and gave him my complete document, and I was finally proposed as a lecturer at Universitas 45 in 2013. After having experience teaching for more and less than two semesters in 2014, I decided to enrol in the ELT Doctorate program at Universitas Negeri Malang. I was sure that this journey was travelled through my parents' love, encouragement, and self-commitment to grasp my education, and it could be achieved because many parties, including my colleagues and community friends, assisted me in handling my scholarship program and document requirements.

Writing a dissertation is one of the requirements to complete my study. I found many challenging stories while writing my dissertation. Referring to the ups, I felt enthusiastic. The campus environment was tranquil to enjoy the days; the weather was cold, giving serenity to study, and the lecturers were very professional, teaching and supervising us with tenderness. Moreover, they were experienced and low-profile lecturers, highly eager to support and guide the students in learning and writing, understood the capacity of students, and never demotivated and judged the students' work. The lecturers were concerned about the student's achievements and how they maintained their persistence in learning and building character. Besides exploring the sources from the open-access journals, another challenge was to find relevant sources from Elsevier, Taylor and Francis, and others. The more reputable the article is, the higher the cost we need to access. To anticipate, I listed some references in the papers and corresponded with the authors to send the sources. The authors were from different countries, and later on, they became my expert judgment for my instruments. They welcomed me to share some articles I needed to provide evidence for my writing. I also took a fruitful moment when I was an international scholar in the Sandwich Program at Ohio State University to sit

in the class, consult my writing development with some faculty members, explore the database of journals on campus and compile the references for my dissertation, and to broaden my research and study partners. It was a tough day to find the reference, understand the main ideas of the evaluation, and revise my draft because the advisors were quick to respond and provide constructive feedback for improvement. My advisor said the *money can be earned anytime in your life, but the experience of studying in a Doctorate Program might only come once*. I acknowledge with gratitude the lecturers who passed away within these two years. Their dedication will always be remembered, and we will continue their passion for teaching.

Collaboration and Strong Bonding

Collaboration and strong bonding in learning are essential components of effective educational practices. Research has shown that computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) provides students with new learning experiences (Fischer et al., 2013). In collaborative activities, students can form strong bonds that encompass productive teamwork, in-depth collaboration, and even lasting friendships, even without meeting face-to-face (Reeves et al., 2004). Higher education institutions are increasingly focusing on creating learning communities, service-based learning, and interdisciplinary research to promote collaboration among students (Kezar, 2005). I felt blessed to have such incredible and caring friends during the journey. Their presence was always enlightening, sharing what I needed help understanding. We were from different affiliations and strange people, but we became an awesome family to step up and alleviate our quality. As novice lecturers, they became the sources of ideas, information, and professional experience. They also showed me the meaning of family, acceptance, and tolerance. We realised that collaboration in and out of the class is essential to create an encouraging learning atmosphere. Figuring out each other empowered the emotional relationship, and recognising friends' weaknesses and strengths led us to understand and provide weekly meetings. We spent our days searching for references, hunting spots, and typical food for sharing and refreshing, as well as performing presentations and discussions in class. Most of the time, it was stressful and pressuring, but we tried to support and cheer up each other. Besides, to evaluate our class progress before and after the semester, we did

a reflective meeting about our need to enhance and achieve our progress the following semester.

The taglines "*No friends left behind*" and "*If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together*" became beautiful colours in our class. To release our overburdened days, we sometimes travelled around the city. It is not only the tourism objects in Malang and Batu but also some visits to other regencies where we could enjoy the trip and meet friends and family. Importantly, we always had time to get together for refreshment and pleasure no matter where it was to find the GAP (our dream to start writing a dissertation). There were some favourite spots to gather, like Joyogrand Housing, Pojok Camil, Roti Bakar 543, and many more places. From those moments, I can keep my friends in mind. They have carved unforgettable memories during this journey.

Not all went well; sometimes, I felt stressed, stuck, and procrastinated. The more feedback we need to read and revise, the more destructive activities we have. Genuinely starting to write a dissertation is a stressful moment. I was challenged to find the current global issue related to English language teaching. Proposing some titles based on the previous research was dropped three times because I could not convince the advisor. The topic of the decision process was like haunting my day. After several weeks, we presented the case, and finally, we all got one accepted issue to develop as a dissertation proposal. I consulted the proposal writing to the three advisors with intensive communication. The proposal seminar was presented in semester 4. After that, writing, revising, reading articles, and sharing became the subject. The instrument development and data collection and analysis were also a long process, and the draft of the research was examined in semester 6. Because of the intensive consultation and international program, I defended my dissertation in semester 8 in July 2018. For graduate requirements, my manuscript must be accepted in a reputable international journal. During the submission and review of articles, I got the term SCOPUS, or Internationally respected journal, for the first time as a requirement for study completion. To achieve that, I had to extend my study by one year. I submitted my manuscript to a journal publication Scopus indexed, but unfortunately, it was rejected after waiting for four months. Then, I attempted to find another one, and in the following two months, I finally received an email notification that my draft was accepted with some revisions. I was genuinely grateful for this achievement. I happily celebrated my graduation in August 2019 with a relieved mind and soul.

During my journey, it is clear that the things I found especially helpful were scholarship and positive vibes from my family, housemates, classmates, lecturers, advisors, and the academic atmosphere. I might have dropped out because I could not afford my studies without a government subsidy and was giving up without support from my awesome friends. At the beginning of my research, my sister shared her money to buy tickets and living costs, and my parents also overdrew their savings for my tuition. It happened around two semesters ago. I thanked God because the ongoing scholarship of the Ministry of Research and Technology was available for me to apply for in the third semester. It made me more passionate because I did not have to worry about my finances; my focus was learning and improving. The way to free myself from distress made me survive on this journey. On the weekend, I went hiking with community friends and visited new places to find a fresh panorama and observe the cultural activities of social groups. That was a community empowerment.

Mental Health Empowers the Journey

Additionally, I sometimes worked out to obtain enjoyment, positivity, and physical health. When feeling homesick, I scheduled to reach home and gather with my lovely family for a while to feel tenderness and serenity. These circles of self-relieving could alleviate my burden and awaken my flame of life. It would be better for prospective doctoral candidates to have good mental and physical health. Being a student in a Doctorate Program is not days, weeks, or months. Some years need stability and reasonable quality effort. We may have the same enrollment but different challenges and how we perceive it, although we attempt to support and guide each other. Never walk alone. Engage others to share and overcome the problems. Studying in a Doctoral program is not about knowledge/ expertise but growing networking, collaboration, communication, and humanity, which will make us more mature, educated, and adaptive. Enjoy every single process, no matter how hard it is. Keep a commitment to make daily improvements even when your lecturer puts high demands on your work. There is no need to show a sense of competition in the class because we have the same vision of graduating. When we walk together till the end of the journey, it will be more beautiful to remember.

Walking on the Life Path

At last, you will be proud of being a Doctorate Graduate. Further, time management, health, and financial stability need to be well-shaped before and during studying in ELT doctoral programs. When somebody asks about the experience of studying in a doctorate program, my answer is, "Keep smiling in every single process because it can be the effective cure of your days." I returned to Universitas Bosowa to teach and be the head of the English graduate program in 2018. At the end of 2019, I was supported by relatives and colleagues to apply as a civil servant. Bosowa University, where I grew up and found my professional experience, also sincerely encouraged me to see the more promising path to contribute to developing Indonesian Education. I work in the English Education Department in the Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Universitas Borneo Tarakan, North Kalimantan, Indonesia. As a lecturer, my commitment to Education is enormous. Supported by lifelong learning, I dream of sharing motivation, optimism, knowledge, and the spirit of life. I am with my family here in Tarakan to start an inexplicable journey. Life is very changeable. We never figure out what we will be someday. However, **once you take the road, never look back. Go for it.**

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STORY OF THE DREAMER

Early Exposure to English

During his early school years, the Author showed a remarkable talent for English language skills, which his teachers acknowledged. However, upon starting college, the Author realised that his existing knowledge needed to be improved to attain fluency in English. This realisation prompted the Author to pursue linguistic proficiency. He was inspired by observing individuals who had mastery over the language, which instilled in him a desire to expand his existing knowledge of English. The Author's early education involved learning common vocabulary words, while middle school introduced him to sentence structure and comparison techniques. He received more comprehensive instruction in verb tenses and advanced vocabulary acquisition in high school. Although the Author was highly regarded by his teachers during their earlier years, he recognised the need to continue learning and expanding his knowledge of English to achieve true fluency. The author desires to emulate those who have already mastered the language and are committed to furthering his education and building upon what he has learned thus far. The author's passion for improving his English language skills has become integral to who he is, fueling his success in both personal and professional spheres.

During his school days, starting from kindergarten until elementary school, the author was known as a whiny child and spoiled the teacher, but he was rated as a child who was quite active in school. The author's journey in learning the English language began at a very young age, specifically during his kindergarten years. At that time, he was introduced to the basics of the language, starting with the alphabet. His teacher provided him with a sheet of paper containing all the letters and guided him on pronouncing each one correctly. After some time, the teacher called upon the author to read aloud the alphabet in front of his classmates. Although he felt nervous, he summoned his courage and began reading each letter from A to Z. To his surprise, his classmates appreciated and recognized his efforts by giving him a round of applause. This moment filled his heart with joy and sparked his interest in further learning English.

For the author, linguistics was one of the most incredible things one could learn, and he believed that mastering this language would open

doors for him in various aspects of life. He realized that English is a universal language spoken worldwide, and communicating effectively in it would help him connect with people from different cultures and backgrounds. As he progressed through school, he continued to learn more about English grammar rules, sentence structures, idiomatic expressions, and vocabulary words. He also practised listening skills by watching movies and TV shows in English and conversing with native speakers whenever possible. Through hard work and dedication, the author eventually became fluent in English, which proved academically and professionally beneficial for him. He realized that proficiency in a second language expands opportunities and broadens one's perspectives on life.

The Author of the passage above underwent a transformative journey marked by a profound realization—an invaluable lesson emerged from his experiences. He discovered that venturing into the realms of the unfamiliar may initially evoke trepidation, yet with unwavering perseverance and steadfast determination. Triumph becomes an attainable reality. Furthermore, the author discerned the significance of commemorating minor milestones throughout this expedition, recognizing that these seemingly modest victories pave the way for even grander accomplishments on the horizon. This encounter underscores the importance of stepping beyond one's comfort zone and embracing novel challenges. By navigating uncharted territories, individuals unlock opportunities for personal growth and cultivate the fertile ground for profound development. This symbiotic relationship between adversity and achievement propels one towards a state of not just professional success but, more importantly, personal fulfilment. The narrative underscores the profound rewards that await those who willingly confront challenges, illustrating that each incremental step outside the familiar is a stride towards a more prosperous, more gratifying existence.

This self-assurance is not merely a surface-level bravado but a testament to the rich tapestry of experiences woven through learning English (Fatima, Akther,2022). The author's proficiency in English, manifested in his adept handling of assessments, is a tangible product of his deep-seated enthusiasm for linguistic nuances and expressions. As the narrative unfolds, it becomes evident that learning English has transcended the confines of a mere educational pursuit. Instead, it has evolved into a rewarding odyssey characterized by excitement and opportunities for personal and professional growth. The author, navigating the intricacies of

the language, has not only acquired a set of linguistic skills but has also unlocked doors to a broader, more interconnected world. As the author reflects, this journey extends beyond the classroom or examination hall. It is a dynamic exploration that resonates with moments of epiphany, cultural understanding, and forging connections with a global community. In this context, proficiency in English emerges not only as a set of skills but as a gateway to a world teeming with diverse perspectives and opportunities.

In conclusion, the author contends that learning English is not merely a practical pursuit but a transformative process that extends its tendrils into various facets of life. The ability to navigate and express oneself in English becomes a valuable asset in the academic realm and the broader landscape of global success. The author passionately argues that anyone aspiring to thrive worldwide would find immense value in mastering English. This skill transcends borders and opens pathways to unparalleled personal and professional achievements.

English is a widely spoken language that has become an international means of communication (Megawati & Mandarani, 2016). For the author, learning English has been an excellent and exciting experience. The author's journey began early when his mother taught him how to read and pronounce numbers and letters in English. As the author progressed through primary school, he and his late father bonded over watching soccer matches, especially the Premier League and European Champions League. The Author's Favorite Club is Manchester City, a Football club from England with the color of sky blue as its distinctive feature. From 2010 until now, he has become a Citizen and forever will be. Listening to enthusiastic commentary by fluent English commentators such as Jim Beglin, John Champion, and Peter Drury made watching these games even more exciting. Even today, the author still enjoys watching soccer matches, but now with a greater appreciation for the language. His love for English extends beyond sports commentary to include music from artists like Ed Sheeran, Charlie Puth, and Maher Zain, among others.

Hollywood movies like Marvel Studio Movies, Nickelodeon shows, and Cartoon Network programs offer another opportunity to learn new words and phrases. Moreover, the author also likes watching anime, such as One Piece, Jujutsu Kaisen, My Hero Academia, and Naruto. However, at this point, the author would like to briefly explain One Piece, one of the best animes ever. According to a Journal titled "Corak Corak Maritim dalam Anime One Piece" by (Yasim et al., 2022). One Piece is a manga by Eichiro

Oda, which is adapted to anime produced by Toei Animation. It tells the story of Monkey.D. Luffy is a boy who dreams of becoming a pirate king. Together with his friends, their straw-hat crew embarks on an adventure, defeating powerful enemies from among the pirates and the navy, even the Celestial dragons and the people of the World Government who have absolute power.

Uncovering the mysteries and history covered by the world government, Luffy and his friends provide valuable lessons about the meaning of perseverance, diversity, friendship, and history that have not been revealed. The author believes that One Piece is one of the anime that is indeed very cool and worth watching by all circles. The author enjoys learning English and dreams of becoming fluent in multiple foreign languages. The author is serious about this goal because he wants to be able to convey messages or explanations effectively in various languages, including English. Pursuing an English education major in college helped improve his listening skills and vocabulary. However, the author admits that his grammar and vocabulary still need improvement. The author recognizes that knowing English is essential for future success since it is used everywhere, from playing games to using mobile phones with language settings switched to English. Learning this language has been fun for the author compared to other courses like math or biology. The author, delving into English tests and assessments, exudes a profound confidence rooted in his genuine passion for the language.

One of the author's dreams is to be fluent in foreign languages, and English is one of them. Of course, he is earnest about it, and the author wanted to be articulate in conveying messages or explanations to everyone later using English. As long as the author went to college and chose to major in English, he feels that his English skills have significantly improved, especially in listening and vocabulary. The Author admitted that his language and grammar are still lacking and need much improvement. Therefore, by entering the English education centre, the author had high expectations that he would be able to improve the quality of his vocabulary. The author predicted multiple English necessities in the future, so he spent time learning English, and his prediction was correct. The author found the English language everywhere, and even some games only supported the English language to play, and he was so glad that he had learned English before. Therefore, he had no problem playing any English games. Later, the author switched the language settings on mobile phones to English. From that action, the author learned many things. His friends were surprised about

this. Unlike his friends, the author does not see this as fantastic or excellent. From the author's perspective, English was fun and more accessible than math, biology, and history courses. The author had no worries when there was an English test because it would be fine if he did not study for the preparation.

In a fascinating twist of fate, the author embarked on an academic journey with aspirations of becoming a religious education teacher, only to find that the chosen university did not offer such a major. Undeterred, the author, guided by an innate passion for linguistic mastery, deliberately decided to delve into the realm of English. Though initially driven by a quest for fluency in the language, this decision soon unfolded into a narrative of personal growth and unexpected opportunities. The author's deliberate choice to enrol in the English Department was not merely a detailed compromise but a conscious decision rooted in the desire for linguistic excellence. This pursuit of English proficiency, undertaken with a keen sense of purpose, became more than a means to an end. It transformed into a personal odyssey marked by the unwavering support of those closest to the author, especially his mother and siblings, who rallied behind the decision with wholehearted encouragement. Amidst the academic rigours of the English Education major at the chosen campus, the author discovered a wellspring of optimism. This optimism was not confined to the hope of honing linguistic skills alone; it extended to a broader vision—realizing a dream to become a Native Speaker. The author envisaged English not merely as a subject of study but as a powerful tool, a conduit through which dreams could be articulated and aspirations could find expression. In this unfolding narrative, the author's journey is not just a linear progression through coursework but a dynamic narrative of personal agency and resilience. While initially divergent from the envisioned path, the pursuit of English as a major became a bridge to aspirations beyond the immediate scope. It symbolized adaptability and the ability to navigate unexpected turns on the road to realizing one's dreams. As the author guides the intricacies of English Education, there is a palpable sense of purpose—an anticipation of academic achievement and a holistic transformation. Through this chosen major, the author envisions linguistic mastery and a profound evolution that aligns with the broader canvas of personal and professional aspirations. The journey unfolds, promising not just a degree but narrative rich with determination, familial support, and the unwavering belief that fluency in English is a skill and a stepping stone toward realizing an audacious dream.

When it comes to mastering the English language, writers and learners alike turn to a plethora of tools and resources at their disposal. The most commonly used applications are Google Translator, Grammarly, DeepL, Cambridge and Oxford Dictionary, Quipper Video, and British English Council - each with unique features and benefits. Grammarly is an American cloud-based typing assistant. The app reviews spelling, grammar, punctuation, clarity, engagement, and delivery errors in English text, detects plagiarism, suggests replacements for identified errors, and allows users to customize their style, tone, and context-specific language. DeepL is a web or translator application that shows the accuracy and precision of grammar and word selection in the language sentence for which someone wants to find a translation not only English, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, Malay, and others. The Author uses those applications to see the accuracy of grammar and language rules that he uses to be more precise. However, learning does not have to be solely academic or dry - many find that incorporating entertainment applications like Spotify, YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram into their routine can make the process more enjoyable and engaging. Of course, countless other apps out there may suit one's individual needs and preferences just as well. Our author is actively seeking recommendations for websites and applications that can help support their learning journey and facilitate further improvement in their English skills. With so many options available today, taking one's language proficiency to new heights has never been easier.

AI's Engagement with the World

In today's world, having strong English language skills has become increasingly important. Authors recognize the value of utilizing technology to enhance their proficiency. AI-driven language learning platforms like Duolingo and Grammarly offer a personalized approach to language practice, providing feedback on various aspects of the language. Furthermore, authors can use language exchange apps such as Tandem to connect with native speakers and engage in conversational practice, leveraging technology for a more immersive learning experience. The future looks bright for even more tailored and interactive language learning with advancements in AI language tutors. To improve their English competence and skills, authors need access to technology in various forms, such as applications, websites, or learning methods that they can incorporate into their teaching practices. Starting

from practising listening and improving vocabulary retention, reading text paragraphs and writing them down on paper, and writing essays are all necessary steps to enhance one's English proficiency.

To further gauge his comprehension of the English language, authors can rely on AI-powered tools like Readable, which assesses text complexity and readability, offering insights into their understanding of written content. Additionally, the author can utilize language proficiency tests on platforms like Cambridge and Oxford English to evaluate his abilities. By using these technologies to guide his learning journey, authors can highlight areas for improvement and track progress over time - leading to a more targeted and practical approach to enhancing his English skills. Technology is essential in today's world when mastering the English language. In the relentless pursuit of bolstering his English skills and proficiency, authors have discerned the invaluable support offered by the ever-evolving realm of technology. Recognizing that the mastery of language is not merely an individual accomplishment but a skill set to be shared within the educational sphere, these wordsmiths eagerly embrace an array of applications, websites, and innovative learning methodologies as essential companions in their linguistic odyssey (Butler et al.,2019).

The technological tools at an author's disposal are diverse, catering to multifaceted dimensions of language acquisition. Amid this digital landscape, applications, and websites emerge as dynamic tools, facilitating a spectrum of language activities. From honing listening skills through interactive platforms to the meticulous task of memorizing and comprehending vast vocabularies, these tech-driven resources weave a tapestry of learning experiences. The journey toward linguistic excellence extends beyond the digital confines of language apps. Authors strategically incorporate these tools into their educational repertoire because of the symbiotic relationship between technology and pedagogy. As he traverses the terrain of language education, he leverages technology to orchestrate exercises encompassing listening comprehension, vocabulary drills, and the nuanced art of reading and transcribing paragraphs onto paper.

Furthermore, the digital realm becomes a crucible for authors honing their expressive prowess. Engaging with applications tailored for essay writing not only refines their ability to articulate thoughts coherently but also provides a virtual arena for refining the craft of written expression (Karyadi,2020). Through real-time feedback and structured exercises, these tools serve as mentors in the quest for eloquence and rhetorical finesse. In

essence, integrating technology into the fabric of language acquisition is a deliberate and strategic choice by the authors. Beyond personal enrichment, these tools become instrumental when translating acquired linguistic prowess into the educational arena. The technology-infused pedagogical approaches crafted by these authors encompass a holistic strategy—balancing listening, memorization, comprehension, and expressive skills, ensuring a well-rounded linguistic proficiency that transcends the individual and resonates within the broader education domain. As technology advances, the narrative of authors navigating the intricate landscape of language acquisition evolves. The author's reliance on digital tools not only testifies to the transformative power of technology but also underscores its integral role in shaping the trajectory of linguistic mastery. Thus, armed with a digital toolkit, the contemporary author stands at the forefront of a paradigm shift where technology becomes an indispensable ally in the quest for linguistic excellence and educational impact.

In order to gauge his mastery of written content and language comprehension, the author has turned to AI-powered tools like Readable. This tool not only evaluates the complexity and readability of text but also provides valuable insights into an author's grasp of written content. Additionally, authors may take advantage of language proficiency tests available on platforms such as Cambridge English to obtain a well-rounded evaluation. These cutting-edge technologies serve as indispensable resources for authors seeking to improve their skills over time. By identifying areas for improvement and tracking progress, these tools enable a more focused and practical approach to enhancing one's language abilities. Authors can effortlessly enhance their English competence using these innovative tools while staying abreast of the latest technological advancements. The symbiotic relationship between authors and technology takes on a more intricate dimension as innovative tools serve not only as companions in the learning journey but astute guides, delineating areas for improvement and meticulously tracking progress over time. In this digitally-infused odyssey toward linguistic excellence, authors navigate a landscape where technology becomes a perceptive mentor, enabling a more nuanced, targeted, and ultimately effective approach to language enhancement.

The dynamic interplay between authors and these technological aides unfolds within a framework transcending mere skill acquisition. These tools, ranging from language apps to sophisticated learning platforms, delve into the intricacies of an author's linguistic repertoire. The author provides

personalized feedback, pinpointing specific areas of improvement, be it in listening comprehension, vocabulary retention, or the art of expressive writing. This granular analysis not only refines language skills but also tailors the learning trajectory to the individual nuances of each author's linguistic journey.

The capacity of these technological mentors to track progress over time is a cornerstone of their efficacy. Armed with real-time insights into his linguistic evolution, authors can calibrate his learning strategies, focusing on areas that demand additional attention. This iterative and adaptive approach fosters a more profound and sustained enhancement of English competence. Moreover, the bond between the authors and technology extends beyond language acquisition. It positions these wordsmiths at the forefront of staying abreast of current technological advancements. By immersing himself in the digital realm for language learning, The Author organically integrates the contemporary technological landscape into his educational pursuits. This dual engagement not only sharpens his language skills but also ensures that he is conversant with the latest tools and methodologies, thus aligning their proficiency with the evolving digital age demands. Therefore, the synergy between authors and technology in pursuing English competence is a dynamic exchange. As the authors harness these innovative tools, the narrative transcends conventional learning paradigms. It becomes an experiential journey where traditional linguistic skills and cutting-edge technology combine to sculpt a narrative of continuous growth and adaptability. In the grand tapestry of digitally-infused learning expedition, the author emerges not merely as the passive recipient of knowledge but as an active participant, shaping his linguistic destinies with the guidance of technology. The result is a profound transformation and evolution of language proficiency that resonates not only within the individual aspirations of authors but echoes within the broader spectrum of language education and technological integration.

Lack is not a Disgrace

The author, realizing his English level could be much higher, strives to continue practising to elevate his language skills to the next level. Starting from learning new vocabulary, listening to Western songs and Hollywood movies even without subtitles, and infusing English into daily conversations, he navigates the challenges of language improvement. Sometimes, he felt

unable to enhance his English due to a tendency to procrastinate and underestimate tasks that should be addressed promptly. In his pursuit of improvement, the author employs diverse strategies. Learning new vocabulary is foundational, allowing him to enhance written and spoken communication. Immersing himself in Western songs and Hollywood movies, even without subtitles, exposes him to authentic language usage and cultural nuances, contributing to a more holistic language acquisition process—the struggle with procrastination and underestimating immediate tasks surfaces as a hindrance to progress. The author reflects on instances where this attitude impeded his growth, particularly in handling Grammar assignments from Mr Ramli, Writing Essays assigned by Mr Johny, and speaking assignments guided by Ms Romlah. Recognizing the need to address these challenges head-on, he endeavors to reshape his approach and prioritize the timely execution of tasks. Amidst his language journey, a setback occurs when the author's application for a provincial scholarship faces rejection. This event brought about a wave of disappointment and sadness as the scholarship represented a financial aid opportunity and a means to support his educational pursuits. Despite this setback, the rejection becomes a turning point, prompting the author to reevaluate his strategies and seek alternative avenues for academic support. The rejection of the provincial scholarship catalyzes the author's self-reflection. Rather than succumbing to despondency, he channels the disappointment into renewed determination. This pivotal moment prompts him to explore alternative avenues for financial assistance, demonstrating resilience and adaptability in the face of setbacks. The rejection also highlights the importance of seeking constructive feedback and guidance from mentors such as Mr. Ramli, Mr. Johny, and Ms. Romlah. Their respective assignments, whether focused on grammar, essay writing, or speaking, become valuable tools for improvement.

The author recognizes the significance of constructive criticism in refining his skills and actively seeks mentorship to address areas of weakness. In the grander scheme of his language journey, the rejection of the scholarship becomes a stepping stone rather than a stumbling block. The author's resilience shines through as he redirects his focus towards continuous learning and improvement. The setback catalyzes a more profound commitment to his language goals, leading to a reinvigorated approach to studying and practising English. As the author navigates the complexities of language acquisition, his story becomes a testament to the

transformative power of perseverance and self-reflection. The rejection of the scholarship, once perceived as a setback, transforms into a catalyst for personal and linguistic growth. Through diverse learning methods, self-discipline, and seeking mentorship, the author aims to elevate his English proficiency and cultivate essential life skills that extend beyond language acquisition.

In conclusion, the author's journey unfolds as a narrative of resilience, self-discovery, and the pursuit of continuous improvement. His commitment to overcoming obstacles and a proactive approach to learning positions him on a trajectory toward linguistic and personal success. Rather than defining his journey, the rejection of the provincial scholarship becomes a pivotal moment that propels him toward greater heights in his pursuit of language excellence.

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THE STORY ABOUT MY ENGLISH ENHANCEMENT

The Beginning

Before entering the English Department Student, my English was not good because, during my school period, I was just focused on other subjects. Truthfully, I did not like English in junior high school. Why? Back then, English was not considered a fun subject, and the teacher did not bring a joyful atmosphere. I do not remember when English started to be learned; either it was in the 3rd or 4th grade of elementary school. My mind was changed in senior high school, and I began to be liked then; it grew on me gradually. The teachers brought the class's nuance well compared to my junior high. The teachers enjoyed Sharing their experiences, which made me more interested in English. English was considered problematic for me, and I did not know how to pronounce the words correctly because people who could speak English were terrific to me.

My English skills are classified as passive, where listening and reading are dominant over speaking and writing. When someone speaks my English, I cannot provide feedback. English was taken seriously by me in senior high school because I began to like it at that time, and then motivation to study English seriously was obtained. Also, I enjoyed watching movies, which interested me in English because I learned how they speak in English while watching movies, which was very satisfying. I am improving bit by bit, developing my English competency. As I mentioned, English started to be liked by me when I was in senior high school, and I began to learn English seriously after that. Learning English was limited to the class because, at that time, it was still learning the basics, so only limited learning was done in class. Therefore, when the college was entered, the teaching became more intense and profound, with a competent lecturer. My English has improved from the first semester to now, especially in speaking, writing, reading, and listening. However, many things still need to be improved to enhance my English skills, such as listening more and reading English books and articles because, through reading, many new vocabulary words can be found to support my speaking skills. Using supporting applications such as Duolingo, where pronunciation can be learned correctly, is also considered. English is my second choice because, before choosing this major, I wanted to register

in the Faculty of Health, majoring in nursing. Still, due to the high cost, my intention to major in nursing was cancelled. Even so, I am thrilled because I have been accepted at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, majoring in English Education. Taking this major is also one of the ways I can realize my dream of becoming a teacher. I will strive to achieve that goal; therefore, I will study harder in the department I am taking now.

I liked and was interested in English, which made me want to register for the English major and make it my second choice. I want to share my experience of learning English from elementary school until now. English was not enjoyable for me in elementary school, especially as a child. However, when I entered junior high school, I started to like English because I had recently watched Western movies. From there, I began to select English, including its pronunciation, plot, and actors. In senior high school, my interest in English increased even more because my teacher motivated me to learn more English. Additionally, I was inspired by my diligent friend, Eki, who influenced me with her pronunciation and suggestions. I also have a friend who, like me, has difficulty understanding if the topic or material is not getting repeated; her name is Amoy, and she has been my friend since junior high school. We constantly study together, and when she knows about something that I do not know, she always shares it with me, and so do I. We like to explore outdoors, and she took me to learn together; when we had a project assignment, we did it together; there was one time we requested to do a video assignment, and the teacher gave us some topics, and we chose a topic about traditional food, we discussed the topic. She suggested traditional food from Sulawesi Selatan, *Barongko*.

Meanwhile, I suggested traditional food from Papua, *Papeda*. After a lengthy discussion, it became our choice, and we started the video. There were so many funny moments when we made this assignment, starting with our messy pronunciation; we took many videos because we could not stop laughing. We succeeded in finishing. When I recall this moment, I got a flashback. Now, both of us have separated, and we pursue education at different places. I am a student in the English Department at the University of Borneo Tarakan. This major was my second choice. In the first semester, I was afraid of not getting a friend because there were a lot of new people in my class, and I am not the typical person who cannot adapt to new people.

After some quiet time, my classmates became outgoing, which made me happy. Next semester, I became closer to them because of many group assignments, which allowed me to know more about my classmates.