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Voices of growth: Students' experiences in the Job Enabling English Proficiency Program

KIM D. BONIFACIO *, ANALYN S. CLARIN, LUZ MAY D. FUERZAS and MARIA KRISTINA C. VICENTE

Faculty of College of Arts and Sciences, Misamis University, Ozamiz City.

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Abstract

The Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program addresses a critical need for enhancing English communication skills among college students to improve their academic performance and workplace readiness. This study explored the JEEP program's impact on English proficiency, communication skills, and learning experiences among college students. Employing phenomenological research design, the study was conducted in one of the Higher Education Institutions in Misamis Occidental. Participants included 15 college students enrolled in the JEEP program who were selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using semi-structured interviews guide questions. Moustakas' method of data analysis was utilized to interpret the qualitative data. The study identified four key themes including Learning Through Interactive and Technology-Aided English Activities, Navigating the Challenges of Language Learning in a Structured Program, Building Communicative Confidence Through Real-World Practice, Enhanced English Language Competence, Strengthening Resource Accessibility and Learning Conditions through Teacher Guidance, and Fostering Teacher Engagement with Active Facilitation and Individualized Support. The themes revealed that the JEEP program significantly improved students' English proficiency and communication skills, particularly in real-world contexts. The JEEP program effectively prepares students for global communication and employment opportunities. It is recommended that the program be continuously adapted and further enhanced to maximize its benefits.

Keywords: Communication skills; Communicative confidence; English proficiency; Language learning; Technology-aid

1. Introduction

1.1. Rationale of the Study

In today's fast-paced, globally connected world, mastering English is more than just an academic requirement—it is a passport to countless opportunities and career success. As the language of the global community, English serves a variety of purposes and is primarily used for academic purposes and business transactions. However, despite its importance, many college students still struggle to meet the demands of effective English communication, especially when it comes to real-world and workplace situations. This growing challenge has inspired the creation of innovative programs like the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program, which aims to bridge the gap between classroom learning and professional readiness by equipping students with essential language skills for both academic excellence and future employment.

In the context of university students, communication skills involve the ability to effectively convey information, ideas, and thoughts, both verbally and in writing. At the same time, English proficiency refers to the mastery of the English language in reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Wang et al., 2023). The United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) and Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) program offers a rigorous two-year English

* Corresponding author: KIM D. BONIFACIO

language training program called Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) (Coles, 2023). The Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) Program consists of two components: JEEP Start and JEEP Accelerate. The first year of this program is called JEEP Start. It develops students' general language proficiency and communication skills in speaking, listening, and reading through computer-based learning while the second year is called JEEP Accelerate. This is based on English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which includes internet-based study, group work, improvised conversations revolving around typical situations, and written exercises (Bawa, 2020). The JEEP Program aims to enhance students' communication skills, focusing on rhetoric, leadership, collaboration, and professionalism to prepare them as effective and globally competitive workers in the business sector. (Sonsona et al., 2021).

The JEEP Program is effective in developing or enhancing English Proficiency. As demonstrated by computer-assisted language learning and classroom-based procedures, students benefit significantly from the consistent and repetitive use of the English language, which ultimately helps them get ready for employment (Diaz, 2022). College students' proficiency in speaking English, particularly average students, significantly improved with the use of DynEd, a computer-assisted language learning tool. To help college students learn languages, administrators can create academic policies. For example, offering a course or program to help students learn how to communicate, extending the JEEP Start course from one semester to two semesters or a year, and enforcing an English-speaking policy for all subjects, including faculty and students (Jaber and Reyes, 2023). The ability of JEEP graduates to explain and communicate effectively with colleagues was ranked highly, followed by the use of polite language and form completion—skills that are crucial in the workplace. Therefore, in order to adequately meet the demands of offices and industry, this study suggests that JEEP's communication skills training be improved and reorganized (Sonsona et al., 2021).

The Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) Start program utilized Computer-Based Foreign Language Learning (CBFLL) software called Dynamic Education (DYNED) by teachers and students (Baz & Tekdal, 2025). Dynamic Education (DynEd) International Inc. is a leading provider of an Interactive Language Program designed to enhance learners' English communication skills (Aliman, 2021). Enhancing students' general English proficiency through computer-assisted language learning. DynEd is a blended language learning tool that combines the features of traditional learning and contemporary multimedia technologies. DynEd places students at appropriate levels with artificial intelligence methods and adjusts the learning stages for each student according to their difficulty levels. It also calculates a study score by assessing students' progress and provides feedback following the behavioral learning model. DynEd specializes in English education and classifies learning for different age groups and levels (Shaikh & Koçak, 2021). The DynEd software is a language-learning program that has different modules to help people improve their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in a language. The software has been used in many educational settings around the world, and it has been shown to help people of all ages and backgrounds improve their language skills (Jaber et al., 2023).

Technology integration with language instruction has emerged as a crucial strategy in modern education. For the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) Start program in particular, a Higher Education Institution in Ozamiz City has acknowledged the necessity for innovative learning resources to improve students' English ability. Students in JEEP Start utilize the Neo Study application to hone their basic language abilities, such as speaking, listening, reading, and pronunciation. To ensure focused and practical learning, the app monitors users' progress and modifies lessons according to their level of skill. In addition to using the app, the instructor also incorporates enriching activities such as writing essays, reading exercises, listening to podcasts, delivering reports, and participating in simultaneous and role-playing exercises to further enhance the students' communication skills and real-world language use.

In teaching the Job Enabling English Proficiency Accelerate, the teachers' primary focus is communication practice, which highlights the development of students' oral fluency (Menson, 2024). As these students seek jobs after school, it is important to remember that employers expect strong communication skills from graduates and identify communication as one of the most important skill sets (Sonnenschein & Ferguson, 2020). JEEP Accelerate program focuses on the results of the substantial gains in English proficiency, leading to a greater number of Mindanao graduates to obtain well-paying jobs. JEEP Accelerate utilizes a mixed-mode instruction focusing on English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The JEEP Accelerate program integrates online learning and makes use of multimedia resources in the classroom. Uses written exercises, group projects, and impromptu discussions centered on common workplace scenarios. As part of the course training, students are shown videos of themselves performing mock interviews that correspond with the target job sectors' Training Needs Analysis (TNA) (Bawa, 2020). It is an ESP course that focuses on the skills needed to secure employment in their sectors. In School Community College (SCC), the Job Area (JA) courses being offered are Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), Travel and Tourism (T&T), and English for international employment (EFIE).

In the Philippines, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) are two approaches used by the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP), a program under the Workforce Preparation of the

Growth with Equity in Mindanao-3 (GEM), a project under the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Suñas et.al., 2021). Technology in the form of audiovisual materials has been evident in promoting students' speaking skills and creative thinking. It revealed the impact of multimedia in helping students comprehend English terminology in a better way (Al Aqad et al., 2021). Yang, Chen, and Hung (2020) revealed Digital Story Telling (DST) as an effective technique to develop students' English proficiency and help students become creative thinkers.

To ensure that students develop essential workplace communication skills, the Higher Education Institution in Ozamiz City requires mock interviews as the final compliance activity in the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) Accelerate curriculum. As a final exercise, this organized simulation allows students to put their newly learned skills in professional speaking, CV presentation, and interview etiquette into practice. By simulating actual job interviews, the mock interview process gives students a chance to improve their professional communication skills, confidence, and fluency. By evaluating students' verbal articulation, critical thinking, and non-verbal indicators, academic members and industry professionals provide constructive input to help students improve their employability and English proficiency. This requirement's introduction demonstrates the university's dedication to generating graduates who are globally competitive by bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world job readiness.

This study lacks specific research and limited empirical studies on the specific impact of JEEP (Job Enabling English Proficiency) on students' English proficiency and communication skills within real-world and workplace contexts. While numerous studies examine general English language programs, there is a lack of research focusing on how JEEP, as a specialized program, enhances not only linguistic competence but also practical communication skills necessary for employment. Additionally, existing literature often overlooks students' personal experiences, challenges, and adaptive strategies in learning English through JEEP, leaving a gap in understanding its effectiveness from a learner-centered perspective.

This study aims to investigate how students' English proficiency and communication skills are improved by the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program. Specifically in academic and professional settings, it sought to evaluate how well the program enhances students' speaking, writing, listening, and reading skills. Furthermore, the study aims to pinpoint JEEP's advantages and disadvantages, offering insights into how it equips students for global communication and employment chances. The results will assist educators and policymakers in improving English language training programs to better enhance students' employability and language development.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to highlight the effectiveness of the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program in improving students' English proficiency and communication skills. By evaluating how JEEP enhances students' speaking, writing, listening, and reading abilities, the study provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and institutions in refining language training programs. It also helps students understand the benefits of JEEP in preparing them for career opportunities and global communication. Furthermore, the study may identify areas for improvement, ensuring that JEEP remains a relevant and impactful tool for language development in academic and professional settings.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the following theories: Sociocultural Theory by Lev Vygotsky (1978) and Communicative Competence Theory by Dell Hymes (1972).

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the fundamental role of social interaction and cultural context in cognitive development. Vygotsky (1978) posited that learning is a socially mediated process, wherein individuals construct knowledge through interactions with more knowledgeable others, such as teachers, peers, and parents. A central concept of this theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to the gap between what a learner can achieve independently and what they can accomplish with guidance (Panhwar et al., 2016). Additionally, scaffolding, or the temporary support provided by an expert, facilitates the learner's progress until they gain autonomy. Language also plays a crucial role in cognitive development, serving as both a tool for communication and a means of internal thought regulation. Vygotsky's theory underscores the influence of cultural and social factors in shaping cognitive growth.

One notable study that employs Sociocultural Theory examines the role of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (SCT) in facilitating the acquisition of a second language (L2) through meaningful human interactions. Critical analysis was conducted of SCT's foundational concepts, including the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding, and elucidates their application in the enhancement of L2 learning methodologies. The study concludes that collaborative learning activities grounded in SCT principles play a significant role in advancing the cognitive development and language performance of L2 learners (Reham Alkhudiry, 2022).

Another study that applies sociocultural theory employed a quasi-experimental design, utilizing pretests and posttests to investigate the impact of scaffolding techniques rooted in Vygotsky's SCT on enhancing the speaking skills of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The experimental group received instruction in scaffolding techniques, which included exercises such as dialogues, text-based questions, and picture-based conversations. The findings revealed that the scaffolding approach significantly enhanced the speaking abilities of the learners compared to traditional teaching methods (Noemí-Victoria Sarmiento-Campos et al., 2022).

Sociocultural Theory holds significance to the study as it provides understanding of how social interaction and cultural tools influence language learning. Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggests that learners acquire new skills most effectively when guided by more knowledgeable individuals, such as instructors or peers, which aligns with JEEP's goal of improving students' English proficiency through structured support and real-world communication practice. Additionally, scaffolding, another key aspect of sociocultural theory, plays a crucial role in JEEP's approach, as students receive progressive guidance in English language use until they achieve greater independence. The program's emphasis on interactive and situational learning reflects Vygotsky's assertion that language development is deeply embedded in social and professional contexts, making sociocultural theory an essential lens for evaluating JEEP's impact on students' communication skills.

Dell Hymes' Communicative Competence Theory (1972) emphasizes that language proficiency extends beyond grammatical accuracy to include the ability to use language effectively in social contexts (Celce-Murcia, 1995). Hymes introduced communicative competence, which consists of four components: linguistic competence (knowledge of grammar and vocabulary), sociolinguistic competence (understanding cultural and contextual appropriateness), discourse competence (ability to organize and connect ideas meaningfully), and strategic competence (using strategies to overcome communication barriers). This theory laid the foundation for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which prioritizes real-life interaction and meaningful communication over rote memorization, significantly influencing language education and second language acquisition.

A study that applies Hymes' Communicative Competence Theory conducts a comprehensive analysis of 85 empirical studies to assess how communicative competence has been defined and operationalized in L2 learning and assessment. Their findings reveal that the construct of communicative competence has evolved to encompass multimodal and intercultural dimensions, highlighting the need for language education to adapt to these emerging competencies. The study emphasizes the importance of integrating digital literacies and intercultural awareness into language curricula to better prepare learners for effective communication in diverse contexts (Mootosamy & Aryadoust, 2024).

Another study that applies sociocultural theory investigates the correlation between language proficiency and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) among Chinese EFL learners. Utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods, the study finds that higher language proficiency is associated with improved ICC, particularly in areas such as attitude and skills. The authors suggest that while language competence serves as a foundation for intercultural interactions, it is insufficient on its own; thus, integrating intercultural training into language education is essential for developing comprehensive communicative competence (Feng et al., 2024).

Dell Hymes' Communicative Competence Theory is highly significant to the study as it provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating the effectiveness of the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program. Hymes' theory emphasizes that language proficiency goes beyond grammatical accuracy, incorporating sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies necessary for effective communication in real-world contexts. Since the JEEP program aims to equip students with practical English skills for employment and global communication, applying Hymes' framework allows for a deeper analysis of how the program fosters not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to use English appropriately in diverse social and professional settings.

1.3. Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework illustrates the experiences of Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) students.

Learning Through Interactive and Technology-Aided English Activities. The integration of varied interactive activities combined with technology-assisted learning significantly enhances English language proficiency by targeting multiple language skills and fostering learner engagement. The JEEP program exemplifies this by incorporating communication drills, role-playing, journal writing, and group discussions, which collectively improve pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and overall communication effectiveness, while also building learners' confidence in real-life contexts.

Incorporating diverse interactive activities such as communication drills, journal writing, role-playing, and group discussions significantly enhances language proficiency by engaging learners in meaningful contexts. Varied instructional strategies cater to different learning styles, promoting comprehensive language development (Budiman et al., 2023). Situated learning environments, which include role-playing and group discussions, effectively improve learners' speaking performance, vocabulary, and grammar (Yan et al., 2024). Interactive tasks in online language learning environments positively impact reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, underscoring the importance of varied activities in language acquisition (Eslit, 2023).

The integration of technology in language learning empowers students by providing personalized and adaptive learning experiences. Technology integration fosters learner autonomy and multiliteracies, enabling students to take control of their learning processes (Hung & Ding, 2018). The use of technology in English language teaching enhances engagement and facilitates the development of language skills through interactive platforms (Shaikh, 2025). Artificial intelligence in informal digital English learning significantly improves learners' motivation and engagement, leading to better language mastery (Guan et al., 2024).

Engaging in real-world tasks and presentations through technology-enhanced platforms significantly boosts learners' confidence and communication skills. Using digital materials in English speaking classes helps students overcome anxiety and enhances their speaking performance (Salih & Omar, 2024). Teaching practices incorporating World Englishes improve EFL learners' self-confidence in English-speaking performance (Cao et al., 2024).

Navigating the Challenges of Language Learning in a Structured Program. Language learners in structured programs often face challenges such as balancing academic demands, technical limitations, and psychological barriers that can hinder progress. Participants in the JEEP program reported difficulties managing time between coursework and language activities, alongside accessibility issues with technology and anxiety related to language use, which affected their learning experience.

In structured English language programs, students often grapple with the dual pressures of academic coursework and language learning activities, necessitating effective time management and flexibility. Integrating language development with content instruction to alleviate the burden on learners (Cordeiro, 2025).

Access to technology and stable internet connectivity remains a significant challenge for students participating in digital learning components of structured English programs. Technical and infrastructural limitations hinder the adoption and implementation of digital learning, particularly in underdeveloped regions (Zou et al., 2025). Addressing digital learning operations and artificial intelligence integration to overcome these barriers (Downs, 2025).

Psychological factors such as language anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and lack of self-confidence can significantly hinder students' engagement and performance in structured English language programs. Fear of mistakes, stage anxiety, shyness, and lack of motivation are key psychological barriers affecting students' English speaking skills. (Gobena, 2025). The causes of language anxiety among future primary school teachers highlight the need for supportive learning environments to mitigate these challenges. (Haroud et al., 2025). Increasing students' language achievement through practical resources can help reduce language anxiety and improve overall performance. (Alamer et al., 2025)

Building Communicative Confidence Through Real-World Practice. The JEEP program's use of real-world practice through group activities, role-plays, and presentations significantly increases learners' communicative confidence, enabling them to perform effectively in public speaking and academic discussions. Engaging students in role-plays and group work significantly enhances their oral communication skills, fostering increased confidence in public speaking and academic discussions.

Role-playing techniques improved the oral communication abilities of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students by providing them with practical speaking opportunities in simulated real-life scenarios (Lasheiky, 2024). Collaborative work in heterogeneous groups not only fosters learning but also boosts students' motivation to actively participate in the learning process (Ishak & Aziz, 2022).

Creating supportive environments that emphasize encouragement and tolerance for mistakes is crucial in reducing language anxiety and promoting active participation among learners. Implementing active learning approaches can promote motivation, reduce anxiety, and shape positive attitudes in EFL learners (Rezai et al., 2025). Positive learning environment where all students experience a safe, healthy, caring, and nurturing atmosphere, which is essential for effective learning (Julien, 2023).

Enhanced English Language Competence Through Structured and Interactive Learning. Structured and interactive learning approaches contribute significantly to the development of comprehensive English language competence, including vocabulary expansion, sentence fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and listening comprehension. The JEEP program's combination of structured lessons with interactive tasks like debates and speaking drills facilitated noticeable improvements in these core language areas.

Structured lessons combined with interactive tasks significantly contribute to vocabulary expansion and sentence fluency among English language learners. The practice of sentence expansion involves guiding students to develop simple sentences into more complex ones by adding adjectives, prepositional phrases, and dependent clauses, thereby enhancing their syntactic skills and expressive abilities (Meehan, 2024). Additionally, the use of interactive vocabulary learning systems like RetAssist, which incorporates generative images to facilitate story retelling, has been shown to improve learners' fluency and ease their learning workload. (Chen et al., 2024).

Focused drills and technology-assisted exercises play a pivotal role in reinforcing pronunciation, grammar, and listening comprehension skills in English language learners. Pronunciation practice significantly enhances listening comprehension, highlighting the interconnection between accurate pronunciation and effective listening (Muhammed & Abduljabbar, 2023). The implementation of Computer-Assisted Pronunciation Training (CAPT) systems demonstrates the effectiveness of technology in providing personalized feedback and improving learners' pronunciation skills (Issa & Hahn-Powell, 2025).

Strengthening Resource Accessibility and Learning Conditions through Teacher Guidance. Teacher guidance plays a pivotal role in strengthening resource accessibility and creating conducive learning conditions that support language acquisition. In the JEEP program, teachers ensured equitable access to learning tools and platforms, provided supportive environments, and facilitated supplementary materials tailored to students' needs.

Teachers play a pivotal role in bridging the digital divide by facilitating equitable access to both digital and physical learning resources. Promoting digital inclusion involves designing inclusive learning experiences, providing accessible content, and enhancing digital literacy, which are essential for equitable education (Ahuja, 2023).

Creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment is essential for student engagement and success. Fostering inclusive and resilient classroom environments is particularly crucial in the post-COVID era, as it addresses the diverse needs of underserved and underrepresented students through strategies that promote equity and resilience (Villarreal & Scott, 2024).

Fostering Teacher Engagement with Active Facilitation and Individualized Support. Active teacher engagement through facilitation, timely feedback, and personalized support significantly enhances student motivation and learning outcomes in the JEEP program. The JEEP program's emphasis on enhancing teacher engagement aligns with contemporary pedagogical shifts that position educators as active facilitators and personalized learning coaches.

Teachers play a pivotal role as active facilitators in the learning process, guiding and scaffolding students' educational experiences. In the JEEP program, teachers act as active facilitators, guiding students through interactive learning experiences that promote English language proficiency. Incorporating physical activity into academic lessons presents a unique approach to increasing student engagement without compromising academic content (Wood et al., 2025). Active learning strategies, such as collaborative exercises and problem-based learning, enhance student engagement and improve learning outcomes in higher education institutions (Sulaiman & Abdullah, 2024).

Providing timely and constructive feedback is essential for student motivation and academic progress. Timely feedback and motivation are critical components of the JEEP program, enabling students to recognize their progress and areas for improvement in English language learning. Feedback is an integral part of teacher professional development, enabling educators to plan and assess the effectiveness of their instructional strategies (Parpucu & Al-Mabuk, 2023). Both immediate and delayed feedback significantly enhanced motivation and language learning outcomes compared to no feedback, emphasizing the importance of feedback timing in online education (Qun, 2025).

The JEEP program recognizes the importance of teachers serving as academic coaches who provide personalized learning experiences tailored to individual student needs. In their role as academic coaches, teachers provide personalized support tailored to the diverse needs of learners. The impact of personalized AI tutors on language learning performance has been found to be significant, as such tools, when guided by teachers, can enhance student engagement and achievement (Suh, 2025). Teachers who adapt their instructional strategies to accommodate diverse learner profiles can better support student autonomy and language proficiency (Devira, 2020).

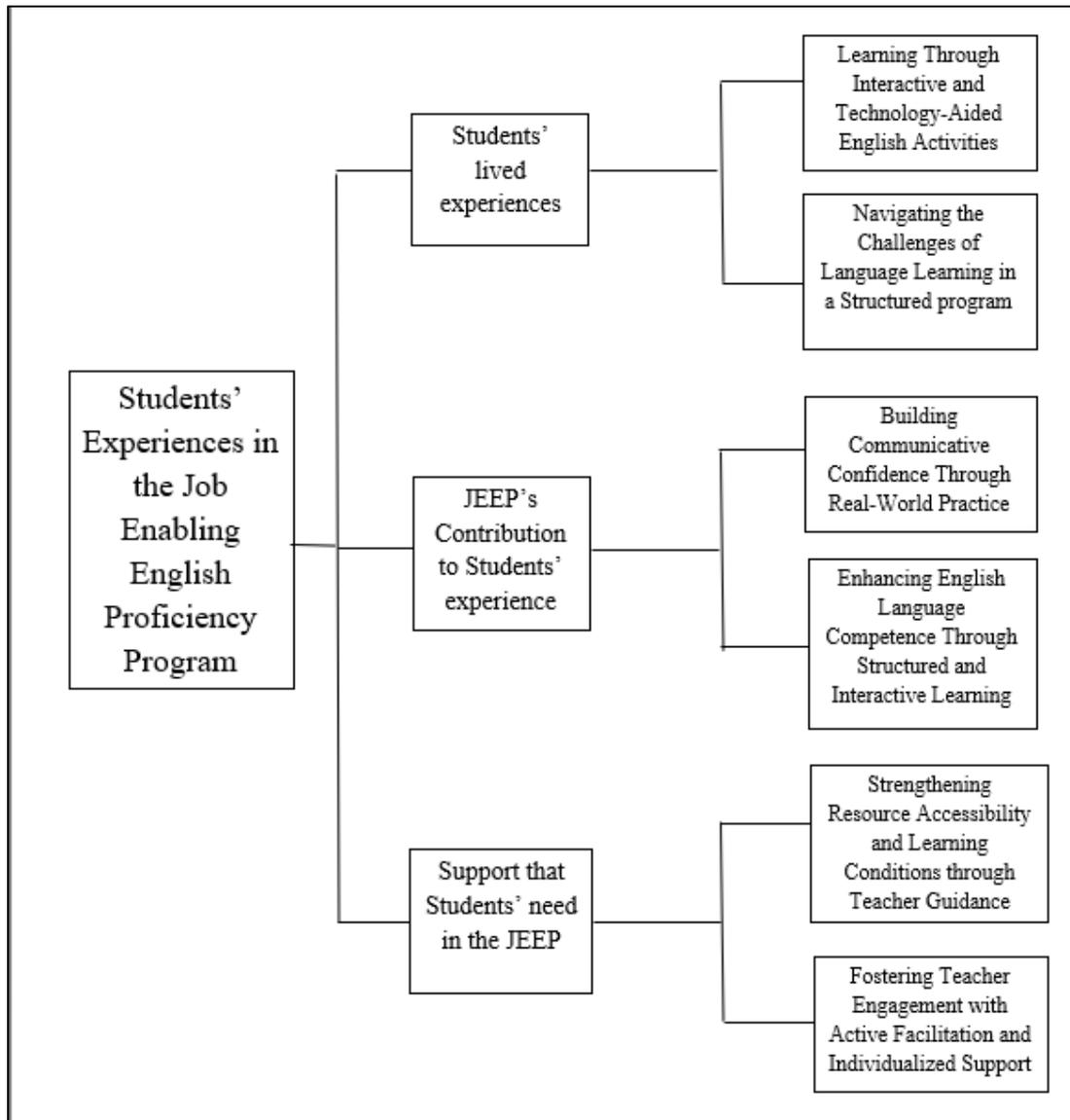


Figure 1 Schematic Diagram

1.3.1. Statement of the Problem

This study explored the JEEP program's impact on students' English proficiency, communication skills, and learning experiences.

Specifically, it sought the following questions:

- What are the students' lived experiences in the JEEP program in enhancing their English proficiency and communication skills?
- How does the JEEP program contribute to students' confidence and competence in using English in academic and real-world settings?
- How can the teachers and administrators further support students in maximizing the benefits of the JEEP program for their language development and communication confidence?

2. Research methodology

2.1. Design

This study employed a phenomenological research design, a qualitative research approach that explores how individuals make sense of their lived experiences. Phenomenology is a rigorous descriptive research method that looks at phenomena from the perspectives of multiple individuals to understand how the intersubjective world and daily life are made (Sarker et al., 2021). Phenomenological research design is particularly suited for this study as it seeks to understand how students personally experience and interpret the impact of the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program on their English proficiency and communication skills. This design is appropriate for determining students' perceptions and learning experiences, as well as for a detailed examination of how JEEP influences their language development and confidence in real-world communication.

2.2. Setting

This study was conducted in one of the higher education institutions in the Philippines. This institution of learning is a private, non-sectarian institution located in Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, Philippines, established in 1929. It spans a 7.5-hectare urban campus that accommodates over 8,000 students annually. The institution implements the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program as part of its curriculum. This higher institution provides an ideal setting for this research, as it offers a diverse student population engaging in JEEP to enhance their English proficiency and communication skills for academic and professional advancement.

2.3. Participants

The participants of this study included students from the institution who were enrolled in the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) Start program in the school year 2023-2024. Purposive sampling will be used to select 15 participants. The inclusion criteria for participants included the following: 1) previously enrolled in the JEEP Start program and 2) willing to take part in the study. The exclusion criteria for this study are: 1) students who have not completed at least one semester of the JEEP Start program, 2) those who are currently enrolled in other English proficiency programs outside JEEP, and 3) students who are unwilling or unable to participate in the data collection process.

2.4. Instruments

This study employed semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) as primary research instruments to gain an in-depth understanding of how the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program enhances students' English proficiency and communication skills. The semi-structured interviews explored students' personal experiences, challenges, and perceived improvements in language proficiency, using open-ended yet guided questions to ensure comprehensive responses while allowing flexibility for deeper insights. The FGDs served as a collaborative platform, enabling students to share and reflect on their language learning journey, identify common themes, and discuss the program's impact on their fluency, confidence, and real-world communication skills. The research instruments underwent expert validation to ensure content accuracy, clarity, and alignment with the study objectives. At the same time, pilot testing will be conducted to assess reliability and refine question structures for consistency in data collection.

2.5. Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering process for this study began with securing approval from the Dean of the College of Education, with obtaining pertinent documents, ethical clearance, and permission from the Misamis University Research Ethics Committee (MURE) and JEEP coordinators. Once approval is secured, purposive sampling was used to select participants who meet the inclusion criteria, including JEEP students and instructors. Before data collection, participants will be given a detailed explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, and ethical considerations, and they will be required to sign an informed consent form. To ensure a comfortable and open exchange of insights, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) will be scheduled at times and locations convenient for the participants, either in person or through virtual platforms if necessary.

The actual data collection involved semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Individual interviews explored participants' personal experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding the JEEP program's effectiveness. FGDs encouraged participants to share their collective insights and engage in meaningful discussions about how JEEP has influenced their English proficiency and communication skills. Additionally, classroom observations will be conducted to assess instructional strategies, student engagement, and learning dynamics in JEEP classes. All interviews and discussions will be audio-recorded and supplemented with field notes to ensure accuracy. Once data collection is

complete, the recorded interviews and observations will be transcribed and systematically analyzed. Through data analysis, key themes and patterns will be identified, providing a deeper understanding of the program's impact on participants.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

This study aimed to protect each participant's rights, privacy, and welfare. All participants were given a thorough explanation of the study's goals, methods, possible risks, and advantages prior to data collection. Participants were informed that participation was entirely optional and that they could leave at any moment without facing any repercussions. By using pseudonyms rather than real identities, confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously upheld, and all information gathered was safely preserved to guard against unwanted access. In order to guarantee that the study conformed with institutional and ethical research requirements, approval from the Misamis University Research Ethics Committee (MUREC) was also obtained.

Respect for the opinions and welfare of participants was given top priority throughout the data collection procedure. Focus groups and interviews took place in a relaxed setting where participants could openly share their opinions without worrying about being judged. Only the researcher and authorized staff had access to the data, and all audio recordings and transcripts were treated with the utmost confidentiality. In order to prevent any harm, including psychological discomfort, the study ensured that conversations were civil and that participants did not feel under any obligation to divulge personal stories. Findings from the study were appropriately disseminated after it was completed, guaranteeing that no one could be identified and that the information was utilized only for scholarly and instructional purposes.

2.7. Data Analysis

The study followed Moustakas' (1994) method of phenomenological data analysis, which involved the following steps: (1) Epoche (Bracketing), (2) Horizontalization, (3) Clustering of Meanings, (4) Textural Description, (5) Structural Description through Imaginative Variation, and (6) Synthesis of Meanings and Essence.

Epoche (Bracketing) – The researcher intentionally set aside personal biases, assumptions, and preconceived notions about the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program to ensure an unbiased interpretation of the participants' experiences. This reflective process helped maintain focus on the authentic voices and perceptions of both students and instructors, minimizing subjective influence on data interpretation.

Horizontalization – All significant statements from interview and focus group discussion (FGD) transcripts were identified and treated with equal value. These statements included insights related to language improvement, communication strategies, and program effectiveness. Repetitive or irrelevant statements were removed, leaving invariant meaning units that represented the core aspects of the lived experience.

Clustering of Meanings – The invariant meaning units were grouped into thematic categories that reflected common aspects of the phenomenon. For this study, emerging themes included increased confidence in English communication, interactive and immersive learning experiences, challenges in mastering fluency, and practical application of English skills.

Textural Description (What) – Based on the clustered themes, a textural description was developed to capture what the participants experienced in relation to the JEEP program. This highlighted the specific elements of the program that influenced students' language development, self-efficacy, and real-world communication abilities.

Structural Description through Imaginative Variation (How) – Using imaginative variation, the researcher explored how participants experienced the phenomenon, examining different perspectives and structural factors such as background, learning styles, and contextual challenges. This step uncovered the conditions, situations, and contexts that shaped the participants' experiences with the JEEP program.

Synthesis of Meanings and Essence – The textural and structural descriptions were integrated into a composite description that reflected the overall essence of the JEEP experience. This synthesis presented a holistic narrative of the program's transformative role in developing students' linguistic competence, confidence, and ability to use English in real-world contexts. The final analysis was supported by direct quotations from participants to preserve authenticity and ensure that the findings remained grounded in lived experiences.

3. Results and discussion

This study explored the JEEP program's impact on students' English proficiency, communication skills, and learning experiences. The participants of this study were fifteen (15) students who were previously enrolled in the Job Enabling English Proficiency Start program. The participants are nine (9) females and six (6) males; ten (10) are third-year students, while five (5) are fourth-year students.

From the transcribed interview, the following themes were developed, namely: Learning Through Interactive and Technology-Aided English Activities, Navigating the Challenges of Language Learning in a Structured Program, Building Communicative Confidence Through Real-World Practice, Enhanced English Language Competence Through Structured and Interactive Learning, Strengthening Resource Accessibility and Learning Conditions through Teacher Guidance, and Enhancing Teacher Engagement through Active Facilitation and Personalized Support, includes the subthemes: (1) Teachers as Active Facilitators of Learning Activities, (2) Teachers as Providers of Timely Feedback and Motivation, and (3) Teachers as Academic Coaches for Personalized Learning.

3.1. Learning Through Interactive and Technology-Aided English Activities

This theme encapsulates how the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program effectively enhances students' English language skills through a combination of varied interactive activities and technology-assisted learning tools. Participants emphasized that diverse communicative exercises such as communication drills, journal writing, role-playing, and group discussions significantly improved their pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and overall communication abilities. These activities not only developed multiple facets of language proficiency but also fostered confidence in real-life and workplace communication scenarios. Furthermore, the integration of AI-driven software like the Neo Study app played a crucial role in reinforcing listening, pronunciation, and grammar skills by providing personalized, level-appropriate tasks that encouraged repeated practice and active engagement. This technology-aided approach allowed learners to master language components through interactive and adaptive exercises. The program empowered students to gain confidence and voice, enabling them to express themselves effectively in public speaking, presentations, and job interviews, which are vital for academic success and employability. This theme reflects the holistic approach of the JEEP program in blending traditional interactive methods with innovative technological tools to produce competent and confident English communicators prepared for global and workplace demands.

Integration of Varied Activities Enhancing Language Proficiency. The responses reveal how integrating a variety of interactive activities within the JEEP program significantly enhances students' language proficiency by targeting different skills and learning needs. Participant 1 emphasized that communication drills and exercises not only improved their accent and overall communication but also deepened their understanding and effectiveness in interacting with others, showing the value of structured speaking practice. Participant 3 stressed that the impact of extension activities like journal and poem writing, noting that these tasks made daily conversations easier, increased classroom participation, and provided a fun, pressure-free environment for self-assessment and skill practice.

These are the answers of the participants:

"So the moments and the activities in the program that significantly improved my English proficiency and communication skills are participation in some communication drills or exercises that improved my accent and also my communication in talking to other people. Because of that, it boosted my understanding of other people and also improved my communication effectiveness." (P1)

"I think the very activity that helped me the most is those extension activities wherein we write journals and poems and others, and it helped me in my daily conversations and also to be more interactive in the class. So it was fun and at the same time, you learn. And also, you can practice your speaking skills and you can also assess yourself without pressure." (P3)

Participant 9 pointed out that speaking activities such as role-playing, debates, and group discussions were instrumental in developing pronunciation, grammar, and fluency, demonstrating the importance of varied oral tasks in holistic language growth. Similarly, Participant 10 shared that role-playing and speaking drills were particularly effective in boosting confidence and fluency, underscoring the confidence-building aspect of interactive, real-world simulations. Collectively, these responses illustrate that a blend of communicative, creative, and collaborative activities not only improves technical language skills but also nurtures self-confidence and engagement, making language learning both effective and enjoyable.

These are the answers of the participants:

“Speaking activities, like role-playing, debates, or group discussions, really helped with my English skills, such as pronunciation drills, grammar, and fluency.” (P9)

“So, the role-playing activities and speaking drills during class greatly improved my confidence and fluency.” (P10)

The integration of varied classroom activities—such as task-based learning, gamification, creative writing, and project-based approaches—has been shown to significantly enhance language proficiency among learners. When learners are engaged in multiple interactive tasks, they become more immersed in meaningful language use, which supports the development of all four macro skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Task-based speaking activities, for instance, provide learners with real-life communication opportunities that boost their confidence and fluency. Students exposed to such activities demonstrated noticeable improvements in speaking proficiency due to the emphasis on practical language application (Putri & Assapari, 2025). Similarly, creative writing tasks not only enhance writing fluency but also stimulate imagination and critical thinking, allowing learners to internalize vocabulary and grammar structures in context. Creative writing activities significantly increased both student engagement and the accuracy of language output in Romanian EFL classrooms (Arsovan, 2023).

Furthermore, the integration of gamified learning environments has proven effective in improving learner motivation and emotional involvement, which are key factors in language acquisition. Gamification in EFL/ESL instruction increases participation and promotes better retention of vocabulary and language patterns, ultimately contributing to improved proficiency (Chan & Lo, 2024). Meanwhile, project-based learning, particularly among pre-service teachers, supports language development through collaborative and content-rich tasks. Embedding project work into English proficiency courses enhances both academic language skills and professional readiness, encouraging students to use English authentically across diverse contexts (Nguyen & Han, 2021). These findings underscore that a varied instructional approach caters to different learning styles and helps establish a richer, more effective environment for language development.

Empowerment Through Technology-Assisted Learning. This theme emphasizes how AI-driven software, such as the Neo Study app, played a pivotal role in developing students’ listening, pronunciation, and grammar skills within the JEEP program. Participant 8 shared that the repetitive practice required by the software helped them master pronunciation and vocabulary, emphasizing the value of persistent, targeted drills. Participant 11 described an immersive experience in the JEEP lab, where the Neo app provided level-appropriate questions and required students to repeat sentences, thereby personalizing learning and reinforcing communication skills through interactive, real-time feedback. Meanwhile, Participant 12 noted that the software presented situational exercises, like fill-in-the-blank activities, which encouraged practical application of grammar and vocabulary in context. Collectively, these responses illustrate that technology-assisted learning not only makes language practice more engaging and adaptive to individual needs but also empowers students to build essential language skills through consistent, interactive, and contextualized exercises. These were the answers in the interview that support these statements:

“I believe that the programs for the activities in the JEEP subject helped me a lot, especially when we were using the software and were tasked to repeat the words until we mastered them.” (P8)

“The moments or activities in the JEEP program that significantly improved my English proficiency and communication skills were during the time when we walked through the JEEP lab. We used our headphones, faced the computer, and that's when the AI or the Neo app would ask us questions based on our level. As far as I remember, I was in Level A or C, which is not the highest but more like the medium level. There was a question-and-answer portion where the robot or Neo asked us questions, and we were to repeat the sentence.” (P11)

“As far as I can remember, it would give you a situation where you need to fill in the blanks depending on the given situation” (P12)

Technology-assisted learning has emerged as a transformative force in language education, offering diverse tools that empower learners to enhance their proficiency. Mobile-assisted task-based learning (M-TBL) exemplifies this, where primary foreign language learners engaged in M-TBL activities showed significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition and positive shifts in learning attitudes (Biglar & Kaban, 2023). Similarly, AI-assisted grammar instruction has proven effective; students using AI chatbots for grammar practice exhibited enhanced grammatical accuracy and increased learner autonomy (Yener & Selcuk, 2024). These findings underscore the potential of integrating mobile and AI technologies to personalize learning experiences and foster self-directed language development.

Immersive technologies further enrich language learning by providing authentic and engaging contexts. It was stressed that virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) tools create interactive environments that boost motivation and facilitate contextual vocabulary learning among K–12 ESL learners (Weng et al., 2024). Additionally, the efficacy of subtitling in technology-enhanced language learning is noteworthy, as it not only improves language proficiency but also fosters intercultural awareness (Tinedo-Rodriguez, 2025). Collectively, these illustrate how technology-assisted learning strategies can empower learners by making language acquisition more interactive, personalized, and culturally relevant.

Gaining Confidence and Voice. The JEEP program's emphasis on group activities and role-plays significantly increased students' confidence in English communication, especially in public speaking and professional contexts. Participant 15 shared that consistently using English during group activities and presentations helped them become comfortable expressing themselves, pushed them out of their comfort zone, and significantly boosted their confidence in speaking before an audience. Participant 14 emphasized that the program enhanced their communication skills, making English a practical tool for effective interaction in job interviews and professional settings, which is vital given English's status as a universal language. Together, these responses demonstrate that the JEEP program not only develops technical language proficiency but also empowers students to find their voice, build self-assurance, and prepare for real-world communication demands.

These are the answers of the participants:

"The program improved my communication skills, making me more effective and confident in professional and social interactions, especially in job interviews." (P14)

"Regular participation in English-speaking group activities and presentations helped me become more comfortable and confident in expressing myself publicly." (P15)

The JEEP program's emphasis on group activities and role-plays has been instrumental in enhancing students' confidence and communication skills in English. Role-play activities provide learners with opportunities to use language in dynamic, real-world contexts, thereby improving oral fluency and vocabulary development (Ishak & Aziz, 2022). Furthermore, the role-play technique significantly boosted students' speaking motivation and changed their attitudes towards English communication (Gusmuliana et al., 2021).

The use of communicative language teaching methods to address high school students' anxiety when speaking English. The significance of creating a supportive and interactive language learning environment to alleviate anxiety and enhance students' English speaking skills (Teng, 2023). Additionally, a study on improving speaking skills using group work methods demonstrated that such collaborative activities led to improvements in students' speaking ability, including accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension, while also fostering self-confidence and classroom participation (Madjid, 2020).

The JEEP program's integration of interactive, varied, and technology-assisted English learning activities significantly enhances students' language proficiency, confidence, and communicative competence. These outcomes align with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978), which emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cultural tools in cognitive development. Activities like group work, role-playing, and peer collaboration provided learners with opportunities to co-construct meaning and develop language skills within their zone of proximal development. Furthermore, the study's results resonate with Dell Hymes' Communicative Competence Theory (1972), which posits that effective communication goes beyond grammatical accuracy to include sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. The JEEP program's focus on real-life simulations, public speaking, journal writing, and AI-driven drills supported learners in developing both the technical and functional aspects of language use. Collectively, these findings affirm that a communicative, socially grounded, and technologically enriched approach empowers students to use English confidently and appropriately in academic, social, and professional contexts.

The findings of the study imply that the integration of varied, interactive, and technology-assisted English learning activities—such as role-playing, group discussions, creative writing, and AI-supported drills—not only strengthens students' linguistic proficiency but also empowers them with the confidence and practical competence needed for real-world communication. These approaches promote learner engagement, autonomy, and meaningful language use, which are essential in preparing students for academic and professional demands. The JEEP program's holistic design serves as a model for English language instruction that aligns with 21st-century educational needs, highlighting the importance of combining traditional teaching with innovative, learner-centered methods. As such, educators and curriculum

designers should consider adopting similar blended approaches to foster communicative competence and learner empowerment in diverse language learning contexts.

3.2. Navigating the Challenges of Language Learning in a Structured Program.

This theme encapsulates the multifaceted difficulties students face while engaging with the JEEP program. Participants expressed the struggle to balance the program's demanding workload alongside other academic responsibilities, highlighting how time constraints and increased activity requirements can create pressure and affect their ability to keep up. Additionally, technical limitations such as unreliable internet connections, lack of access to appropriate devices, and inadequate audio equipment posed significant barriers to fully participating in technology-driven learning activities, thereby impacting engagement and progress. Beyond logistical challenges, psychological factors also played a crucial role, with many students reporting fear of judgment, nervousness, and low self-confidence during oral communication tasks, which hindered their willingness to actively participate and practice speaking. Together, these challenges underscore the complex environment in which learners must navigate academic, technological, and emotional obstacles, emphasizing the need for supportive structures that address not only skill development but also accessibility and learner well-being within language programs.

Balancing Academic Demands and Time Constraints. Balancing the JEEP program's demanding activities with other academic responsibilities posed a significant challenge for participants, primarily due to the program's time-consuming nature and the need for effective time management. Participant 1 expressed difficulty in coping with conflicting schedules and the pressure of completing all required tasks, highlighting the struggle to manage multiple academic demands simultaneously. Participant 2 emphasized the extensive time investment and patience required by the program, contrasting it with other less time-intensive activities, which made time management exceptionally challenging. Participant 7 noted that achieving a higher rank resulted in an increased number of activities and time commitments, making it harder to keep up while needing to accumulate points through consistent completion. Collectively, these responses underscore that the intensive workload and time demands of the JEEP program require students to develop strong time management skills to successfully balance their academic obligations. These were the answers in the interview that support these statements:

"The challenge that I encountered is balancing academics and activities, because if the schedule is in conflict and then there are some activities that you need to do, like lesson planning, I struggle on how to cope with this challenge since I need to do all of it." (P1)

"While participating in the JEEP program, one particular challenge that I encountered was time management. I struggled a lot with time management because, you know, it's time-consuming, and unlike other activities that only require a little time, the JEEP program particularly takes a lot of time and it takes a lot of patience." (P2)

"The challenges I encountered were having a higher rank, like B+ or B2, which gave me more activities and more time to do them. This was very time-consuming and also very difficult because you had to earn points by completing the activities." (P7)

Balancing the rigorous demands of the JEEP program with other academic responsibilities presents a significant challenge for students, as highlighted by participants who struggled with time-consuming activities and conflicting schedules. This underscores the critical importance of practical time management skills in academic settings. Students who implement structured time management techniques demonstrate higher academic performance, reduced stress levels, and improved focus (Rao, 2025). The challenges faced by JEEP participants also reflect broader issues related to academic stress and mental well-being among college students. High levels of academic stress have been significantly correlated with poor mental well-being, affecting students' overall performance and health (Barbayannis et al., 2022).

The relationship between time management and motivation on academic performance among university students found that while time management did not show a significant relationship with academic performance, motivation was found to have a significant and positive impact on academic outcomes (Makiah & Nusron, 2025). These findings suggest that while time management is crucial, fostering motivation is equally important in enhancing students' academic performance.

Technical Limitations and Accessibility Issues. The responses highlight how significantly participants' engagement and progress in the technology-driven components of the JEEP program were impacted. Participant 4 pointed out that the requirement for high-quality recording equipment posed a challenge, as the software struggled to recognize low or unclear voices, which could result in incorrect assessments and frustration. Participant 6 described multiple

accessibility barriers, including the lack of personal devices, limited internet connectivity, and difficulties with memory retention, all of which hindered consistent use of the Neo app and completion of activities. Participant 11 noted that even in the JEEP lab, where devices were available, unstable internet connections due to many users affected the smooth progression through the program levels. Together, these responses underscore the critical role of reliable technology and access in ensuring equitable and effective participation in technology-assisted language learning.

These are the answers of the participants:

"Some of the challenges and problems that I encountered in the subject are that there are times when the audio requires a very high-end recording microphone so that the system or the app could hear you because they have difficulty in taking small or low voices. Also, if you cannot pronounce it correctly, then they would consider it wrong, so that's the problem or challenge that I have encountered." (P4)

"As I mentioned earlier in our EP1S class, there were some challenges. I had a hard time accomplishing the activities in NEO because, first, I don't have a phone, so I can only access NEO in the JEEP lab or on my laptop. Next is the internet access since my laptop cannot use a data connection, so I can only use NEO in places with an internet connection. And the third one is that I have a terrible memory, like a goldfish, so I had trouble repeating the sentences in NEO or remembering them." (P6)

"It wasn't really a challenge, but sometimes the internet connection was an issue. In the JEEP lab, with about 30 students, the signal would not be strong, so I couldn't proceed to the next level." (P11)

Technical limitations and accessibility issues significantly impact students' engagement and progress in technology-driven language learning programs like JEEP. Participants reported challenges such as the need for high-quality recording equipment, lack of personal devices, limited internet connectivity, and difficulties with memory retention. These obstacles hinder consistent use of language learning applications and completion of activities. Such challenges are not unique to the JEEP program; they reflect broader issues in technology-assisted language learning. For instance, technological barriers, including limited access to devices and internet connectivity, pose significant obstacles to the widespread adoption and effectiveness of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) programs (Luo, 2024). Furthermore, the implementation of AI technologies in education often overlooks the infrastructural and accessibility disparities among learners, leading to unequal learning opportunities (Owoc et al., 2021)

Additionally, the effectiveness of AI-driven language learning tools is contingent upon their accessibility and the users' ability to interact with them seamlessly. While AI-powered tools have the potential to enhance language learning, their benefits are not uniformly experienced by all students, particularly those facing technical and accessibility challenges (Woo & Choi, 2021). Therefore, addressing technical limitations and accessibility issues is crucial for the equitable and effective implementation of technology-assisted language learning programs.

Psychological Barriers to Language Use. Psychological barriers such as fear of judgment, nervousness, and low self-confidence significantly affected students' willingness and ability to participate in oral English activities within the JEEP program. Participant 3 described feeling pressured and afraid to speak English in front of others, especially when tired, which impacted their engagement and momentum in class. Participant 13 shared that difficulties in understanding new accents and the fear of being judged hindered their confidence to voice thoughts spontaneously, slowing their progress during the initial stages of learning. Participant 15 pointed out struggles with grammar and pronunciation, compounded by nervousness and fear of correction when speaking publicly, which created additional emotional obstacles. Collectively, these responses emphasize how affective factors can impede language learning, underscoring the need for supportive environments that foster psychological safety and encourage risk-taking in language use.

These are the answers of the participants:

"Sometimes I experience pressure, especially when reporting in front, and then I feel like I am afraid to talk using English in front of other people. I also have a challenge in maintaining the momentum in class, especially when I am tired" (P3)

"At first, I had trouble comprehending new accents in listening practice or voicing my thoughts on the spot. Sometimes I was afraid to speak up because of fear of being judge which made my progress slow in early stages." (P13)

"I'm actually had a hard time with grammar and sometimes pronunciation as well. I also got nervous speaking in front of people because I was scared to be judged or corrected by them." (P15)

Psychological barriers such as fear of judgment, nervousness, and low self-confidence significantly impede students' participation in oral English activities within the JEEP program. These affective factors manifest as anxiety and apprehension, leading to avoidance behaviors and reduced classroom engagement. Foreign language anxiety negatively impacts learners' willingness to communicate, with high-anxious students exhibiting lower participation levels compared to their low-anxious counterparts (Wang et al., 2022). Furthermore, perfectionistic tendencies can exacerbate listening anxiety, as learners strive for flawless performance, leading to increased self-doubt and avoidance of language tasks (Ardestani et al., 2025).

To mitigate these psychological barriers, fostering a supportive learning environment that enhances self-efficacy and reduces anxiety is crucial. Higher self-efficacy correlates with lower levels of language anxiety, enabling learners to engage more confidently in language activities (Gao & Zuo, 2025). Additionally, integrating metacognitive strategies into instruction can help learners manage their anxiety by promoting self-regulation and reflective practices (Shen et al., 2024). By addressing these affective factors through targeted strategies, educators can enhance students' confidence and participation in language learning.

The challenges encountered by students in the JEEP program reveal a complex interplay of academic pressures, technological limitations, and psychological barriers that shape their overall engagement and learning outcomes. Balancing demanding workloads with limited time, navigating unreliable access to digital tools, and coping with anxiety or fear of judgment during oral communication tasks all contribute to the students' varied learning experiences. These difficulties highlight the importance of social interaction, scaffolding, and access to supportive tools as emphasized in Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which views learning as a socially mediated process. Additionally, the emotional and cognitive obstacles that hinder students' ability to express themselves in English align with Hymes' Communicative Competence Theory, which stresses the need for both linguistic knowledge and the confidence to use language effectively in context. Together, these perspectives underscore the importance of creating inclusive, resource-equipped, and psychologically safe learning environments that foster both competence and confidence in language use.

The challenges experienced by students in the JEEP program carry important implications for the design and delivery of structured language learning programs. The convergence of academic overload, limited technological access, and psychological distress signals the need for a more holistic and learner-centered approach to English language instruction. Programs like JEEP must not only prioritize the development of linguistic competence but also ensure that students are equipped with the resources, support systems, and emotional safety necessary to thrive. This involves integrating flexible scheduling options, investing in accessible technological infrastructure, and cultivating classroom environments that encourage risk-taking, reduce anxiety, and build learners' self-efficacy. By addressing these interconnected challenges through a multidimensional framework, language programs can create more equitable and compelling learning experiences that empower students to engage confidently and meaningfully with the English language in both academic and real-world contexts.

3.3. Building Communicative Confidence Through Real-World Practice

This theme encapsulates how the JEEP program effectively nurtures students' self-assurance in using English by providing continuous opportunities to engage in authentic communication tasks across both academic and social contexts. Through repeated exposure to public speaking, presentations, and everyday conversations, students gradually become more comfortable expressing themselves despite initial mistakes or grammatical errors, recognizing that improvement comes with practice. The supportive learning environment encourages a positive attitude toward errors, framing them as natural and valuable steps in the learning process, which helps reduce anxiety and fear of judgment. This shift in mindset empowers learners to take risks, participate actively, and apply their English skills confidently in diverse real-life situations, ultimately fostering not only linguistic competence but also the courage to communicate effectively across cultural and social boundaries.

Increased Confidence in Public Speaking and Academic Discussions. The JEEP program effectively fosters increased confidence in public speaking and academic discussions by providing students with consistent opportunities to practice English in both formal and informal settings. Participant 1 emphasized that the program improved not only their communication skills but also their comprehension of instructional content, which together enhanced their overall confidence in participating in activities and exercises. Participant 3 remarked that a growing comfort with making mistakes, recognizing that errors are part of the learning process and do not diminish their willingness to speak. Participant 10 noted that the program helped them feel more at ease speaking English during both reports and casual conversations, reflecting a broadening of confidence across different contexts. These were the answers in the interview that support these statements:

"The JEEP program helped me feel more confident and helped me boost my confidence by helping me improve my communication skills with other people and also understand the information that was conveyed by our teacher or the JEEP program, so that it helped my understanding of some activities or some drills or exercises that the JEEP program gave to us." (P1)

"Because of the JEEP's regular speaking tasks, I am used to communicating using English with others. And also, even if I commit mistakes usually in grammar, I am not shy because I know that I can improve as time goes by, and the more I practice, the more I will improve my speaking skills." (P3)

"The JEEP program made me more comfortable speaking English during reports and even casual conversations." (P10)

Participant 12 described how the program enhanced their language use in academic discussions and real-life conversations by developing their fluency and vocabulary. Participant 13 shared that engaging in activities like math presentations and peer feedback challenged and encouraged them to express thoughts more effectively, reducing fear and boosting confidence in diverse communicative situations. Collectively, these responses demonstrate that through repeated practice and supportive environments, students gradually build the confidence needed to communicate effectively in English across various social and academic domains. These were the answers in the interview that support these statements:

"The JEEP program helped make me more confident when using English in academic discussions, presentations, or real-life conversations, by simply helping me enhance how I speak the language and helping me become more developed in using English language terms." (P12)

"That activity not only tested my English but also challenged me to think and put my thoughts forward more effectively. Through consistent practice in formal and informal setting the JEEP program help me shed my fear of making mistakes. For example, the math presentations and peer feedback sessions make academic discussions feel less intimidating. Now, I am confident in expressing my thoughts in English whether during the class or chatting my friends from different cultural background." (P13)

The JEEP program's effectiveness in enhancing students' confidence in public speaking and academic discussions is well-supported by recent literature. Consistent practice in English through structured activities, such as presentations and peer feedback, has been shown to significantly improve learners' self-assurance in using the language. For instance, students' confidence in English public speaking increased notably when they engaged in regular speaking tasks, highlighting the importance of preparation and practice in reducing anxiety (Rosyadi et al., 2022). Interactive discussions and simulations in public speaking sessions effectively boosted students' self-confidence (Tarigan et al., 2024)

Technological interventions have also played a pivotal role in building public speaking confidence. The use of Smart Flexible Language Mobile Apps (SFL-ApPs) has been found to enhance students' public speaking skills and self-confidence by providing interactive and adaptive learning experiences (Asmayani, 2025) Additionally, integrating TED Talks into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has proven effective in improving students' presentation skills and reducing speaking anxiety, thereby fostering greater confidence in academic discussions (Mai et al., 2024). These findings align with the experiences of JEEP program participants, who reported increased comfort in speaking English across various contexts, underscoring the program's success in creating supportive environments for language.

Overcoming Fear Through Encouragement and Mistake Tolerance. The JEEP program creates a supportive learning environment that encourages students to embrace mistakes as a natural and valuable part of the language learning process, thereby reducing their fear and hesitation in using English. Participant 15 shared that repeated practice helped overcome initial shyness, fostering confidence by normalizing errors as essential to growth. Participant 13 emphasized that consistent engagement in both formal and informal activities, such as presentations and peer feedback, challenged them to express ideas more effectively and helped diminish their fear of making mistakes, making academic discussions less intimidating. These were the answers in the interview that support these statements:

"Back then, I was super shy to speak English especially when expressing my thoughts in class but now I'm more confident because we practiced and practice. The JEEP program made me realize that it's okay to make mistakes sometimes but that's how we learn.." (P15)

"That activity not only tested my English but also challenged me to think and put my thoughts forward more effectively. Through consistent practice in formal and informal setting the JEEP program help me shed my fear of making mistakes.

For example, the math presentations and peer feedback sessions make academic discussions feel less intimidating. Now, I am confident in expressing my thoughts in English whether during the class or chatting my friends from different cultural background." (P13).

Participant 9 reflected on their transformation from being afraid to speak English to actively using and improvising their language skills in front of others. Participant 5 noted a significant shift from relying on their native language during oral recitations to confidently responding in English after participating in the program. Together, these responses demonstrate that through encouragement and a mistake-tolerant atmosphere, the JEEP program empowers students to take risks, build fluency, and communicate more confidently in English.

These are the answers of the participants:

"At first, I was afraid to speak in English, but now I usually use and improvise my English proficiency when speaking in front of others." (P9)

"Back then, during oral recitation, I would speak in Bisaya in class, but now, after taking the JEEP program, I already know how to speak in English and answer in English." (P5)

The JEEP program's emphasis on consistent practice and a supportive learning environment has been instrumental in helping students overcome their fear of speaking English. Regular engagement in oral presentations diminishes anxiety among EFL learners, emphasizing the importance of a supportive classroom atmosphere where mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities (Wu, 2024). Additionally, embracing a variety of English dialects and promoting communicative competence over native-speaker norms can enhance learners' self-confidence in speaking (Cao et al., 2024).

Further reinforcing the JEEP program's effectiveness, participants described significant transformations in their confidence levels, moving from reluctance to active participation in English conversations. The role of a growth mindset and self-efficacy in enhancing L2 speaking performance indicates that fostering these psychological factors can lead to improved speaking abilities (Derakhshan & Fathi, 2024). Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of encouragement and mistake tolerance in language learning, validating the JEEP program's approach to building students' confidence in public speaking and academic discussions.

Vygotsky's theory emphasizes that learning occurs through social engagement and is mediated by more knowledgeable others—such as teachers and peers—which aligns with the JEEP program's emphasis on supportive environments, peer interaction, and scaffolded speaking opportunities. These social experiences help learners move from dependence to independence in using English. Meanwhile, Hymes' theory highlights the need for learners not only to know the rules of grammar but also to use language appropriately in context. The JEEP program provides authentic tasks like presentations, conversations, and peer feedback, which foster both linguistic accuracy and contextual appropriateness, essential for communicative competence. Together, these theories support the idea that real-world practice, feedback, and tolerance for mistakes help learners build confidence, overcome anxiety, and develop the skills needed to communicate effectively across academic and social settings.

The theme carries significant implications for language education, particularly in designing programs like JEEP that aim to foster both competence and confidence in English communication. Its findings suggest that language learning is most effective when students are consistently exposed to authentic, interactive speaking tasks that mirror real-life situations. This practice not only enhances fluency but also reduces fear and anxiety associated with speaking a second language. Educators and curriculum designers are thus encouraged to create supportive environments where mistakes are normalized as part of the learning journey and where feedback is constructive and continuous. Incorporating diverse communicative tasks, such as public speaking, peer discussions, and casual conversations, can empower students to take linguistic risks and engage more confidently in English. Ultimately, this approach promotes not just language proficiency, but also the personal growth of learners as confident, resilient communicators in both academic and everyday contexts.

3.4. Enhanced English Language Competence Through Structured and Interactive Learning

This theme encapsulates how the JEEP program effectively strengthens students' linguistic abilities by combining consistent practice, digital tools, and interactive speaking and listening activities. Participants reported significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition and sentence fluency, noting that exposure to new words and focused exercises helped them communicate more clearly and confidently. Additionally, the program's emphasis on pronunciation, grammar, and listening comprehension enabled learners to correct errors, organize their thoughts coherently, and

understand spoken English more effectively. The use of technology, such as the Neo app and JEEP lab activities, provided personalized, repetitive practice that addressed individual weaknesses, further enhancing fluency and accuracy. Overall, this theme highlights the comprehensive and systematic approach of the JEEP program in developing core language skills, enabling students to become more proficient and natural English speakers.

Vocabulary Expansion and Sentence Fluency. The JEEP program significantly contributed to students' vocabulary expansion and enhanced sentence fluency, enabling them to communicate more clearly and effectively. Participant 2 indicated that the program not only broadened their vocabulary but also improved their pronunciation, making their speech sound more natural. Participant 7 attributed their progress to consistent effort and practice during both class and free time, noting a marked improvement in communication skills, particularly vocabulary.

These are the answers of the participants:

"Before, my vocabulary was limited and even my pronunciation was not that good. Although I believe it was already good, it still needed a bit of improvement, but with the help of the JEEP program, I was able to learn a new set of words, which basically improved my vocabulary, and my pronunciation also improved—it sounds more natural now." (P2)

"I overcame that by being diligent in most ways, like answering or doing the activities at home and also during free time. I can compare my communication skills before and now, and they have significantly improved, especially my vocabulary." (P7)

Participant 8 emphasized that the program helped refine their word choice, allowing them to construct clearer and more concise sentences without relying on lengthy expressions. Participant 13 described a comprehensive development in vocabulary, pronunciation, and logical organization of thoughts, which now enables them to confidently speak on a topic for an extended period with minimal preparation. Collectively, these responses reflect the program's success in fostering both lexical growth and fluency, essential components of effective English communication.

These are the answers of the participants:

"The JEEP program has helped me a lot because it helped me with fixing my choice of words, and now my sentences are clearer. I don't need to use longer statements anymore because I know how to shorten them, thanks to JEEP." (P8)

"I developed a very broad vocabulary and clear pronunciation. I've also improved the way I organize my thoughts and how I present them logically. For instance, I am now able to quite effectively speak for five minutes on a given topic with very little preparation." (P13)

The JEEP program has demonstrably enhanced students' vocabulary and sentence fluency, as evidenced by their improved ability to communicate with clarity and precision. Multimodal teaching approaches, incorporating audiovisual media and gestures, can significantly improve EFL learners' pronunciation, making their speech more natural and comprehensible (Panyathikul et al., 2024). Consistent vocabulary instruction within meaningful contexts significantly enhances pronunciation and fluency among EFL learners (Mingyan et al., 2025).

Frequent engagement in vocabulary exercises—both in and outside the classroom—contributes to long-term lexical retention and improved language production (Zeng et al., 2025). Organizing speaking tasks with minimal preparation—such as impromptu speeches or peer interviews—can significantly improve fluency and vocabulary retrieval under pressure (Ghasemi & Mozaheb, 2021). Collectively, these insights confirm the effectiveness of the JEEP program in developing vocabulary and fluency, both of which are foundational to proficient English communication.

Pronunciation, Grammar, and Listening Comprehension Development. The JEEP program significantly enhanced students' pronunciation, grammar, and listening comprehension skills, contributing to more natural and confident English communication. Participant 5 stresses that the NEO study component taught correct pronunciation and proper grammar, which directly improved their speaking abilities. Participant 6 noted that activities focused on sentence construction helped refine their communication skills. Participant 3 observed improvements in understanding spoken English, especially in videos and lectures, alongside better pronunciation awareness and the ability to organize thoughts before speaking.

These were the answers in the interview that support these statements:

"In our EP1S, we also had the NEO study, and in that study, we were taught how to pronounce words correctly and also taught proper English grammar, which helped improve my English speaking skills." (P5)

"I think my English communication skills improved a little bit after doing the NEO activity in our EP1S class because it taught us sentence construction and the like." (P6)

"The noticeable improvement I have observed is that I can now easily understand English conversations, especially in videos and also in lectures. And also, it is clear, like I can assess the clear pronunciation if I have pronounced words clearly or not. And also, now I know how to organize thoughts before I can speak them to others." (P3)

Participant 11 shared that the JEEP lab and Neo app helped overcome stuttering, pronunciation difficulties, and limited vocabulary, which previously caused fear of public speaking. Participant 4 emphasized that the program not only boosted their confidence in speaking but also enhanced their reading comprehension, particularly in English subjects. Together, these responses demonstrate how the structured, technology-supported learning environment of JEEP fosters comprehensive language development, enabling students to communicate more fluently and confidently. These were the answers in the interview that support these statements:

"The JEEP lab and the Neo app really helped improve my fluency in speaking English. Before, I would stutter a little, couldn't pronounce well, and had limited vocabulary, which made me afraid to speak in public." (P11)

After taking the JEEP program, my English language skills have improved, and it has helped me to be more confident in speaking the English language. Also, it allows me to have better reading comprehension, especially when it comes to English subjects like the JEEP course. (P4)

The JEEP program has significantly enhanced students' pronunciation, grammar, and listening comprehension skills, leading to more natural and confident English communication. AI-driven speech recognition technologies can enhance listening comprehension and reduce anxiety among EFL learners (Xiao, 2025). These observations align with research indicating that mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) tools effectively improve grammar skills among EFL learners by providing interactive and personalized learning experiences (Muslimah et al., 2025).

Multimodal teaching methods, incorporating audiovisual media and hand gestures, significantly improved EFL learners' pronunciation skills (Panyathikul et al., 2024). Furthermore, the integration of technology in language learning environments has been shown to create engaging and effective platforms for developing listening and speaking skills (Saeed & Rao, 2013). Collectively, these insights underscore the effectiveness of structured, technology-supported programs like JEEP in fostering comprehensive language development.

Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the importance of social interaction and guided learning in cognitive development, which is reflected in the JEEP program's interactive and collaborative approach. The use of technology, peer activities, and structured practice embodies the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learners progress with the support of tools and more knowledgeable peers or instructors. At the same time, Hymes' (1972) theory of Communicative Competence highlights not just grammatical accuracy but also the ability to use language appropriately in social contexts. The JEEP program directly supports this framework by integrating vocabulary expansion, grammar, pronunciation, and listening comprehension into real-life communicative tasks, such as presentations, conversations, and impromptu speaking. This dual-theoretical foundation affirms the program's effectiveness in enhancing students' linguistic abilities in both form and function, enabling them to become competent and confident English users.

This implies that a well-designed, technology-supported language program like JEEP can significantly improve students' English proficiency by addressing key areas such as vocabulary, sentence fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and listening comprehension. Consistent exposure to interactive activities, digital tools like the Neo Study app, and authentic speaking opportunities empowers learners to take ownership of their progress. Students gained not only lexical and syntactic knowledge but also the confidence to communicate clearly and fluently in academic and social contexts. This suggests that language instruction should move beyond rote memorization and isolated grammar drills, emphasizing instead a comprehensive, communicative, and learner-centered approach. Such programs can serve as models for future curriculum designs aimed at developing holistic language competence among ESL and EFL learners.

3.5. Strengthening Resource Accessibility and Learning Conditions through Teacher Guidance

This theme encapsulates the pivotal role teachers play in bridging gaps that hinder students' effective participation in the JEEP program. Teachers not only assist students in overcoming technological barriers—such as limited device

availability and unreliable internet access—by advocating for institutional support and providing practical alternatives, but they also create a conducive and supportive learning environment that fosters confidence and active engagement. By establishing structured routines and encouraging a safe space where mistakes are accepted, teachers help reduce learners' anxiety and promote consistent language practice. Furthermore, teachers supplement app-based learning with localized, relevant, and accessible materials tailored to students' individual needs, ensuring that those with limited digital access can still engage meaningfully with the content. Collectively, this theme highlights how teacher intervention is essential in enhancing both the accessibility of learning resources and the overall conditions that support student success in language acquisition.

Ensuring Equitable Access to Learning Tools and Platforms. Teachers play a critical role in ensuring equitable access to learning tools and platforms by helping students navigate challenges related to device availability and internet connectivity. Participant 1 pointed out that many students lack personal laptops and face slow internet connections, suggesting that provisions like lending gadgets or reserved school laptops would greatly assist learners. Participant 2 pointed out that the difficulty of balancing work and study, expressing that having offline access to JEEP materials would provide much-needed flexibility. Participant 4 described struggles with poor internet that hinder completing online tasks and suggested that teachers guide students on maximizing school resources or offer alternative solutions. Collectively, these responses underscore the importance of teacher support in bridging digital divides by advocating for institutional resources and providing practical guidance to help students overcome technological barriers.

These are the answers of the participants:

"Not all students have access to a personal laptop. I also struggle with a slow internet connection. So, it would really help if there are provisions like lending of gadgets or reserved laptops in school that students can borrow." (P1)

"As a working student, it's hard to focus. Having access to the JEEP materials anytime, even offline, would help a lot." (P2)

"I have poor internet and can't always complete the tasks online. Maybe teachers can also guide us on how to maximize school resources or give some alternatives." (P4)

Ensuring equitable access to learning tools and platforms is essential for fostering inclusive education, particularly in programs like JEEP that rely on digital resources. Participants' experiences underscore the challenges faced due to limited access to personal devices and unreliable internet connectivity. The digital divide remains a significant barrier to equitable online education, with disparities in access to technology and the internet affecting students' learning opportunities (Taqa, 2025). In the context of education, this divide creates significant disparities in students' ability to access educational resources, participate in online learning, and develop digital literacy skills essential for success in the modern world (Johnny & Martin, 2025).

Promoting digital inclusion involves designing inclusive learning experiences, providing accessible content, and enhancing digital literacy (Ahuja, 2023). Open Educational Resources (OER) are a groundbreaking approach to address inequities in education by providing freely accessible and openly licensed learning materials. (Kenchakkanavar et al., 2024). By adopting such inclusive strategies, educational programs can ensure that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have the opportunity to succeed in a digitally-driven learning environment.

Providing a Conducive and Supportive Learning Environment. The importance of a supportive and well-structured learning environment in fostering students' confidence and engagement in English language practice. Participant 8 emphasized the need for a comfortable physical space with stable internet access, such as a well-equipped lab, to facilitate uninterrupted learning. Participant 9 pointed out that teacher encouragement and creating a classroom culture where making mistakes is accepted are crucial for building students' confidence in speaking. Participant 10 underscored that a safe, non-judgmental environment allows learners to participate without fear, with teachers playing a key role in establishing this positive atmosphere. Together, these responses illustrate how both the physical setting and emotional climate shaped by teachers significantly influence students' willingness to practice and improve their language skills.

These are the answers of the participants:

"Maybe make the classroom more comfortable or allow us to use the lab where internet is stable." (P8)

"If the teacher encourages us to practice and creates a classroom where it's okay to make mistakes, it helps us become more confident in speaking." (P9)

"Having a safe environment for learning means that even if we're not fluent, we don't get judged. The teacher helps in creating that kind of setting." (10)

Providing a conducive and supportive learning environment is pivotal in enhancing students' confidence and engagement in English language learning. The physical, social, and cultural aspects of the learning environment significantly impact English language acquisition (Zhang, 2023). Perceived teacher support is the most influential factor for deep cognitive and emotional engagement, emphasizing the role of teachers in promoting a favorable classroom climate (Ye, 2024).

Creating a supportive and non-judgmental classroom environment is essential for reducing speaking anxiety and encouraging student participation (Zahari & Achmad, 2025). Additionally, incorporating peer support mechanisms can mitigate anxiety, enhance achievement, and cultivate growth mindsets among language learners (Namaziandost, 2024). Collectively, these insights illustrate that both the physical setting and the emotional climate shaped by teachers significantly influence students' willingness to practice and improve their language skills.

Facilitating Access to Supplementary and Contextualized Learning Materials. Teachers play a crucial role in supplementing digital learning platforms with localized, accessible, and tailored materials to support diverse student needs, particularly those facing limited internet access or language barriers. Participant 3 suggested that providing printed modules or handouts can help students who struggle with weak internet connections, ensuring they still have access to essential content. Participant 5 emphasized the challenge of understanding certain parts of the Neo app and recommended that teachers prepare simplified lessons or translations in the local language to make learning more comprehensible. Participant 6 proposed that sharing links to short videos or podcasts could serve as adequate supplementary resources to reinforce topics and cater to different learning preferences. Collectively, these responses illustrate the importance of teacher intervention in creating inclusive and contextually relevant learning materials that complement technology-based instruction.

These are the answers of the participants:

"Teachers may provide copies of modules or printouts if the internet is weak." (P3)

"Some parts of the NEO are hard to understand. Maybe teachers can prepare a simplified version of the lesson or a translation in local language." (P5)

"Even giving links to short videos or podcasts can help reinforce the topic." (P6)

Simplifying lesson content and incorporating translations in the local language can significantly enhance comprehension for learners struggling with complex materials. Employing translation strategies serves as a semantic bridge, facilitating better understanding and retention of information among EFL learners (Jupri et al., 2024). Podcasts can effectively scaffold language-learning experiences, aiding in the development of listening skills and overall language proficiency (Panagiotidis, 2021).

Facilitating access to supplementary and contextualized learning materials is essential in addressing the diverse needs of students, particularly those facing challenges such as limited internet connectivity or language barriers. Printed modules or handouts can serve as a reliable alternative for students with unstable internet access, ensuring continuity in their learning process. Printed modules offer a dependable means to bridge educational gaps caused by technological limitations, maintaining academic rigor and allowing students to engage with course content at their own pace (Choyccawen et al., 2024). These approaches underscore the importance of teacher intervention in creating inclusive and contextually relevant learning materials that complement technology-based instruction, thereby fostering an equitable educational environment for all students.

Vygotsky emphasizes that learning is inherently social and is most effective when learners are supported within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) by more knowledgeable others—such as teachers—who scaffold learning through tailored assistance, accessible resources, and a supportive environment. This is evident in how teachers in the JEEP program bridge digital divides, facilitate contextualized materials, and foster safe, inclusive classrooms. Similarly, Hymes' theory stresses that actual communicative competence involves not just grammatical knowledge, but also the ability to use language effectively in real-world contexts. This is reflected in the teachers' role in creating practice-oriented, low-anxiety environments that encourage authentic language use and confidence-building among students. Together, these theories reinforce the study's findings that teacher intervention is not merely supportive but

foundational in enabling equitable access and nurturing the communicative abilities of learners within diverse, often digitally challenged educational settings.

Educators play a crucial role in promoting equity and inclusivity within language learning programs like JEEP. Teachers are not only facilitators of knowledge but also critical agents in mitigating systemic barriers—such as limited access to technology, weak internet connectivity, and language comprehension challenges—that hinder student participation and performance. Their proactive involvement in providing alternative learning tools, fostering a safe and encouraging classroom environment, and contextualizing instructional materials ensures that no learner is left behind. This underscores the need for institutional policies and professional development programs that empower teachers to adapt their instructional approaches, advocate for necessary resources, and implement inclusive strategies that support diverse learners. Ultimately, the theme reinforces that meaningful educational progress, particularly in communicative competence, is deeply tied to how effectively teachers respond to students' unique challenges and learning contexts.

3.6. Fostering Teacher Engagement with Active Facilitation and Individualized Support

This theme encapsulates the vital role teachers play in enriching the JEEP program beyond app-based learning by actively facilitating interactive and authentic language activities, providing timely and constructive feedback, and offering personalized academic support tailored to individual student needs. Students expressed the value of dynamic classroom tasks such as games, role-plays, and real-life scenarios that promote practical language use and make learning more engaging. They also stressed the importance of consistent teacher feedback and motivation in sustaining their interest, improving performance, and fostering accountability and confidence. Furthermore, teachers are viewed as essential academic coaches who can address diverse learning challenges through one-on-one or small-group sessions, especially for students facing slower progress or difficulties with grammar and vocabulary, and by encouraging real-world application of language skills through communication with native speakers. Together, these aspects underscore how active teacher involvement and personalized guidance are crucial for maximizing student engagement, learning outcomes, and language proficiency development within the JEEP program.

Teachers as Active Facilitators of Learning Activities. Students desire teachers to facilitate engaging and interactive learning activities that complement app-based instruction, making language practice more dynamic and contextually meaningful. Participant 11 suggested incorporating brief performance-based group activities, such as games or imitation exercises, before using the Neo app to better prepare and focus students on the tasks ahead. Participant 10 recommended increasing interactive speaking opportunities and inviting guest speakers to motivate and inspire learners, thereby enriching their exposure to authentic language use. Participant 15 expressed interest in more enjoyable and practical activities, such as games, real-life scenarios, and role-playing, to strengthen speaking, listening, and vocabulary skills in an engaging way. Collectively, these responses emphasize that students value teacher-led, interactive experiences that foster active participation and deepen their communicative competence beyond digital platforms.

These were the answers in the interview that support these statements:

"Additional resources or teaching strategies I suggest would be not just using the Neo app but perhaps having the teacher give us a little time before we use it, maybe 10 minutes, for a performance-based activity. For example, in groups, we could play games or try to guess answers based on what the teacher says, or maybe imitate what the teacher says. This would help focus on the Neo app." (P11)

"Maybe they can add more interactive speaking sessions or invite guest speakers to inspire us." (P10)

"For me, maybe more fun games, real-life scenarios, or role playing so that we can really enhance our speaking, listening, and vocabulary skills." (P15)

Educators play a pivotal role in enhancing language acquisition by integrating interactive and engaging strategies alongside digital tools. Active teacher involvement is crucial in creating a rich language-learning environment through daily activities, which in turn fosters language development and positive learning experiences (Purwanti, 2024). Teacher support significantly impacts language progress, academic resilience, and enjoyment, highlighting the importance of educators in facilitating engaging learning experiences (Huang et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the integration of guest speakers and interactive speaking sessions can expose learners to authentic language use, thereby enriching their communicative experiences. Moreover, the incorporation of gamified elements and technology-enhanced activities, such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), can further motivate

students and cater to diverse learning preferences. (Pérez-Jorge et al., 2025) Ultimately, active teacher facilitation transforms language classrooms into participatory, student-centered spaces where communicative competence can thrive.

Teachers as Providers of Timely Feedback and Motivation. The importance of teachers providing timely feedback and motivational support to sustain students' engagement and enhance their performance in the JEEP program. Participant 2 posited that increased monitoring and encouragement from teachers could address issues of low motivation, helping students develop patience, improve time management, and ultimately complete the program successfully. Participant 9 emphasized the value of teachers actively seeking feedback from students, which can foster a more responsive and supportive learning environment. Participant 13 pointed out that engaging with both instructors and classmates through feedback and shared insights offers a significant advantage in learning, promoting collaboration and deeper understanding. Together, these responses illustrate how consistent teacher feedback and motivation are essential for maintaining student accountability, boosting confidence, and facilitating meaningful progress in language learning. These were the answers in the interview that support these statements:

"A bit more monitoring and feedback, I guess, could help, and also another would be motivation because one of the problems, I guess, that I encountered in the JEEP program was, you know, lack of motivation. So maybe by adding that, the students will be able to have more patience and even manage their time better, and they would be able to finish the program on time and actually learn.." (P2)

"So, don't be afraid to make mistakes, practice, use English every day, join all activities, ask for feedback, and don't be shy to speak."(P9)

"You also want to engage with your classmates and instructor as their feedbacks and insight will give you an advantage." (P13)

Educators play a pivotal role in sustaining student engagement and enhancing performance, particularly within digital and blended learning environments like the JEEP program. Participant insights highlight the necessity of consistent monitoring and timely feedback to aid learners in managing tasks effectively and providing the emotional encouragement needed to navigate challenges. Immediate and delayed feedback significantly enhance motivation and language learning outcomes compared to the absence of feedback (Qun, 2025). Timely, personalized, and multimodal feedback in online education has been shown to significantly improve student outcomes by satisfying psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Wang, 2025). Students who perceive higher levels of teacher feedback report less difficulty in online learning environments (Flores et al., 2024).

Teacher facilitative feedback practices are associated with increased student motivation and engagement in language learning contexts (Gan et al., 2021). Engaging students in feedback loops promotes reflective thinking and a growth mindset, enabling them to better understand their progress and challenges. Thus, the teacher's role in providing timely, constructive feedback and motivation is essential not only for academic progress but also for sustaining emotional engagement and promoting a positive, collaborative learning environment.

Teachers as Academic Coaches for Personalized Learning. The critical role of teachers is as academic coaches who provide personalized support tailored to the diverse needs of students, especially those facing challenges such as unstable internet access, slower learning pace, or difficulties with grammar and vocabulary. Participant 12 expressed the need for one-on-one sessions to supplement online learning, ensuring that students who struggle or have limited connectivity receive targeted assistance to improve their language skills. Participant 7 suggested that additional resources should include a variety of activities that address different levels of difficulty and cater to students' interests, helping to scaffold vocabulary development and comprehension more effectively. Participant 6 recommended incorporating opportunities for students to interact with native speakers, enabling them to apply what they learn in the Neo app to authentic, real-life communication. Collectively, these responses emphasize the importance of individualized instruction and practical language use facilitated by teachers to enhance learning outcomes and student engagement.

These are the answers of the participants:

"I wish it were not just available online since some students don't have a stable internet connection, but maybe try one-on-one sessions with a teacher, especially for students who are slow in learning or enhancing their vocabulary and grammar skills." (P12)

"I think additional resources that may be useful in the JEEP program would be adding more activities that require comprehension and also cater to what the students or learners want to learn. There are many activities that are difficult in different ways, so I think additional resources should include some easier activities and also improvements to help students enhance their vocabulary development." (P7)

"It would be great if there was a feature where students could communicate with native speakers so that they could utilize what they learned in NEO and use this knowledge in real-life settings." (P6)

Teachers serving as academic coaches play a pivotal role in delivering personalized support to students facing challenges such as unstable internet access, varying learning paces, and difficulties with grammar and vocabulary. The need for one-on-one sessions to supplement online learning is crucial, as it ensures that students who struggle or have limited connectivity receive targeted assistance to improve their language skills. Personalized learning accommodates both fast and slow learners, increasing students' responsibility and engagement in the learning process. (Herawati, 2023)

Incorporating AI tools into personalized learning strategies can further support teachers in their coaching roles. AI-enabled intelligent assistants, for instance, can provide personalized learning support tailored to individual needs and learning styles, facilitating knowledge assessment and reducing cognitive load on learners (Sajja et al., 2023). These tools can generate quizzes, flashcards, and offer personalized learning pathways, enhancing student learning outcomes and engagement. Leveraging AI for personalized English language learning allows for tailoring instruction to individual needs, ensuring that the difficulty of the content aligns with a learner's level of proficiency (Akpabio et al., 2025) By integrating one-on-one sessions, varied activities, opportunities for authentic language use, and AI tools, teachers can create a supportive and effective learning environment that enhances student engagement and language proficiency.

Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the role of more knowledgeable others—such as teachers—in scaffolding learning within the learner's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), making teacher-guided activities like role-plays, one-on-one coaching, and performance-based tasks critical in supporting students' progress, especially when using app-based instruction like the Neo app. These interactions help students move from what they can do independently to what they can accomplish with guidance. Similarly, Hymes' Communicative Competence Theory (1972) stresses the need for authentic communication and sociolinguistic awareness in language learning, which is directly supported through real-life scenarios, interaction with native speakers, and collaborative feedback loops. Together, these frameworks highlight that language acquisition is most effective when embedded in socially meaningful contexts facilitated by engaged and responsive educators—precisely the kind of teacher roles that participants in the JEEP program valued and advocated for.

This theme applies to language education programs like JEEP, particularly in the context of blended or app-based learning environments. It highlights the indispensable role of teachers in bridging the gap between digital instruction and meaningful language use by actively guiding learners through interactive, contextual, and student-centered activities. The findings suggest that when teachers provide consistent feedback, motivational support, and tailored instruction—especially for students facing challenges such as low motivation, limited connectivity, or slower learning progress—learners are more likely to stay engaged, develop confidence, and achieve communicative competence. This theme underscores the need for professional development that equips educators with strategies for active facilitation, feedback techniques, and differentiated instruction, ensuring that technological tools like the Neo app are not used in isolation but as part of a holistic, teacher-led learning experience. Ultimately, empowering teachers to act as facilitators, motivators, and academic coaches can lead to more inclusive, effective, and humanized language learning outcomes.

4. Summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations

4.1. Summary

This study explored the experiences of students enrolled in the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program, focusing on how they enhance their English proficiency and communication skills. It aimed to understand the students' lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and strategies in improving their speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities through the two-year JEEP program, which integrates computer-assisted language learning and situational communication practice. Fifteen participants of this study were purposively selected in one of the higher education institutions in Misamis Occidental. The data were gathered using a researcher-made interview guide. Employing a qualitative phenomenological transcendental design, the study analyzed the data using Moustakas' (1994) method to capture the essence of students' experiences in developing workplace communication skills and academic competence through JEEP's structured and technology-enhanced instruction.

4.2. Findings

The following are the findings of the study:

- Students' lived experiences in the JEEP program revealed that interactive and technology-aided activities, such as using DynEd and Neo Study applications, significantly enhanced their English proficiency. These tools provided engaging, self-paced, and adaptive learning environments that improved students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, making language acquisition more effective and enjoyable.
- While students benefited from the structured nature of the JEEP program, they also faced challenges such as initial language anxiety, adapting to new learning technologies, and balancing coursework with other responsibilities. However, the program's design, which included regular feedback and supportive classroom practices, helped students gradually overcome these obstacles.
- The JEEP program contributed significantly to students' confidence and competence in using English, primarily through real-world practice such as mock interviews, group discussions, and role-playing activities. These experiences allowed students to apply their language skills in practical, job-related scenarios, boosting their self-assurance and readiness for professional environments.
- Structured and interactive learning experiences within the JEEP program led to measurable improvements in students' English language competence. Students reported increased fluency, better comprehension, and more accurate use of English in both academic and workplace contexts, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in developing essential language skills.
- Teacher guidance played a crucial role in strengthening resource accessibility and optimizing learning conditions. Teachers provided not only instructional support but also encouragement and personalized feedback, helping students maximize the benefits of the program and navigate learning resources more effectively.
- Active teacher engagement, through facilitation of activities, one-on-one mentoring, and tailored support, was identified as a key factor in students' successful language development and increased communication confidence. Students valued teachers who were approachable, responsive, and invested in their progress, suggesting that ongoing professional development for teachers could further enhance the program's impact.

5. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following are the conclusions:

The integration of interactive and technology-aided English activities, such as the use of DynEd's Neo Study applications, proved highly effective in enhancing students' English proficiency. These tools provided engaging, adaptive, and self-paced learning environments, making language acquisition more accessible and enjoyable for college students.

Despite initial difficulties such as language anxiety and adaptation to new technologies, the structured nature of the JEEP program—characterized by regular feedback and supportive classroom practices—enabled students to navigate and overcome these challenges, resulting in sustained language development.

Exposure to real-world and workplace-oriented activities, including mock interviews and group discussions, substantially increased students' confidence and competence in using English. These practical experiences bridged the gap between academic learning and professional readiness, preparing students for actual job scenarios.

The combination of structured lessons and interactive activities within the JEEP. The program led to measurable improvements in students' English language competence. Students demonstrated greater fluency, comprehension, and accuracy in both academic and workplace contexts, underscoring the effectiveness of the program's instructional approach.

The active involvement and guidance of teachers were instrumental in improving students' access to learning resources and optimizing their learning conditions. Personalized feedback and encouragement from teachers helped students maximize the benefits of the program and address individual learning needs.

Teachers who provided active facilitation, personalized support, and ongoing mentoring played a key role in boosting students' motivation, communication confidence, and overall language development. Continued professional development for teachers is recommended to further strengthen these positive outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following were recommended:

- Curriculum developers and program administrators may continue and expand the integration of interactive, technology-aided learning tools (e.g., DynEd's Neo Study) by updating content regularly and aligning it with current language learning needs and technological advancements.
- The student affairs and academic support units, develop targeted support systems—such as orientations, peer mentoring, counseling, and flexible tutorials—to help students overcome language anxiety and adapt to new learning methods.
- Program coordinators and industry liaison offices, increase real-world language practice through mock interviews, role-plays, and workplace simulations designed in collaboration with industry partners to reflect actual job requirements.
- The faculty and learning resource managers may ensure students have easy access to materials and digital tools and provide personalized feedback while maintaining open communication channels for academic support.
- Teacher education and professional development committees, support continuous teacher training in language pedagogy and technology integration through workshops, peer-sharing sessions, and reflective teaching activities.
- Future research should investigate the long-term effects of the JEEP program on graduates' workplace performance and career progression. Comparative studies with other English proficiency programs could also provide deeper insights into best practices and areas for further innovation.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of ethical approval

The study was reviewed and approved by the Misamis University Research Ethics Committee (MUREC), ensuring adherence to institutional and ethical research standards. All participants were informed about the study's objectives, procedures, and their rights prior to participation. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the research process.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. Participants were fully informed about the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits of the research before taking part. They were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

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Appendix A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL/INTERVIEW-GUIDE QUESTIONS

Introduction

- Introduce self
- Discuss the importance of the study
- Provides informed consent
- Provides structure of the interview (audio recording and note-taking)
- Ask if they have any questions
- Tests audio recording equipment
- Makes participants feel comfortable

Opening Questions

The participants will be asked to provide the following demographic information:

- Age;
- Sex/Gender;
- Program and Year Level;
- Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program;

Core Question

- What are the moments or activities in the JEEP program that significantly improved your English proficiency and communication skills?
- In what ways has the JEEP program helped you feel more confident when using English in academic discussions, presentations, or real-life conversations?
- What challenges did you encounter while participating in the JEEP program?
- How did you overcome them?
- How would you compare your English communication skills before and after enrolling the JEEP program?
- What noticeable improvements have you observed?
- What additional resources, teaching strategies, or program features do you think could further enhance students' learning experiences in the JEEP program?

Closing Question

- Overall, how do you feel about your journey in the JEEP program?
- What advice would you give to future students who will take part in it?

Appendix B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Researcher/Investigator:

Name: Kim D. Bonifacio

Luz May D. Fuerzas

Course: Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English

College: Education

Email / Contact Number: 09619081682

Thesis Title: VOICES OF GROWTH: STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN THE JOB ENABLING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

PART I. INFORMATION SHEET	
Introduction	Good day! I am Analyln S. Clarin, Kim D. Bonifacio/Luz May D. Fuerzas, the principal researcher/investigator of the study entitled "VOICES OF GROWTH: STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN THE JOB ENABLING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PROGRAM" I am a student under the program Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English at Misamis University in Ozamiz City. I am to conduct the research with _____ as participant. In this vein, I am respectfully seeking your voluntary participation, being qualified to give your informed consent to take part in this study. Before you decide whether to participate or not in this study, please read the succeeding information about the study and feel free to ask questions anytime should there be anything you do not understand or want to clarify. If you agree to answer the interview, you will be asked to affix your name and signature on this form for which you will be given a copy.
Purpose	The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of students who have enrolled in the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program and examine how it contributes to their language development. This research aims to understand the extent to which the program enhances students' English proficiency, boosts their confidence in communication, and prepares them for academic and real-world interactions. Through this investigation, the study hopes to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the JEEP program and offer recommendations for its continuous improvement in fostering students' English communication skills.
Type of Research Intervention	This study will be conducted through interviews. The gathering of data will be conducted in person.
Selection of Participants	The inclusion criteria for participants included the following: previously enrolled in JEEP Start program and willing to take part of the study have firsthand experience with its curriculum and activities.
Voluntary Participation	Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to take part or withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. There is no risk, penalty, or loss of benefits for choosing not to participate. All information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes. By agreeing to participate, individuals acknowledge their willingness to share their experiences with the JEEP program and contribute valuable insights to the research.
Procedure	The participants will be given ample time when to undertake the interview. The interviews will be undertaken once or several times when necessary. The researcher will transcribe the interviews to be used for the analysis of the data. The information and data provided by you as a participant will be utilized for this study alone and will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.
Duration	The gathering of data through the interview will last for 45 minutes to 1 hour.
Risks and Discomforts	Risks to the respondents' physical, social, or financial well-being will be avoided. You can refuse to answer any or all of the survey's questions if they are too personal or uncomfortable for you, and you can stop participating whenever you'd like.
Benefits	This study will enable you to gaining self-awareness and reflection on their language learning journey, helping you recognize their progress in English proficiency and communication skills.
Reimbursement	There will be no monetary expenses or costs on your part as a respondent, nor any monetary compensation for your participation in this study.
Confidentiality of Data	The information and participant replies will only be accessible to the researcher. Participants' personally identifiable information will be kept completely secret and utilized exclusively for study analysis. All data will be stored in a closed, secure filing cabinet during the study and will be deleted six months after the findings are made public.
Sharing of Findings	The findings of this investigation will be showcased during the researcher's final defense of their thesis or dissertation. Additionally, the research findings can be disseminated through conferences and publications with the guarantee that respondent identities would be kept private. Participants will receive a printed copy of the finished study.

Rights to Refuse or Withdraw	At any point during the study, you are free to stop taking part and don't have to explain why. If you decide to stop participating, you won't be penalized.
Who to Contact	<p>Should there be any queries as a parent, you can contact the researcher through the following details:</p> <p>Name of the Researchers: Kim D. Bonifacio & Luz May D. Fuerzas Cellphone Number/s: 09619081682 e-mail ad: kimbonifacio123@gmail.com</p> <p>STATEMENT BY THE RESEARCHER</p> <p>I will read the Information sheet to the potential participant. With the best of my ability, I make sure that the participant will understand the interview questions and that possible follow-up interviews may be undertaken.</p> <p>I can assure that the participant will be given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions raised will be answered fully. I can likewise assure that the participant will not be coerced into giving consent that must be free and voluntary.</p> <p>A copy of this Informed Consent Form will be provided to the participant.</p> <p>Print Name of Researcher: Kim D. Bonifacio, Luz May D. Fuerzas</p>

<p>PART II. CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT</p>
<p>This research entitled "Voices of Growth: Students' Experiences in the Job Enabling English Proficiency Program by Kim D. Bonifacio and Luz May D. Fuerzas with the aim of gathering information and data pertaining to the experiences of students who have enrolled in the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program and examine how it contributes to their language development, has been presented and explained to me clearly. Since the study involves Students who were enrolled to the JEEP program, I am chosen as one of the participants. determine the experiences of students who have enrolled in the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) program.</p> <p>I have read the foregoing Informed Consent Form, or it has been read to me. I had the opportunity to ask questions, which were subsequently answered fully. I consent voluntarily to be a participant of this study.</p> <p>Print Name of Participant: _____</p> <p>Signature of Participant: _____</p> <p>Date:[MM/DD/YYYY]_____</p>

Appendix C

TRANSCRIPTIONS

- PARTICIPANT 1

Age: 21
 Sex/Gender: Female
 Program and Year Level: BEd Major in English- 3
 Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2024-2025

So the moments and the activities in the program that significantly improved my English proficiency and communication skills are participation in some communication drills or exercises that improved my accent and also my communication in talking to other people. Because of that, it boosted my understanding of other people and also improved my communication effectiveness. The JEEP program helped me feel more confident and helped me boost my confidence by helping me improve my communication skills with other people and also understand the information that was conveyed by our teacher or the JEEP program, so that it helped my understanding of some activities or some drills or exercises that the JEEP program gave to us. The challenge that I encountered is balancing academics and activities, because if the schedule is in conflict and then there are some activities that you need to do, like lesson planning, I struggle on how to cope with this challenge since I need to do all of it. I made strategies like making time for the lesson plan and also making time for the other activities, so that I can proceed to another activity as well. I think my English communication skills improved but not in a way that they improved so much, but because of the JEEP Lab, I was able to understand some words that I wasn't familiar with before after enrolling in the JEEP program. The noticeable improvement that I observed is how I gather the exact information or exact words, pronunciation, or how I can already say the words or use them in a sentence. I think the additional resources or teaching strategies that can help the program enhance the students' learning experience could be offering some personal learning plans that can cater to different capabilities of the students in order for them to not just stick to one learning skill, but also cater to all the learning skills of the students. My journey in the JEEP program made me have a great sense of accomplishment because of the JEEP program; it helped my communication become wider and also helped my accent or pronunciation, making me clear and understood by other people. My advice to the future students who will take part in it is, if you enroll in the JEEP program, you must enjoy the activities or enjoy yourself in learning new languages in order for you to be able to use that language in the near future if you want to go abroad, so you can use it to understand each other more.

- PARTICIPANT 2

Age: 21

Sex/Gender: Male

Program and Year Level: BSEd Major in English- 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2024

The moments, I guess, it was during the hearing part, the listening part of the program, where it enabled me to improve my pronunciation skills, and with that, I was able to convey my information or convey ideas clearly. The JEEP program has enabled me to simulate real-life situations, I guess, and with that, I was able to understand how to apply English in real-life situations, and I was able to use English in a way that feels natural and not forced. While participating in the JEEP program, one particular challenge that I encountered was time management. I struggled a lot with time management because, you know, it's time-consuming, and unlike other activities that only require a little time, the JEEP program particularly takes a lot of time and it takes a lot of patience. I overcame that by being patient and by finding ways to manage my time effectively. Before, my vocabulary was limited and even my pronunciation was not that good. Although I believe it was already good, it still needed a bit of improvement, but with the help of the JEEP program, I was able to learn a new set of words, which basically improved my vocabulary, and my pronunciation also improved—it sounds more natural now. The noticeable improvements that I have observed are that I have improved in my speaking skills, like I am able to convey information and ideas better than before, and it feels natural. A bit more monitoring and feedback, I guess, could help, and also another would be motivation because one of the problems, I guess, that I encountered in the JEEP program was, you know, lack of motivation. So maybe by adding that, the students will be able to have more patience and even manage their time better, and they would be able to finish the program on time and actually learn. I'd say it was challenging but also fulfilling—challenging because there were times that I struggled, particularly with time management, but it was fun and I felt fulfilled because, yeah, it improved my communication skills, my English communication skills, and it even improved my academic performance. My advice to them is do not procrastinate because that was my issue when taking the program. And so yeah, try to manage your time better and motivate yourself to finish the program.

- PARTICIPANT 3

Age: 23

Sex/Gender: Female

Program and Year Level: BEED 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2023-2024

I think the very activity that helped me the most is those extension activities wherein we write journals and poems and others, and it helped me in my daily conversations and also to be more interactive in the class. So it was fun and at the same time, you learn. And also, you can practice your speaking skills and you can also assess yourself without pressure. Because of the JEEP's regular speaking tasks, I am used to communicating using English with others. And also, even if I commit mistakes usually in grammar, I am not shy because I know that I can improve as time goes by, and the more I practice, the more I will improve my speaking skills. Sometimes I experience pressure, especially when reporting in front, and then I feel like I am afraid to talk using English in front of other people. I also have a challenge in maintaining the momentum in class, especially when I am tired. I overcome those challenges by gradually building confidence by practicing at home, and I also write journals, just like what I have said a while ago that this JEEP has its extension activities like writing journals and poems. Sometimes I also practice while I am facing the mirror. And also, I think the most important thing that helped me overcome those challenges is to have a positive mindset. Before, I only had limited vocabulary, like I only knew some words, and I also tended to mispronounce words. However, now I believe that I know some other words now, like some new words, and also I know how to pronounce those words correctly. The noticeable improvement I have observed is that I can now easily understand English conversations, especially in videos and also in lectures. And also, it is clear, like I can assess the clear pronunciation if I have pronounced words clearly or not. And also, now I know how to organize thoughts before I can speak them to others. I think the JEEP program should add other speaking tasks like mock interviews or storytelling. And also, I like it more audio-visual, like they use audio-visual materials for visual learners like me. The JEEP program is very memorable. There are a lot of first times that I encountered. Also, it is my first time speaking in front of a computer, and then my English speaking, I think, has improved. The advice that I can give to future JEEP students is to take it seriously but enjoy the process. Do not be afraid to participate since the more you practice, the more you improve, and also enjoy and value the time that you are still enrolled in that course since it will help you in the future.

- PARTICIPANT 4

Age: 21

Sex/Gender: Male

Program and Year Level: BSEd Science- 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2023-2024

One of the programs of the subject that improved my communication skills and proficiency is that they have differentiated activities that help you enhance your comprehension skills and how you understand a certain situation, and also it improved how you speak or how you say or how you pronounce the words, especially in the English language. It helps me become more confident, especially when the subject includes strengthening your language skills or your English language skills, so that you could be able to pronounce words more correctly. And also, using the proper grammar in speaking is part of some activities of the subject that would help you use it in real-life scenarios. Some of the challenges and problems that I encountered in the subject are that there are times when the audio requires a very high-end recording microphone so that the system or the app could hear you because they have difficulty in taking small or low voices. Also, if you cannot pronounce it correctly, then they would consider it wrong, so that's the problem or challenge that I have encountered. I overcame them by just going to a quiet environment or an environment where there is less noise so that the system or the microphone could hear you more clearly, and also you could pronounce it more clearly so that it would be recorded as correct. I can say that after taking the JEEP program, my English language skills have improved, and it helps me to be more confident in speaking in the English language. Also, it allows me to have better reading comprehension, especially when it comes to English subjects like the JEEP course. Some noticeable improvements that I have observed are how I pronounce words, and there are also some words that I can now recognize or that improved my vocabulary, especially on words that I did not understand or had not encountered before. So probably, it should have a test regularly, not just when you finish the whole C-1 course, so that even though there's an assessment where the subject or the app allows you to repeat it many times, it makes the subject more boring in that part. That's why it needs to be more specific, and also there should be more activities that would enhance the students'

understanding. Overall, it's quite tiring, especially when you have a very slow connection, and it is also fun, especially when the part or the topic of the course is what you're interested in. So my advice is that they should have more patience, and also they should take it seriously, especially if they have a very big vacant time, so they should do it so that they would be able to complete the course and they would be able to have a good grade on it.

- PARTICIPANT 5

Age: 23

Sex/Gender: Male

Program and Year Level: BS Criminology- 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2024

The activity that improved my English speaking skills was the NEO study. In our program, it was called EP1A, and that was the one that improved my English vocabulary. In our EP1S, we also had the NEO study, and in that study, we were taught how to pronounce words correctly and also taught proper English grammar, which helped improve my English speaking skills. The challenges I encountered in EP1S were during the repetition of the words spoken by the computer. In the NEO study, there was an activity where you had to repeat what the AI said, but the microphone was broken, so I kept repeating what the AI said over and over again. I overcame that by finding a way to speak the word clearly into the microphone that needed to be repeated from the AI. Before I enrolled in the JEEP program, my English speaking skills had wrong grammar, but when I took the JEEP program, it really improved. I now know the proper English grammar. Back then, during oral recitation, I would speak in Bisaya in class, but now, after taking the JEEP program, I already know how to speak in English and answer in English. So what I do now is read books, like English storybooks. That really helped improve my English speaking skills. What I really felt was that it was challenging but fun. So my advice to students who will enroll in this program is to take EP1A and EP1S seriously because they will really help you in your studies, especially during oral recitation, and since in Criminology, we are really encouraged to speak in English.

- PARTICIPANT 6

Age: 22

Sex/Gender: Male

Program and Year Level: BSEd Social Studies- 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2024

One activity that helped me is actually a class. It's in the EP1S class. During our EP1S class, there were activities given to us with the help of NEO, in which we needed to repeat or remember certain ideas from the app and then repeat them. I think that can help students improve their English skills. As I mentioned earlier in our EP1S class, there were some challenges. I had a hard time accomplishing the activities in NEO because, first, I don't have a phone, so I can only access NEO in the JEEP lab or on my laptop. Next is the internet access since my laptop cannot use a data connection, so I can only use NEO in places with an internet connection. And the third one is that I have a terrible memory, like a goldfish, so I had trouble repeating the sentences in NEO or remembering them. I overcame these problems by maximizing the available resources and focusing on the main ideas of the topic in NEO so that despite my poor memory and forgetfulness, I could still grasp the main points. I think my English communication skills improved a little bit after doing the NEO activity in our EP1S class because it taught us sentence construction and the like. I think my pronunciation and sentence construction have gotten better. It would be great if there was a feature where students could communicate with native speakers so that they could utilize what they learned in NEO and use this knowledge in real-life settings. I feel delighted because I was able to partake in the JEEP program. Just enjoy while learning. That's all.

- PARTICIPANT 7

Age: 21

Sex/Gender: Male

Program and Year Level: BSEd English- 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2024

Well, for me, there are various activities in EP1S that significantly improved my English, such as pronunciation, grammar development, and the activity where we copy sentences that are delivered in the EP1S activities. The JEEP program has improved my confidence in delivering oral communications and also answering questions using the grammar or

vocabulary I developed through the program. The vocabulary development from the JEEP program has been given through activities. The challenges I encountered were having a higher rank, like B+ or B2, which gave me more activities and more time to do them. This was very time-consuming and also very difficult because you had to earn points by completing the activities. I overcame that by being diligent in most ways, like answering or doing the activities at home and also during free time. I can compare my communication skills before and now, and they have significantly improved, especially my vocabulary. Before, I struggled to make sentences or construct sentences, and also to make the words more understandable and clear. Now, it has improved my communication skills with my friends, family, and others. The noticeable improvements I have observed are in my communication skills, vocabulary development, and the structure of my sentences. I think additional resources that may be useful in the JEEP program would be adding more activities that require comprehension and also cater to what the students or learners want to learn. There are many activities that are difficult in different ways, so I think additional resources should include some easier activities and also improvements to help students enhance their vocabulary development. Overall, I feel very optimistic and very satisfied because the JEEP program has made me a different person today, and it has improved my vocabulary, grammar, sentence structures, and my communication skills with my colleagues. My advice is to be diligent, be optimistic, and also be honest in answering your activities, such as the examination tests, because the points may vary in adding or acquiring points in the activities.

- PARTICIPANT 8

Age: 22

Sex/Gender: Male

Program and Year Level: BEd Science- 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2022-2023

I believe that the programs for the activities in the JEEP subject helped me a lot, especially when we were using the software and were tasked to repeat the words until we mastered them. The JEEP program has helped me a lot because it helped me with fixing my choice of words, and now my sentences are clearer. I don't need to use longer statements anymore because I know how to shorten them, thanks to JEEP. The main challenge I encountered in the JEEP program is that the activity repeats itself. Since it just constantly repeats until you master it, it gets boring at times. I motivate myself just by answering it in order to complete the course. So it's more about completing it rather than enjoying it. I have observed, of course, improvements because of the JEEP program. I observed that my vocabulary has increased and the choices of words I use are now more refined. I have also observed that the software or application used was somewhat boring, and I think they can improve that. I hope they do because I believe that learning should be fun and should always retain the attention of the learner. If they find it boring, they will just force themselves to complete it rather than actually learn. Overall, I feel it was effective. I have learned a lot. I believe they should take it seriously because they can use it in the future, especially in professional settings, particularly for education students and others in the field. I believe that English is a universal language, and if you can speak English, most people also speak it, so both parties can communicate effectively.

- PARTICIPANT 9

Age: 21

Sex/Gender: Female

Program and Year Level: BEd Mathematics- 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2024

Speaking activities, like role-playing, debates, or group discussions, really helped with my English skills, such as pronunciation drills, grammar, and fluency. Because of JEEP, I can now usually use English words in everyday conversations, and through speaking activities and academic presentations, I've practiced and gained more confidence in expressing my ideas using English words. Before, I had difficulty understanding some English accents and sometimes lacked vocabulary, which made me nervous to speak in front of the class. Time management was also hard, especially when there were many requirements. I usually practice by listening to English movies, podcasts, and by practicing speaking certain words during presentations and reports. At first, I was afraid to speak in English, but now I usually use and improvise my English proficiency when speaking in front of others. It's better if the pronunciation is clear, with a broad vocabulary, and speaking faster in English. I also learned how to express ideas directly and clearly. It would be better if we had real-life conversations with native speakers, more video-based lessons, online tools, and personalized coaching. I am very thankful because the JEEP program changed my self-confidence and gave me great help in improving my English communication. The journey was enjoyable and fun. So, don't be afraid to make mistakes, practice, use English every day, join all activities, ask for feedback, and don't be shy to speak. Make sure to take every chance to learn.

- PARTICIPANT 10

Age: 25

Sex/Gender: Male

Program and Year Level: BS Hospitality Management- 4

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2022-2023

So, the role-playing activities and speaking drills during class greatly improved my confidence and fluency. The JEEP program made me more comfortable speaking English during reports and even casual conversations. Sometimes, I struggle with grammar and nervousness when speaking in front of others. I practice more at home and ask for help from my classmates and also my teachers, teamwork. Before JEEP, I was shy and unsure how to express my thoughts, but now I can speak more clearly and confidently. I noticed that I now speak with better pronunciation and use more vocabulary. Maybe they can add more interactive speaking sessions or invite guest speakers to inspire us. For me, I feel proud and thankful because I really grew as an English speaker. My advice to them is to be active, don't be shy, and always grab every chance to speak English, even if you think it's just okay.

- PARTICIPANT 11

Age: 20

Sex/Gender: Female

Program and Year Level: BSEd English- 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2024

The moments or activities in the JEEP program that significantly improved my English proficiency and communication skills were during the time when we walked through the JEEP lab. We used our headphones, faced the computer, and that's when the AI or the Neo app would ask us questions based on our level. As far as I remember, I was in Level A or C, which is not the highest but more like the medium level. There was a question-and-answer portion where the robot or Neo asked us questions, and we were to repeat the sentence. I really relate this to my real-life conversations, which helped me improve my proficiency in English speaking. It wasn't really a challenge, but sometimes the internet connection was an issue. In the JEEP lab, with about 30 students, the signal would not be strong, so I couldn't proceed to the next level. I asked the instructor if they could strengthen the signal. The JEEP lab and the Neo app really helped improve my fluency in speaking English. Before, I would stutter a little, couldn't pronounce well, and had limited vocabulary, which made me afraid to speak in public. The noticeable improvements I've observed are, first and foremost, my pronunciation, and secondly, my vocabulary. Additional resources or teaching strategies I suggest would be not just using the Neo app but perhaps having the teacher give us a little time before we use it, maybe 10 minutes, for a performance-based activity. For example, in groups, we could play games or try to guess answers based on what the teacher says, or maybe imitate what the teacher says. This would help focus on the Neo app. I feel really happy because I learned a lot and had fun. Aside from following what Neo wants us to do, we also had activities given by the instructor once a week, like writing essays or editing pieces, to check if we had really learned from that particular level. My advice to future students taking this course is that this is not a joke. If you want to achieve a lot of points, you must do well, but the more you do well, the more pressure you'll feel because you need to unlock those points. So, the less you do it brilliantly, the easier it will be to move to the next level in JEEP.

- PARTICIPANT 12

Age: 22

Sex/Gender: Female

Program and Year Level: BSEd English- 4

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2022-2023

As far as I can remember, it would give you a situation where you need to fill in the blanks depending on the given situation. The JEEP program helped make me more confident when using English in academic discussions, presentations, or real-life conversations, by simply helping me enhance how I speak the language and helping me become more developed in using English language terms. The challenges I encountered while participating in the JEEP program were the internet connection and the availability of it. Sometimes the app would lag, and it would stop working. I overcame these issues by asking for the school's internet connection. Before, I was unable to comprehend well, and I couldn't

speak English terms, or maybe just simply use basic English words. But when I discovered this JEEP program, well, some of my terms or words improved. There are still some errors, but it's slowly improving how I speak and use the words. As you can see based on our interview, the visible improvements I have observed are in the way I speak, my grammar, and my vocabulary. I wish it were not just available online since some students don't have a stable internet connection, but maybe try one-on-one sessions with a teacher, especially for students who are slow in learning or enhancing their vocabulary and grammar skills. I am happy that it helped me as an English major to not just enhance but develop my speaking skills, especially my grammar and vocabulary. I can also say that you should just enjoy the program and attend regularly.

- PARTICIPANT 13

Age: 22

Sex/Gender: Female

Program and Year Level: BS Psychology- 4

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: 1st semester, A.Y. 2023-2024

One of the activities of JEEP was group discussion, role play, and impromptu speech, which was very essential in polishing my English. That activity not only tested my English but also challenged me to think and put my thoughts forward more effectively. Through consistent practice in formal and informal setting the JEEP program help me shed my fear of making mistakes. For example, the math presentations and peer feedback sessions make academic discussions feel less intimidating. Now, I am confident in expressing my thoughts in English whether during the class or chatting my friends from different cultural background. At first, I had trouble comprehending new accents in listening practice or voicing my thoughts on the spot. Sometimes I was afraid to speak up because of fear of being judge which made my progress slow in early stages. Outside the program, I listened to podcasts, watched English movies with subtitles, and practiced the conversation with classmates. This additional exposure helped me become exposed to different accents and increased my confidence. I also learned that making mistakes is completely fine because that is how one learns. Actually my English was more passive before the JEEP program. Reading text would be good but struggling in listening and speaking while in practice. But now I am able to have meaningful conversations, structure my sentences clearly you know, and I can change my speech as needed with context be it academic or casual. I developed a very broad vocabulary and clear pronunciation. I've also improved the way I organize my thoughts and how I present them logically. For instance, I am now able to quite effectively speak for five minutes on a given topic with very little preparation. Additionally, including professional focused learning such as how to write an email, negotiate, etc. or rendering virtual exchanges with native speakers can also enhance the experience or joining seminars. But, actually, I am so grateful and proud of myself for completing the JEEP program. This has been a journey that will not only help me to enhance my English but also for me to be more confidence and more resilience. The lessons I learned continue to resonate with me long after the program. I would advise them to make the most of every opportunity to practice in the classroom and outside it. Mistakes are common in learning, so don't be frightened by them. You also want to engage with your coworkers and instructor as their feedbacks and insight will give you an advantage.

- PARTICIPANT 14

Age: 22

Sex/Gender: Female

Program and Year Level: BS Nursing- 4

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: Summer, A.Y. 2023

This program really helped me enhance my skills, especially in communication. Since English is a universal language in the world, it is very helpful in communicating with other people, especially in job interviews and when talking to other professionals. Ever since I enrolled in this subject, my English skills have improved, and I am more confident in speaking English, especially during case presentations. The challenges I faced while participating in this program were pronunciation because, to be honest, I was not good at pronouncing words before, but now I am confident in saying new words, whether they are familiar or not. Also, I used to struggle with speaking English during interviews and would stutter because I wasn't confident. But now, I am confident and ready to take on new challenges. I practiced a lot, and sometimes I would stand in front of the mirror to talk to myself in English, as well as read English novels. Watching series also helped me enhance my skills. Before, my English skills were basic, and I didn't know how to use prepositions properly, which made it difficult for me to understand English. But now, after enrolling in the JEEP program, it's easier for me to understand and comprehend sentences. I've noticed that sometimes I speak English fluently, especially during case presentations or when talking to my nieces, relatives who work abroad, and sometimes my English even has an accent because I've adapted to their way of speaking through the JEEP program. From my experience, I would

recommend reading novels, watching international series that are educational and influential, and practicing speaking English. I know this will greatly help my career in the future. I feel grateful that I enrolled in this subject because it has broadened my understanding of English and enhanced my skills. For future students in this institution who will enroll in this program, don't take this subject for granted because it will help you enhance your speaking skills and the proper way to address any type of interview. This program is really helpful, especially when preparing for mock job interviews.

- PARTICIPANT 15

Age: 21

Sex/Gender: Female

Program and Year Level: BSEd English- 3

Last Semester and Academic Year of Enrollment in the JEEP Program: Summer, A.Y. 2023

Honestly speaking, the group activities and role-plays really helped me the most. We had to speak in English the whole time, so I got used to expressing myself and doing presentations and talking in front of people improved my confidence so much. It really gave me strength and like it pushed me out my comfort zone. Back then, I was super shy to speak English especially when expressing my thoughts in class but now I'm more confident because we practiced and practice. The JEEP program made me realize that it's okay to make mistakes sometimes but that's how we learn. Im actually had a hard time with grammar and sometimes pronunciation as well. I also got nervous speaking in front of people because I was scared to be judged or corrected by them. I just kept practicing at home, in the mirror like no one can hear me except myself and own thoughts. I listened to my teacher's feedback and tried to improve. Watching English movies and reading also helped a lot to improve my English learning. My classmates also encouraged me, so I felt more comfortable. Before, I could understand English but I had a hard time speaking it like for real. After the JEEP program, I can now speak more fluently and clearly. I don't panic anymore when someone talks to me in English because I have confidence to express myself or to say what I wanted to say. The noticeable improvements that I have observed was my vocabulary because its better now, I can explain my thoughts in English, and I don't think what will I say next like before. I also got better at writing essays or etc. and answering questions in class. For me, maybe more fun games, real-life scenarios, or role playing so that we can really enhanced our speaking listening and vocabulary skills. For me, it was a fun and meaningful experience because I learned so much and gained confidence I'm really thankful for it because of the JEEP program I know how to say words correctly without any hesitations. Learning is a complex process so just don't be afraid to speak, even if you make mistakes like me just enjoy the journey, participate actively, and practice every day because I know what at the end of the day you'll be surprised at how much you'll improve, trust me.