



SPEAKING COMPETENCE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES STUDENTS AT MINDANAO STATE UNIVERSITY-SULU

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11180145>

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the speaking competence of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu during the School Year 2023-2024 with 100 samples taken through non-probability sampling method via purposive sampling, and with the use of weighted mean, standard deviation, t-test for independent samples, One-way ANOVA, and Pearson's r, this study reveals the following findings: 1) Of the 100 student respondents, the majority are female, between the ages of 19 and 24, and the majority are first-year students.; 2) The majority of Mindanao State University-Sulu's Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students are proficient speakers.; 3) In general, student respondents' assessments of the speaking competency of Mindanao State University-Sulu Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students were not significantly mediated by characteristics such as age, gender, or year level.; 4) Based on Hymes' research, this study appears to validate the Canale and Swains model of communicative competence. Their initial framework, which included three fundamental parts, was put forth by Canale and Swain (1980:29–30). Grammatical competence deals with sentence-level semantics, morphology, syntax, and phonology; sociolinguistic competence deals with discourse norms like cohesion and coherence; and strategic competence deals with the verbal and nonverbal communication strategies a speaker uses to achieve a desired result. Later, in 1983, Canale refined this paradigm by dividing sociolinguistic competence into two distinct categories: discourse competence (cohesion and coherence) and sociolinguistic competence (correct vocabulary, register, and politeness norms).

Keywords: *Speaking Competence, BA ELS, Grammatical Competence, Sociolinguistics Competence, Strategic Competence*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking Competency refers to a person's ability to effectively communicate verbally in a particular language. It involves the skills and knowledge needed to express oneself clearly, coherently, and appropriately, while considering the context, audience, and purpose of the communication. Speaking competency encompasses various aspects, such as pronunciation, fluency, Vocabulary usage, grammar accuracy, and the ability to organize thoughts and convey information effectively. It includes non-verbal elements like body language, Intonation and maintaining body contact. Additionally, cultural awareness and sensitivity Play role in successful communication. Developing speaking practice, active listening, receiving feedback, and continuous improvement. It is an essential skill in various personal, academic, and professional settings, enabling individuals to express their ideas, understand others, and engage in meaningful conversations.

Speaking is the act of conveying information or using spoken language to communicate thoughts and emotions. The act of giving speeches or lectures is another context in which the phrase is employed. Producing, receiving, and digesting information are all part of the interactive process of creating meaning that is speaking Brown, (1994); Burns & Joyce, (1997).

Speaking demands that students possess sociolinguistic competence in addition to linguistic competence, which is the ability to generate particular language elements like syntax, pronunciation, or vocabulary. Speaking, also known as the Speaking Model, is a model sociolinguistic research created by Dell Hymes (1974) that is portrayed as a mnemonic. His belief that learning the context of words in addition to their vocabulary and syntax is essential to speaking a language correctly led to the creation of this instrument, which aids in the identification and labelling of linguistic interaction components.

The concept of communicative competence, which underpins understanding of speaking rules, was put out by Hymes (1972). Hymes provides an example of a speech circumstance, a speech act, and a conversation during a speech event. Hymes (1974) also suggested that in order to provide a satisfactory description of any given speech, it is important to include the components of these speech occurrences. He provides the SPEAKING grid mnemonic method as a heuristic for the different variables that he considers important. Setting, characters, endings, act sequences, important instrumentalities, and genre are the factors.

One of the most important things in our lives is language. It is preoccupied with the fact that language is inevitably employed in daily life as a means of communication. It can be communicated verbally or in writing and is a tool for international communication Widiastuti et al., (2020). Language is employed by different patterns in different ways. Furthermore, people acquire language and its patterns through intentional social usage in a variety of social circumstances, Mantra et.al (2018).

In relation to the previous topic, English is among the world's most important languages. People from numerous nations utilize it almost daily for communication Maba (2022). Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are the four fundamental language abilities in English, coupled with two language components, primarily grammar and vocabulary. Speaking is one of the most important abilities to have in order to participate in the larger working world and be able to communicate, according to the explanation above, Handayani et al.,(2021).

Research Questions

This study determined the extent of speaking competence of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu during the School Year 2023-2024.

Specifically, it answered to the following questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the student-respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1 Gender;
 - 1.2 Age; and
 - 1.3 Year level?
2. What is the extent of speaking competence of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu?
3. Is there a significant difference in the extent of speaking competence of Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu when data are grouped according to their socio-demographic profile in terms of:
 - 3.1 Gender;
 - 3.2 Age; and
 - 3.3 Year Level?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The goal of the current study was to assess the speaking competence of Mindanao State University-Sulu English language studies bachelor's degree students. This is quantitative research, when respondents are chosen to meet a predetermined quota using a sample questionnaire. The problem was quantified through the use of quantitative research to produce numerical data or data that could be converted into useful statistics. It is applied to define variables such as attitudes, opinions, actions, and so on.

Research Locale

The Mindanao State University-Sulu Campus was the site of the study. Capitol Site, Jolo, Sulu is the location. The aforementioned University's Board of Regents established it in 1974.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the 100 Bachelor of English Language Studies students (with a total of 335 students in all year level).

Distribution of Respondents		
Mindanao State University-Sulu		
Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies		
Year Level	Section	Frequency
1 st Year BA ELS	3	33
2 nd Year BA ELS	2	25
3 rd Year BA ELS	2	25
4 th Year BA ELS	1	17
Total		100

Sampling Procedure

In this study, it utilized by means of purposive sampling. Sampling is the act, practice, or technique of selecting a suitable sample; more specifically, it is the selection of a representative subset of the population to determine the parameters or characteristics of the full population.

Data gathering procedure

During the data collection process, the following protocol was followed: the Researcher have launched and administered the questionnaire personally. The Chancellor of Mindanao State University-Sulu, the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Languages, and the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies requested permission to administer the questionnaire.

Research Instrument

The primary tool to collect information on the speaking competence of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu was survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from the study of Indri Theresya (2013) in her thesis titled "The Correlation between Students' Motivation and their speaking achievement at Universitas Kristen Indonesian."

There were two components to the research tool that were utilized in this investigation. Getting the demographic profile of the BA ELS students, including their gender. Age, Year level- was the main goal of Part I of the questionnaire. Part II was primarily concern with gathering data on their expertise.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The following descriptive statistical technique were correctly used to handle the data collected for this study:

1. Frequency and percentages were utilized to determine the BA ELS profile for Research Problem Number 1.
2. The second study problem employed the mean and standard deviation to determine the extent of speaking competence of Mindanao State University-Sulu's Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students for the school year 2023–2024.
3. The T-test for independent samples was utilized to ascertain the significant difference in the degree of speaking competency of Mindanao State University-Sulu S.Y. Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies students when data are categorized according to gender. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to identify the significant differences when data were grouped by age, year level, and course.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the student-respondents in terms of: 1.1 Age; 1.2 Gender; and 1.3 Year Level?

1.1 In terms of Gender

Table 1.1 demonstrates the gender-specific socio-demographic profile of the student responders. This table indicates that, of the 100 student responders, 26 (22.0%) are men and 74 (74.0%) are women. This indicates that, in comparison to male students, the vast majority of student responders in this study—roughly three-fourths—are female. According to this statistic, more female students than male students are enrolled in Mindanao State University-Sulu's Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies program for the 2023–2024 academic year.

Table 1.1 Socio-demographic profile in terms of gender

Gender	Number of Students	Percent
Male	26	26.0%
Female	74	74.0%
Total	100	100%

1.2 In terms of Age

Table 1.2 shows the age-related socio-demographic profile of the student responders. This table shows that, of the 100 student respondents, 19 (19.0%) are in the age range of 18 years and under, 74 (74.0%) are in the age range of 19–24, 3 (3.0%) are in the age range of 25–28, and 4 (4.0%) are in the age range of 29 years and above. According to this survey, the majority of students enrolled in Mindanao State University-Sulu's Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies program during the 2023–2024 academic year are those who make up three-fourths, or the great majority.

Table 1.2 Socio-demographic in terms of age

Age	Number of Students	Percent
18 years old & below	19	19.0%
19-24 years old	74	74.0%
25-28 years old	3	3.0%
29 years old & above	4	4.0%
Total	100	100%

1.3 In terms of Grade Level

Table 1.3 gives the year-level socio-demographic profile of the student responders. This table shows that, of the 100 student responders, 41 (41.0%) are enrolled as first-year students, 23 (23.1%) as second-year students, 25 (25.0%) as third-year students, and 11 (11.0%) as fourth-year students. This indicates that a significant portion of the student respondents in this study—nearly half—are enrolled in the first year of the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies program at Mindanao State University-Sulu for the academic year 2023–2024.

Table 1.3 Socio-demographic in terms of year level

Year Level	Number of Students	Percent
First year	41	41.0%
Second year	23	23.0%
Third year	25	25.0%
Fourth year	11	11.0%
Total	100	100%

2. What is the extent of speaking competence of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu?

Table 2 shows the extent of speaking competence of the students. With a weighted mean score of 3.7942 overall and a standard deviation of .42079, the students' rating falls into the Agree or High Extent category. According to the study's student responses, Mindanao State University-Sulu students pursuing a bachelor's degree in English

language studies demonstrate a good level of speaking competency. Stated differently, these pupils possess a high degree of organizational and synchronization ability between their language knowledge and their real-world communication skills.

Overtly, from among the items under this category, student-respondents rated as Agree or with High Extent the following items: “I think learning speaking is fun”, “I need more friends who knows English”, “So that I can improve my speaking competence”, “I am not sure of myself when I speak English inside the class”, “I worry about speaking English outside the classroom”, “I like to have a conversation with other people to improve how I speak the language”, “After learning to speak with competence, I believe that I can speak English more appropriately and fluently”, “I find it difficult to speak grammatically correct during reports and oral recitations, that’s why I asked my teacher to check my grammar when I am speaking”, and “Speaking with excellent pronunciation is important. So, I have to try hard to pronounce words correctly”.

Table 2 Extent of the speaking competence of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu

	Statements	Mean	S.D.	Rating
1	I think learning speaking is fun.	4.2600	.90587	Agree
2	I need more friends who knows English. So that I can improve my speaking competence.	4.2200	1.04040	Agree
3	I am not sure of myself when I speak English inside the class.	3.6700	1.06415	Agree
4	I worry about speaking English outside the classroom.	3.6300	1.02154	Agree
5	I don't pay much attention to my English teacher.	2.2800	1.28770	Disagree
6	I think learning to speak English fluently is boring.	2.0000	1.09175	Disagree
7	I like to have a conversation with other people to improve how I speak the language.	4.3500	.75712	Agree
8	I worry if my classmate speaks English better than me.	2.8400	1.35378	Undecided
9	After learning to speak with competence, I believe that I can speak English more appropriately and fluently.	3.9400	1.02317	Agree
10	Talking to my teachers using English Language makes me uncomfortable and unconfident.	3.3700	1.18624	Undecided
11	I find it difficult to speak grammatically correct during reports and oral	3.8800	.79493	Agree

	recitations, that's why I asked my teacher to check my grammar when I am speaking.			
12	Speaking with excellent pronunciation is important. So, I have to try hard to pronounce words correctly.	4.3100	.81271	Agree
13	I will be proud if my speaking ability is witness by everyone.	4.0900	.85393	Agree
14	I have a lot of progress in speaking English after following rules inside the class.	3.9900	.75872	Agree
15	I like practicing speaking English.	4.4400	.82045	Agree
16	I am confident to speak English because my teacher encourages me to speak English well.	4.2000	.80403	Agree
17	If I fail to have a good grade in Speaking class, I will strive hard.	4.0700	.91293	Agree
18	I must be better in Speaking English to have a good opportunity in the future.	4.3100	.83720	Agree
19	I think learning speaking is fun.	4.2400	.81798	Agree
	Total Weighted Mean	3.7942	.42079	Agree

Legend: (5) 4.50-5.0=Strongly Agree (SA); (4) 3.50 – 4.49=Agree (A); (3) 2.50 – 3.49=Undecided (U); (2) 1.50 – 2.49=Disagree (D); (1) 1.00 – 1.49=Strongly Disagree (SD)

3. Is there a significant difference in the extent of speaking competence of Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu when data are grouped according to their socio-demographic profile in terms of: 3.1 Gender; 3.2 Age; and 3.3 Year Level?

3.1 According to Gender

Table 3.1 demonstrates the variation in the level of speaking competency among Mindanao State University-Sulu Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies students when data are categorized based on their gender-specific socio-demographic profile. This table indicates that the mean difference value for this category is not significant at alpha.05. This indicates that opinions regarding the degree of speaking proficiency of Mindanao State University-Sulu students pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies do not differ between male and female student respondents. According to this finding, a male student may not always have an advantage over a female student when it comes to judging the degree of speaking competency of Mindanao State University-Sulu BALS students, or vice versa.

As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that the gender variable has no discernible impact on how student respondents evaluate the degree of speaking competency of Mindanao State University-Sulu students pursuing a bachelor's degree in language studies. Thus, the hypothesis that reads, "When data are grouped according to their socio-demographic profile in terms of gender, there is no significant difference in the extent of speaking competence of Bachelor Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu" is accepted.

Table 3.1 Differences in the extent of speaking competence in terms of gender

VARIABLES	Grouping	Mean	S. D.	Mean		Sig.	Description
				Difference	t		
Speaking Competence	Male	3.9271	.39640	.17961	1.897	.061	Not Significant
	Female	3.7475	.42168				

*Significant at alpha 0.05

3.2 According to Age

Table 3.2 shows the variations in Mindanao State University-Sulu Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies students' speaking competence when the data are sorted by age-related socio-demographic profile. This table clearly shows that this category's F-ratio and P-value are not significant at alpha.05. This indicates that even if the student respondents' ages range widely, they all have similar opinions on how proficient the Mindanao State University-Sulu Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies students are in speaking. According to this result, a student-respondent who is older or between the ages of 29 and above may not necessarily be in a better position to judge the degree of speaking competence of Mindanao State University-Sulu BALS students than those who are younger or between the ages of 18 and under, 19–24, and 25–28, or vice versa.

However, it is reasonable to conclude that the degree to which student respondents evaluate the speaking proficiency of Mindanao State University-Sulu Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies students is unaffected by age variation. Thus, the hypothesis that reads, "When data are grouped according to their socio-demographic profile in terms of age, there is no significant difference in the extent of speaking competence of Bachelor Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu" is accepted.

Table 3.2 Difference in the extent of speaking competence in terms of age

SOURCES OF VARIATION		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Speaking Competence	Between Groups	.810	3	.270	1.550	.207	Not Significant
	Within Groups	16.720	96	.174			
	Total	17.530	99				

*Significant alpha .05

3.3 According to Year Level

Table 3.3 presents the variations in the degree of speaking competence among Mindanao State University-Sulu Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies students when data are categorized based on their socio-demographic profile in relation to year level. This table indicates that the mean difference value for this category is not significant at alpha.05. This indicates that even though the student respondents were enrolled in various year levels, their opinions regarding the degree of speaking competency of Mindanao State University-Sulu students pursuing a bachelor's degree in language studies were identical.

This result suggests that a student-respondent who is enrolled in his fourth year of study may not be in a better position than those enrolled in his first, second, or third years of study to assess the level of speaking competency of Mindanao State University-Sulu BALS students, or vice versa.

Consequently, it is safe to say that variable year level has no significant influence in the ways how student-respondents assess the extent of speaking competence of Bachelor of Arts in Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that “There is no significant difference in the extent of speaking competence of Bachelor Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu, when data are grouped according to their socio-demographic profile in terms of year level” is accepted.

Table 3.3 Differences in the extent of speaking competence in terms of year level

SOURCES OF VARIATION		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Description
Speaking Competence	Between Groups	.057	3	.019	.105	.957	Not Significant
	Within Groups	17.472	96	.182			
	Total	17.530	99				

*Significant at alpha 0.05

Conclusions

Based on the findings above, this study concludes the following:

- 1) Student-respondents involved in this study are sufficiently represented in terms of age, gender, and year level.
- 2) On the average, Bachelor Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu have high speaking competence.
- 3) Generally, variables age, gender, and year level do not significantly mediate in ways how student-respondents assessed the speaking competence of Bachelor Arts in English Language Studies students at Mindanao State University-Sulu.
- 4) Based on Hymes' research, this study appears to support the communicative competence model proposed by Canale and Swains. Their initial framework, which included three fundamental parts, was put forth by Canale and Swain (1980:29–30). Grammatical competence deals with sentence-level semantics, morphology, syntax, and phonology; sociolinguistic competence deals with discourse norms like cohesion and coherence; and strategic competence deals with the verbal and nonverbal communication strategies a speaker uses to achieve a desired result. Later, in 1983, Canale refined this paradigm by dividing sociolinguistic competence into two distinct categories: discourse competence (cohesion and coherence) and sociolinguistic competence (correct vocabulary, register, and politeness norms).

Recommendations

Based on the above findings and conclusions, this study forwards the following recommendations:

- 1) School administrators may adopt the findings of this study in formulating policies and programs that aid in promoting quality education among learners, especially in the speaking competency of BA ELS students.
- 2) Teachers may utilize the results of this study in enhancing their pedagogical knowledge and skills towards the development of speech, language and communication skills of students.
- 3) Students may rely on the findings of this study in appreciating the importance of speaking competence as second language learners. Through this study, their speaking skills maybe empowered wherein they are able to create new ways of speaking to others about any topic or experience.

- 4) Student-researchers are encouraged to replicate this study but to include other variables like sub-categories of speaking competence, and other language competence such as listening, reading, and writing skills.

Acknowledgments

The researcher wanted to express her warmest acknowledgement, appreciation and gratitude to all those who have shared their time and efforts in providing valuable contribution to the development of this study. All these inspires the researcher to finish the study with determination, patience and strength.

It will not bound to happened if it is not you, first and for most to the Almighty ALLAH who gives courage, strong will and grace while writing this study.

She is deeply grateful to our very own SUC President II **PROF. CHARISMA S. UTATALUM, CESE**, Sulu State College President, for offering Master program specifically Master of Arts in Language Teaching English, for this is the bridge where aspiring individuals can walk the path of new professional growth.

Her wholehearted appreciation goes to her adviser **PROF. NELSON U. JULHAMID, Ph.D.**, for his untiring support, being kind, approachable and ever ready to give his helping hand whenever the researcher needs one.

Her appreciation to the distinguished panel members namely: **ASSO. PROF. MASNONA S. ASIRI, DPA**, dean of the Graduate Studies and **PROF. ABDEL J. AMILHAMJA**, for their constructive comments and valuable suggestions to improve this study.

Her utmost acknowledgement too, to the Chancellor of Mindanao State University-Sulu, **PROF. NAGDER J. ABDURAHMAN, Ed.D.** , for allowing him to conduct the study in their respective institution.

To the dean of College of Arts and Sciences **PROF. AJID M. SARI, MAED**, for allowing the researcher to conduct the study in their respective college, likewise to the chairperson of the Department of **Languages PROF. FARRAH CARLSON L. TANDIH, LPT, MAED, MALTE**, in giving her permission to conduct the study in her respective department.

Special thanks to the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies Students of MSU-Sulu who served as the participants of the study.

She also extends his warmest gratitude to her ever loving and supportive husband **Al-Fahad S. Jupakkal**, to her lovable children **Farrah Jaine A. Jupakkal** and **Al-Fahad A. Jupakkal II**, to her loving and supportive parents **Mr. Samuel Ramos Aranas** and **Mrs. Rashma Masillam Aranas**, siblings **Vhor** and **Lhang**, to her kind and generous Father-in-law **Mr. Akkub A. Jupakkal** and Mother-in-law **Mrs. Sherma S. Jupakkal**.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Above all, a comprehensive informed consent form explaining the goals, methods, potential risks and benefits, and confidentiality policies was delivered to each participant. Furthermore, all trial data points were carefully anonymised in cases when the respondents' personal information had no bearing on the trial results. Data collection was conducted in a private environment to preserve participant privacy, and the collected data was kept in a secure archive that was only accessible by the researchers. Despite the differences in their thoughts and points of view, all members were respected in the same

spirit. Additionally, the researchers made an effort to give the participants a welcoming and secure environment so they could talk openly about their experiences.

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APA citation:

Jupakkal, S. A. (2024). SPEAKING COMPETENCE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES STUDENTS ATMINDANAO STATE UNIVERSITY-SULU. *Ignatian International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 2(5), 984–996. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11180145>

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