#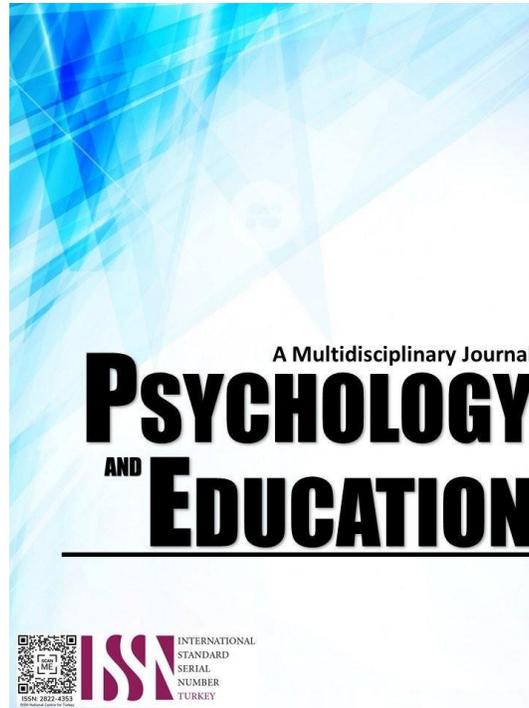 CORRELATING SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS (SES) WITH ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AMONG FIRST YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS AT GRANBY COLLEGES OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Correlating Socioeconomic Status (SES) with English Language Proficiency among First Year College Students at Granby Colleges of Science and Technology

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and English language proficiency among 338 first-year college students enrolled at Granby Colleges of Science and Technology for the 2024–2025 academic year. A correlational research design was employed, using surveys to gather socioeconomic data and a standardized test to assess proficiency in five macro skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing. Results showed that most participants came from low- to middle-income families, with limited parental education and employment stability. English proficiency was found to be generally low, especially in productive skills such as writing and speaking. Statistical analysis using Pearson's correlation coefficient revealed a moderate positive relationship ($r = 0.63$, $p < 0.001$) between SES and English language proficiency. The findings suggest that higher SES is linked to stronger English skills, likely due to increased access to resources and language-rich environments. The study recommends educational interventions to support students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds in improving their language proficiency.

Keywords: *socioeconomic status, English language proficiency, first-year college students, correlational research, macro skills, educational inequality*

Introduction

Being fluent in English is a crucial skill in today's modern world, playing a vital role in education, employment, and communication. In the Republic of the Philippines, English is administered as one of the main languages along with the Filipino language. English is commonly used as the primary language of instruction in schools (Department of Education, 2013). Despite all this, not all students develop the same level of proficiency leading to several concerning factors that influenced their language skills and ability. One of the factors that may affect English proficiency is socioeconomic status (SES), which includes parental education, family income, and access to learning resources (Coleman, 2018). Having a good perspective on the gap between socioeconomic status and English proficiency can help teachers and policymakers implement an effective assessment to support students from different socioeconomic backgrounds.

English has become an important language in work, government, and schools. Even with the broad use of this language, proficiency levels among students remain unbalanced because of its inconsistency in socioeconomic status. A study suggests that learners from higher socioeconomic backgrounds tend to have more access to educational tools, materials, private educators, and an English-speaking home environment. On the other hand, families from lower-income backgrounds may encounter inadequate exposure to the language outside the teaching space (David, 2022). Despite the efforts to expand English proficiency in schools, many students are struggling with the language, particularly in reading, writing, speaking, and grammar skills (Tuazon, 2023).

Learners from higher SES backgrounds often use richer vocabulary and more effective strategies like metacognitive and cognitive approaches compared to their lower-SES peers (Hair et al., 2015). This raises the question: How does socioeconomic background affect students' English language proficiency?

Research Questions

The researchers designed this study to address the influence of socioeconomic status on the English language proficiency of first-year college Students at Granby Colleges of Science and Technology. To give an outline, this research proposes to solve the following set of questions:

1. Who are the First Year College students in Granby Colleges of Science and Technology School Year 2024 – 2025 in terms of:
    1.1. age;
    1.2. gender;
    1.3. parents' highest educational attainment;
    1.4. parents' occupation ;
    1.5. combined monthly household income (PIDS); and
    1.6. GWA/GPA in First Semester?
2. What is the student's language proficiency in terms of:

      2.1. listening;
      2.2. speaking;
      2.3. reading;
      2.4. writing; and
      2.5. viewing?
   3.   What is the correlation between Socioeconomic Status (SES) and the Language Proficiency (ELP) of the students?

Methodology

Research Design

The researchers used a descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This design allowed researchers to analyze connections between variables without manipulating them. In this study, the researchers utilized a correlational style to define the relationship between socioeconomic status and English language proficiency among the respondents. Through organized data collection, the study provided a meaningful understanding that addressed the research questions.

Respondents

The study involved students among the first year college students from Granby Colleges of Science and Technology. Three hundred thirty-eight first year students were surveyed and asked to take an English proficiency exam. This includes students from diverse backgrounds; a stratified random sampling was used to ensure the right number of participants from each college program.

Instrument

To discover the relationship between socioeconomic status and English language proficiency among the First Year College students at Granby Colleges of Science and Technology (GCST), the researchers used two main instruments, a structured survey and a standardized English proficiency exam for five macro skills including Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking, and lastly Viewing.

The structured survey gathered demographic and socioeconomic data of respondents, including students' age, gender, academic program, parents' highest educational attainment, parents' occupation, combined monthly household income based on the classification of PIDS and General Weighted Average (GWA) based on Granby Colleges of Science and Technology grading scale in English. This data was used to develop complete learner profiles and identify how socioeconomic factors may influence educational performance, particularly in English language proficiency.

To assess participants' English proficiency, the researchers designed a standardized exam that tested the five macro skills: Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing, and Viewing.

For Listening, participants listened to a news report titled "Scientist: Dire Wolf Brought Back from Extinction After 13,000 Years" by ABC News. After listening they answered ten multiple choice questions (MCQs) that tested their ability to analyze and understand the English Language. Each correct answer is considered as one point, with a total of 10.

In the Reading section, students read the literary piece Endymion by Edith Hamilton and answer ten MCQs to get their understanding of the text, vocabulary, and interpretation skills. Like the listening section, each correct answer was worth one point for a total of 10 points.

The Speaking assessment required students to deliver a 1–2-minute self-introduction by answering three guided questions: (1) What is your name and where are you from? (2) What are your interests or hobbies? (3) What are your career goals for the future? They were guided to use complete sentences and have at least one complete sentence with the use of a transition word or phrase.

Responses were evaluated using a five-criterion rubric: Content, Clarity and Organization, Confidence and Delivery, Grammar and Language Use, and Creativity and Engagement. Each criterion was scored from 1 (Needs Improvement) to 4 (Excellent), with a maximum total score of 20.

The writing task asked students to compose a 3–5 sentence introductory paragraph about Crab Mentality. They were expected to define the term and provide a clear thesis statement. This response was assessed using two criteria: Introductory Statement and Main Idea. Each was rated on a scale of 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent), with a total possible score of 10.

Lastly, for viewing, respondents watched a short educational video titled "The Mythology of Zeus: King of the Gods" by Koranos (2022). After viewing, they answered a set of multiple-choice questions that tested their ability and comprehension competence to get information from multimedia sources. Each correct answer is added to the total score, with one point per correct response.

Together, these tools provided both quantitative and qualitative data on students' English language skills, allowing for a wide assessment reflective of real-life language use. The combination of demographic surveys and performance-based tasks enables researchers to efficiently analyze patterns and correlations between socioeconomic status and English language proficiency.

Procedure

The research method has four stages. First, the researchers review the survey to ensure that it is clear, appropriate, and aligned with the study's objective. This step is vital to getting the detailed and meaningful responses from the participants. At the outset of the study, the researchers secured approval from the relevant authorities and institutions to ensure compliance with ethical standards. Participants were selected randomly to fit the study criteria, ensuring that the sample is appropriate for the research. In addition, all important materials, including printed surveys, consent forms, and assessment tools, were prepared to help facilitate a smooth data collection process.

Surveys were shared with the selected participants who will comply with both a demographic survey and an English Proficiency assessment during school hours. The demographic survey gathered information on socioeconomic status, while the English Proficiency assessment evaluated the students' language skills in five macro skills, which include listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing.

The researchers offered clear and concise instructions and guidance to ensure that participants understand how to answer the questions accurately and honestly. To maintain uniformity and minimize errors, researchers proctored the survey to clarify any concerns any. Once all participants had completed their responses, the surveys were carefully collected and arranged for the next stage.

Afterward, the researchers meticulously reviewed the gathered responses to check for completeness, accuracy, and consistency. Any missing or inconsistent data were identified, and necessary steps were taken to address these issues, such as follow-up with participants. After the surveys were confirmed, the responses were step by step recorded, categorized, and organized in a structured format, making it easier to interpret. Proper documentation and secure keeping of the data were ensured to maintain confidentiality and follow the ethical standards.

Finally, the researchers performed a detailed analysis of the gathered data to recognize patterns, trends, and significant correlations. The relationship between socioeconomic status and English proficiency was carefully examined using statistical methods and comparative analysis. The results were explained to provide a meaningful understanding of how socioeconomic factors influence language skills. These understandings gave us a deeper knowledge of the topic. At last, the research findings were outlined in a complete report, showcasing key discoveries and potential implications for educators, policymakers, and researchers.

Data Analysis

The method that the researcher used was made in five comprehensive stages to secure a detailed and systematized. First, the collected data were carefully organized based on the respondents' demographic profiles. This includes their age, gender identity, program, parents' highest educational attainment, parents' occupation, combined household income based on PIDS brackets, and students' General Weighted Average (GWA) or Grade Point Average (GPA) in English based on Granby Colleges of Science and Technology's grading scale to get the students' academic performance. Apart from the demographic profile, the researcher also assesses the students' English proficiency levels in the five macro skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing were also arranged appropriately. This categorization is essential when it comes to ensuring that the data is methodically structured for statistical processing, making it easier to examine patterns and relationships.

Once the data were organized, they were forwarded to a statistician for thorough processing and analysis. To accurately interpret the demographic data, statistical methods such as the weighted mean were used to determine central patterns and overall trends among respondents. Furthermore, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to calculate the strength and path of the relationship between socioeconomic status and English language proficiency. This statistical tool was vital in evaluating whether there is a significant correlation between the two variables, supplying noticeable facts to support or reject the study's hypothesis. By applying these methods, the research ensured that there was an objective and analytical approach to understanding how economic factors influence language skills.

The following results were further analyzed statistically to find major outcomes concerning the relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and English proficiency level. In this step, the act of interpreting the analysis directed its findings toward a different direction, to study how different aspects of socioeconomic status, including parental education, household income, and social rank, affect the students' listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing skills. If imbalances were found, the analysis indicated whether students from low SES backgrounds were more disadvantaged in attaining English proficiency than their counterparts from high-income households. The results indicated the range to which some language skills might be affected more than others, thereby indicating which aspects of English proficiency are most affected by economic factors.

Providing the outcome of the English proficiency scores, the researchers used the Department of Education's (DepEd) grading scale that is aligned with DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015. This kind of grading system is commonly used in the Philippines' K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum to test the students' performance. Their scores were categorized in: Advance (90-100%), Proficient (80-89.99%), Developing (70-79.99%), Low (60-69.99%), and lastly Beginner (below 60%). These categorized scores provide a more meaningful interpretation of proficiency levels, allowing researchers to conduct consistent evaluations across macro skills.

Presenting a much easier presentation of the data gathered, the researchers used tables, charts, and graphs. Visual representation is crucial for effectively communicating complex statistical findings, allowing researchers, educators, and policymakers to compare

trends and relationships efficiently. The visual presentation will provide patterns that will effectively correlate how socioeconomic aspects affect the English Language Proficiency of the students. By incorporating graphical elements, the findings will become more engaging and practical for stakeholders who require a clear presentation.

Finally, based on the study's outcomes, conclusions were drawn regarding the extent to which socioeconomic status impacts students' English proficiency. The research questions will be addressed, and the study of overall outcomes will be examined.

Moreover, the research method highlights not only the accuracy of data collection and analysis but also a strong commitment to ethical standards. The researchers ensured that participants' rights were protected by securing informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and guaranteeing voluntary participation. These ethical considerations were especially vital given the sensitivity of the study's focus on socioeconomic status and academic performance. Keeping these principles helped foster a respectful and trustworthy environment throughout the research.

Additionally, the study acknowledges certain limitations that may have impacted the scope and applicability of its findings. One key limitation was the reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce bias or inaccuracies. Another was the focus on a single institution, which may limit the generalizability of the results to broader populations. Despite these barriers, the research gives a valuable starting point for future studies. It encourages further exploration through larger sample sizes, cross-institutional comparisons, and regionally diverse populations to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how socioeconomic factors influence English language proficiency.

Finally, the study suggests practical recommendations to key contributors, including educators, parents, school administrators, policymakers, and future researchers. These recommendations highlight the substance of expanding fair access to language learning opportunities, applying tailored academic support programs, and designing inclusive policies that accommodate learners from all socioeconomic backgrounds. By pointing to strategies and techniques that are both responsive and adaptable, the study aims to help close the English proficiency gap influenced by economic disparities. Ultimately, this research contributes meaningful insights that support the creation of a more inclusive, unbiased, and supportive educational environment for all students at Granby Colleges of Science and Technology.

The following statistical tests were used in encoding any correlation found from the data interpretation relation between socioeconomic status and the English proficiency of the respondents:

Slovin's Formula was used in this study to calculate the appropriate sample fit size from the total population. Slovin's Formula is widely used when the total population is known, but the behavior of the population is not well understood. After determining the total sample size, Stratified Random Sampling was used to ensure a proportional representation of each subgroup within the population. The formula used for stratified sampling is:

The Office of the Registrar provided the number of students from each program, and the sample population per program was computed. As seen in Table 1, a total of 338 students across the first year of college were chosen to become the research respondents.

Table 1. *Sample Population for Each Program*.

Programs	*Number of Enrolled First Year College Students*	*Sample Population per Program*
Bachelor of Science in Criminology (BSCrim)	902	149
Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT)	353	59
Bachelor of Science in Accountancy (BSA)	60	10
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS)	20	4
Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM)	322	53
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA - OM)	30	5
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA - MM)	145	24
Bachelor of Secondary Education (English)	94	16
Bachelor of Secondary Education (Math)	18	3
Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED)	88	15
Total:	2032	338

Ethical Considerations

This study follows strict ethical standards being applied to ensure the rights, privacy, and well-being of the participants are secured. Consent to respondents, ensuring that the respondents clearly understood the purpose of the study, potential risks, and benefits, was obtained before the survey was conducted. The consent consists of voluntary participation from respondents, and they can decline from the study anytime and without facing any costs. To ensure confidentiality within the study, all collected data will be anonymized and assigned codes, then stored in a secure location with restricted access to prevent misuse or unauthorized sharing of private data.

To maintain the highest ethical standards, the study has gone through multiple reviews and approvals from the research advisors and our college dean, making sure that it follows research guidelines and legal prerequisites to maintain its highest standards. This review process verified or made sure that the study is fair, low risk to respondents, and connects with the ethical norms of academic research.

Furthermore, every data collected shall be accurate and transparent from any form of manipulation or deception. The researchers of the study maintained neutrality in their analysis, making sure that the conclusions are based on reliable and trustworthy evidence.

Diversity of the respondents is evidently present; therefore, respect for rights and dignity will be given attention first throughout the study. To ensure that the participation of respondents is respected and promotes inclusivity. No participant was forced to participate, put under pressure or given incentives for them to participate. Furthermore, to ensure that the results will be a significant contributor to educational research, ethical considerations were also extended to the distribution of the findings. Lastly, the study maintains academic integrity and protects the well-being of all respondents using its ethical safeguards.

Results and Discussion

A thorough evaluation of the collected data is necessary to address the research questions effectively. Both quantitative findings and qualitative insights are systematically organized based on the specific problems outlined in the study. By examining each research problem in detail, we aim to provide a clear and thorough knowledge of the connection between socioeconomic status and English proficiency among college freshmen at Granby College of Science and Technology for the SY 2024-2025. The findings are organized to emphasize key trends, patterns, and significant outcomes, ensuring that the results are both convenient and informative for readers.

Furthermore, the analysis emphasizes emerging issues and implications that may affect and influence educational techniques and interventions. Each section of the discussion not only explains the data but also relates it to relevant literature, providing context and strengthening the study's conclusions.

Problem 1: Who are the First Year College students in Granby Colleges of Science and Technology in terms of: age, gender , parents' highest educational attainment, parents' occupation, combined monthly household income (PIDS), and GWA/GPA in First Semester

Quantitative Findings:

Age Distribution

The study surveyed 338 first-year college students enrolled at Granby College of Science and Technology for the 2024–2025 academic year. The age distribution indicates that most students are within the traditional college-entry age range.

Table 2. *Frequency of the Age of Respondents*

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18	86	25.44%
19	123	36.39%
20	67	19.82%
21	29	8.58%
22	14	4.14%
23	9	2.66%
24	2	0.59%
25	4	1.18%
26	1	0.30%
27	1	0.30%
30	1	0.30%
36	1	0.30%
Total:	338	100%

This trend reflects Chen and Carroll's (2017) finding that traditional-age students still make up most first-year enrollees. However, Stone and O'Shea (2019) noted the growing presence of older or nontraditional students in higher education. According to Kim and Bragg (2019), these learners contribute valuable perspectives shaped by diverse life experiences. Kahu et al. (2015) also emphasized the impact of age on retention and academic adjustment. These changes echo broader shifts in enrollment demographics (NCES, 2021).

Gender Identity

Woodford et al. (2015) studied the difficulties LGBTQ+ students in universities face when disclosing their identities. The study highlights that many institutions lack inclusive policies and environments, which creates gaps in openness. These challenges in disclosure can negatively impact the students' academic engagement, participation, and ability to express themselves freely. Woodford et al. (2015) identified the need for more general structures in higher education to support LGBTQ+ member students. In relation to language proficiency, Cameron and Huang (2020) performed a study on gender-based performance in English among Southeast Asian college students and found that female students consistently outperformed male students, especially in writing and reading. The study aims to investigate whether gender may play a role in language learning outcomes. This performance barrier emphasizes the need to understand and address factors influencing male students' lower proficiency. Similarly, Liu and Zhao (2022) observed Chinese university students and reported that female learners showed stronger communicative skills in English, largely attributed to higher classroom participation and motivation. The research emphasizes how actions and approach factors, like engagement and interest, can

influence proficiency.

Furthermore, a study by Morales and Tan (2023) conducted at a Philippine state college found no significant correlation between gender and English proficiency among junior students. This suggests that other aspects beyond gender, such as learning environment, teaching quality, and individual capability, may well explain variations in proficiency. The results challenge the assumption of inherent gender-based differences in English proficiency. These opposing findings across studies emphasize the richness of language learning and indicate that gender alone fails to justify proficiency gaps. Future research should adopt a more holistic framework to investigate how different social and contextual factors collectively mold language development.

Table 3. *Gender Identity Distribution*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	164	48.52%
Female	173	51.18%
Gay	1	0.30%
Total	338	100%

The overall gender distribution of the 338 respondents at Granby Colleges of Science and Technology presents a nearly equal number of males (48.52%) and females (51.18%), providing a balanced sample for gender based comparisons. This equal number is crucial when analyzing how gender might affect English language proficiency in relation to socioeconomic status. Based on Tran (2020), gender differences sometimes exist in language acquisition, with female students commonly performing well in reading and writing due to their higher verbal engagement and language learning motivation. Those findings align with UNESCO's (2019) emphasis of closing gender gaps in education to promote equal academic opportunities across all levels of learning.

Above all, only one respondent identified as gay (0.30%), reflecting minimal LGBTQ+ representation in the study. As stated by Pascoe (2019), underscoring that LGBTQ+ students often face unique educational barriers and that their inclusion is important in understanding the intersection of language, identity, and equity. Future researchers are highly encouraged to adopt more inclusive sampling to capture a wide gender experience. As gender identity can shape both the learning environment and language development, diverse representation is necessary to ensure that research outcomes are more comprehensive and socially responsive.

Parents' Educational Attainment

In the study conducted by Garcia and Umali (2020), they investigated the relationship between parental education and students' English proficiency at the state university in central Luzon. The findings stated that some students' parents who had attained higher education performed better in academic writing and excelled in reading comprehension. This is the factor of a richer home environment wherein literacy and active parenting in early language development are being exercised. Highlights of their study state that parents' educational attainment has a significant effect on students' linguistic abilities through early exposure and support.

The study found a strong correlation between higher parental education and improved vocabulary range and reading comprehension among students. Parents with higher education attainment will most likely be the model when it comes to language use and will be the ones to provide access to educational materials. The findings proposed that a home centered in literacy practices influenced by parental background can significantly affect language acquisition. Moreover, the study by Reyes and Santos (2022) at Bulacan State University examined how less educated family backgrounds adapt to academic demands. The result presents that those students inside the marginalized community experienced limited home-based academic support, which tends to rely on peer learning and formal classroom instruction. This kind of adaptive behavior suggests resilience; however, it highlights disparities in language development opportunities. Their study supports the opinion that parental education really helps in molding the educational practices at home, which can affect English proficiency. These results collectively highlight how family background is important as a factor in molding students' academic achievement. Therefore, strengthening this factor may serve as a strategic factor to improve students' English Proficiency across different social backgrounds.

Table 4. *Distribution of Parents' Highest Educational Attainment*

Highest Educational Attainment of Parents	Father		Mother	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
No formal education	1	0.30%	0	0.00%
Elementary Graduate	58	17.16%	45	13.31%
High school graduate	185	54.73%	205	60.65%
Vocational/Technical	39	11.54%	39	11.54%
Bachelor's Degree	52	15.38%	39	11.54%
Master's Degree	3	0.89%	10	2.96%
Total:	338	100%	338	100%

The data illustrate that a majority of both fathers (54.73%) and mothers (60.65%) are high school graduates. This aligns with the findings of Sapungan and Sapanta (2016), who emphasized that while basic education equips parents with foundational knowledge, It might not be sufficient to provide structured academic support at home. Parents with only secondary education might have limited

exposure to academic conversation, affecting their ability to guide their children's language development and proficiency.

Following this, 17.16% of fathers and 13.31% of mothers are elementary graduates. According to Reyes and Santos (2022), students from homes where parents have only completed elementary schooling often rely heavily on school-based learning and peer assistance due to the limited home academic support. The study highlighted that children in such households are less likely to be exposed to reading habits and formal English conversations, which in turn influences their proficiency levels.

Vocational or technical graduates make up 11.54% of both parents, suggesting a focus on practical skills. While technical training provides career-specific competencies, Kurniarini (2023) noted that it does not necessarily contribute to language-rich environments at home, which are essential for English language acquisition. These parents may offer structured support in technical subjects, but limited help in areas requiring formal English proficiency.

In terms of higher education, 15.38% of fathers and 11.54% of mothers hold a bachelor's degree. This confirms the findings of Garcia and Umali (2020), who found a strong link between parental college education and student performance in English. College-educated parents often model good language use and promote reading habits, providing a linguistically better home that enhances children's English development.

Only 0.89% of fathers and 2.96% of mothers have attained a master's degree. These households likely have access to better educational materials and place a high value on academic achievement. As observed by Khan and Shaikh (2022), children raised in homes where parents pursue postgraduate studies tend to perform well in reading comprehension and vocabulary due to increased parental involvement and exposure to intellectual discourse.

Lastly, no mothers and only one father (0.30%) reported no formal education. This suggests that while rare, there are still students coming from homes where parents lack any schooling experience. According to Decierdo et al. (2024), students from such backgrounds often develop coping mechanisms like peer learning or increased self-reliance, though they face greater challenges in literacy and academic performance.

Overall, the data highlights how parental education impacts students' English proficiency. Higher parental attainment often means more academic support and English exposure at home. For students with parents who are non-degree holders, schools should offer extra language support and involve families to help close learning gaps.

Parents' Occupation

Various local studies addressed the interconnectedness between parental occupation and student outcomes, most likely in language proficiency. A study by Lopez and Navarro (2019), conducted in Nueva Ecija, found that students whose parents have a full-time job and stable employment tend to have better English proficiency, largely due to their improved access to educational materials, extracurricular opportunities, and a stable learning environment at home. According to the researchers, this was due to the better use of access to learning materials, participation in various extracurricular activities, and teaching in more stable home environments, which allowed students to devote more attention to learning. This study underscores how financial and environmental stability positively contribute to academic success, particularly in language acquisition. On the other hand, David and

Alon (2012) analyzed how parental unemployment or part-time work affected students' English proficiency, focusing on single-parent households. Students from these backgrounds scored lower in language assessments, and the study is aligned with emotional stress, reduced study time, and a lack of academic support at home. The outcomes suggest that economic hardship can remarkably hinder language development. It also highlights the importance of home-based guidance and emotional stability in supporting outcomes. A comparable study by Buenaventura (2020) at a University in Mindoro found that those with unemployed or irregularly employed parents struggled in academic engagement, similarly in English and other language-intensive subjects.

The research shows that some of these students had to take on part-time employment or family obligations, which restricts their time and energy for academic activities. Economic coercion was identified as a major hindrance to consistent language practice and participation. This study strengthens the link between parental occupation, time allocation, and student language proficiency.

Table 5. *Distribution of Parents' Occupational Status*

Occupation of Parents	Father		Mother	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Deceased	4	1.18%	3	0.89%
Unemployed	45	13.31%	89	26.33%
Part Time	57	16.86%	51	15.09%
Full Time	232	68.64%	195	57.69%
Total:	338	100%	338	100%

The data shows that the majority of both fathers and mothers are employed full-time, with 68.64% of fathers (232) and 57.69% of mothers (195) falling into this bracket. This suggests that a significant part of the respondents' families enjoy relative financial stability, which may positively influence learners' academic performance. Stable income often ensures access to essential learning materials, a reliable internet connection, and a conducive home environment for studying. As Sirin (2005) pointed out, socioeconomic status,

particularly parental occupation and income, strongly predicts academic success because it shapes access to educational resources and consistent support.

The second most common status is part-time employment, recorded at 16.86% for fathers (57) and 15.09% for mothers (51). Part-time employment often indicates irregular income and reduced financial security, which may hinder the family's ability to maintain structured academic routines and provide constant educational support at home. Lehti and Drydakis (2023) noted that underemployment is associated with increased family stress and reduced parental capacity to support learning, often leading to lower academic engagement among children, particularly in language-rich subjects such as English.

Unemployment comes next, with 13.31% of fathers (45) and a notably higher 26.33% of mothers (89) reported as unemployed. This disparity may reflect traditional gender roles or socioeconomic conditions that disproportionately affect female employment. Although unemployed mothers might spend more time at home, limited financial resources could restrict the family's ability to provide books, digital tools, or tutoring support. Lee and Bowen (2006) emphasized that economic strain and stress from unemployment may reduce the quality of parental involvement, diminishing the student's ability to perform well in school, particularly in language acquisition.

Lastly, a small percentage of parents were reported as deceased—1.18% (4) of fathers and 0.89% (3) of mothers. Although statistically minimal, the absence of a parent due to death can significantly affect the emotional and academic life of a student. Terenzini et al. (1996) and more recent studies argue that disturbance in family structure can weaken a student's emotional well-being and motivation, leading to difficulties in academic focus and adjustment.

These results emphasized the role of parental employment in shaping the academic environment and language development of every student. While full-time employment can provide financial stability that supports English language learning, irregular or absent income—due to part-time work, unemployment, or the early loss of a parent—can present relevance barriers. Therefore, it is essential for schools and policymakers to recognize these employment-related differences and develop targeted remedial actions, such as extracurricular programs, educational grants, or student support services, to help bridge the academic support gap for students from economically disadvantaged households. A stable job or parental income results in consistent access to digital tools and a productive study environment. On the other hand, financial limitations may cause stress and limited exposure, which in turn hinder the language learning process.

Household Income

The study of Torres and Pascua (2020) examined the relationship between family income and English language proficiency among high school students in Metro Manila. They

found a positive link, particularly for reading comprehension and speaking skills, noting that students from wealthier families typically have greater access to English books, online resources like articles, journals, and e-portfolios, as well as private tutoring. This highlights the significant role of financial resources in improving language learning opportunities and outcomes (Torres & Pascua, 2020).

Similarly, Villamor (2020) investigated how socioeconomic status and self-confidence affect high school students' academic skills. He reported a strong correlation between family income and overall academic performance, further emphasizing economic capacity as a key reason for educational success.

Table 6. *Total Household Income of Respondent's Family*

Household Income	Frequency	Percentage	Classification [a]
Less than ₱10,957	25	7.40%	Poor
₱10,957 - ₱21,194	43	12.72%	Low Income Class (but not poor)
₱21,194 - ₱43,828	87	25.74%	Lower Middle-Income Class
₱43,828 - 76,999	65	19.23%	Middle Middle-Income Class
₱76,999 - ₱131,484	47	13.91%	Upper Middle-Income Class
₱131,484 - ₱219,140	37	10.95%	Upper Income (but not rich)
₱219,140 & above	34	10.06%	Rich
Total:	338		

A Classification based on PIDS Discussion Paper Series No. 2018-20

Additionally, Liu and Thompson (2018) explored the psychological impacts of financial hardship on English language development. Their study revealed that students from lower-income families frequently experienced academic anxiety, reduced confidence, and reduced motivation, which negatively affected their engagement in English-speaking activities and overall performance.

Several studies have emphasized the critical role of household income in shaping students' academic outcomes, particularly in English language proficiency. According to White (1982), family income is a significant forecaster of educational achievement, as it determines access to learning materials and better opportunities. More recent research by Azarcon and Zabala (2022) confirmed that students from higher-income families tend to have stronger grammar and vocabulary skills due to better language environments. These students are most likely to attend programs or be exposed to English media at home, whereas those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds have limited exposure, which affects their overall proficiency.

The majority of the respondents (25.74%) belong to the Lower Middle-Income Class (₱21,194–₱43,828), indicating that a significant portion of the student population comes from modest financial backgrounds. According to Lopez and Navarro (2019), students from lower-middle-income households often show enough performance when supported by school systems, although challenges such as inconsistent internet and fewer books at home remain. Financial limitations may hinder the development of English proficiency, particularly in resource-intensive areas such as reading and writing.

Next, 19.23% of the students fall under the Middle Middle-Income Class (₱43,828–₱76,999). These students are typically based in more stable households, likely benefitting from structured home study environments and access to digital tools. According to Buenaventura (2020), students from this socioeconomic status have a higher tendency to participate actively in class, especially in language courses, if parental supervision and time management skills are present.

Next up is 13.91% of this sample portion, the Upper Middle-Class, with a salary range of (₱76,999–₱131,484). These students are more likely to have reliable internet access, private tutoring, and academic support systems. Villamor (2020) found a significant correlation between students' socioeconomic status—measured by income—and their academic performance in English, pointing to enriched educational exposure.

Students from the Low Income but not Poor group (₱10,957–₱21,194) represent 12.72% of respondents. Although families from this class may not be considered poor, they often face inconsistent income and may not receive sufficient academic support from their households. According to David and Alon (2021), students are more likely to feel anxiety and less likely to engage in English, specifically in terms of speaking and writing.

Upper Income but not Rich (₱131,484–₱219,140) accounts for 10.95% of respondents. These students benefit from a relatively comfortable lifestyle and access to additional education. Liu and Thompson (2018) emphasized that students from higher-income families often experience less academic stress and have greater motivation, which in turn leads to better English language acquisition.

Rich households (₱219,140 and above) comprise 10.06% of the total. These families can afford high-quality schooling, language-enriched environments, and frequent exposure to English through books, media, and travel. Torres and Pascua (2020) emphasized that students from wealthy households generally excel in reading and speaking due to the extended learning opportunities they receive.

Lastly, Poor households (less than ₱10,957) represent the smallest group at 7.40%. Students from this category face the most challenges, such as limited access to digital tools, books, and stable study spaces. According to Reyes and Santos (2022), learners in extreme poverty often rely on peer support and in-school interventions to make up for the lack of home-based academic assistance, which can delay or hinder English language proficiency.

GPA

Some studies have already established the connection between students' GPA and their English language proficiency, mainly in contexts where English is a center of instruction. Cruz and de la Peña (2020) conducted a study among college freshmen in Batangas, examining the relationship between English proficiency and GPA. They found that students with solid English skills generally performed better in their academic subjects, including general education courses. This was attributed to better comprehension of instructional materials, classroom lectures, and written texts. The study supports the idea that English proficiency enhances overall academic skills in English-medium instruction settings. Santos and Villanueva (2019) also studied the connection between GPA and English language skills, particularly speaking and writing.
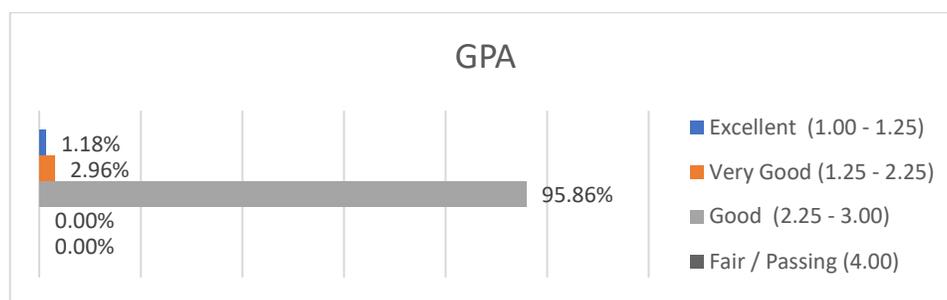

Figure 1. *GPA of Respondent's in first semester of SY 2024-2025*
GPA range and classification based on Granby College of Science and Technology grading system

These results recommend that enhancing conversational competence benefits the student academically. Additionally, exploration by Zhou et al. (2022) examined how socioeconomic factors affect academic performance, especially GPA. Their study revealed that students from financially comfortable and more educated families had exemplary access to resources, more effective time management, and lower stress levels, all contributing to higher GPAs. These students also demonstrated stronger English communication skills, which notably supported their academic achievement.

Another study by Aballe et al. (2024) further emphasized the role of English language proficiency in shaping academic outcomes. Their

research on primary students in Davao Occidental revealed a consistent pattern: learners with higher proficiency in English—particularly in grammar and vocabulary—tended to score better across academic subjects, not just in English. This suggests that proficiency in the language of instruction supports broader academic understanding.

The GPA distribution of first-year college students in the first semester of the school year 2024–2025 reveals a generally positive academic profile. Most students (95.86%) fall within the "Good" GPA range (2.25–3.00). While only 1.18% of learners got the "Excellent" rating (1.00–1.25), 2.96% fall into the "Very Good" (1.25–2.25) category. Importantly, no students were recorded in the "Pass" (4.00) or "Fail" (5.00) categories, which reflects effective academic performance overall. This trend is supported by Krumrei-Mancuso et al. (2013), who emphasized that first-semester GPA is a strong predictor of long-term academic success and persistence. Moreover, a study by Robbins et al. (2004) found that prior academic preparation, including high school performance and motivation, significantly affects college GPA, suggesting that foundational academic experiences may have contributed to the strong performance observed among the students..

Problem 2: What is the student's language proficiency in terms of: listening, speaking, reading, writing and viewing

Quantitative Findings:

The English proficiency data of 338 first-year students at Granby College of Science and Technology reveals a widespread need for targeted language development, with over 60% of students falling under Beginner or Low proficiency levels. These findings point to a crucial mismatch between students' current language abilities and the academic demands of tertiary education. Cruz and de la Peña (2020) demonstrated that limited English proficiency significantly hampers comprehension, class participation, and written output in English-mediated courses. Santos and Villanueva (2019) similarly found that deficits in writing and speaking skills negatively impact academic engagement and overall GPA. Dita (2022) noted that students with greater exposure to English through media and formal instruction consistently excel in higher education environments.

Meanwhile, Zhou et al. (2022) identified English proficiency as a mediator that helps students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds mitigate barriers to academic success. Meanwhile, Aballe et al. (2024) emphasized that English proficiency developed in earlier years remains a key predictor of reading and academic success. Khan and Shaikh (2022) also noted that students from literacy-rich, higher-SES households tend to enter tertiary education with stronger language skills, giving them a significant academic advantage.

Table 7. *English Proficiency Distribution of the Respondents*

Classification [b]	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing	Viewing	Overall
Advanced (90-100%)	113	112	37	7	85	9
Proficient (80-89.99%)	77	27	65	37	41	47
Developing (70-79.99%)	60	36	57	38	32	74
Low (60-69.99)	39	37	85	44	39	72
Beginner (< 60%)	49	126	94	212	141	136

Total N = 338
b Classification based on Department of Education. (2015). Policy guidelines on classroom assessment for the K to 12 Basic Education Program (DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015)

Based on the results across the five macro skills—Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing, and Viewing. The beginner level had the highest number of students, with 136 students falling under this category. The majority of these students scored particularly low in Writing (212 students) and Reading (126 students), suggesting a need for stronger foundational instruction. According to Liu and Thompson (2018), low socioeconomic conditions often correlate with academic anxiety and reduced language confidence, which may affect performance in written and receptive skills like reading and writing. Their study highlights the emotional and cognitive burden language learners from low-income families may experience, which aligns with this data.

The second most populated category is the Developing level with 74 students overall. Most learners in this group showed moderate proficiency in Listening (60 students), Speaking (57 students), and Writing (38 students). This suggests some improvement, particularly in oral skills. Gonzales and Bautista (2019) found that female learners tend to outperform their male counterparts in reading and writing, highlighting the role of gender in skill development.

Next is the Low level with 72 students overall. Interestingly, 85 students in Speaking and 44 in Writing were classified under this level, indicating that some students have difficulty expressing themselves. De Castro (2021) highlights that communicative competence is often impacted by low classroom engagement or lack of motivation, particularly among male students, which may explain the disparity in expressive skills.

The Proficient level includes 47 students, with most of them demonstrating stronger skills in Listening (77 students) and Speaking (65 students). This suggests that some learners are gaining mastery in auditory and verbal communication. Santos and Villanueva (2019) emphasized that conversational competence plays a significant role in academic success, aligning with the finding that oral proficiency contributes to better GPA performance.

Finally, only 9 students reached the Advanced level, indicating high performance across all macro skills. These students demonstrated superior comprehension and language use, especially in Listening (113 students) and Reading (112 students). Khan and Shaikh (2022) argue that students from more educated families often have access to rich literacy environments, improving vocabulary and

comprehension. This connection implies that advanced learners likely benefit from more supportive educational and home backgrounds.

These results emphasize the need for differentiated instruction tailored to students' specific skill levels. Targeted support for those in the Beginner and Low categories—especially in reading and writing—should be prioritized through remedial programs, literacy workshops, and one-on-one coaching. At the same time, learners in the Developing and Proficient levels would benefit from enrichment activities such as public speaking, advanced reading exercises, or academic writing support to refine their growing competencies. Addressing the wide range of proficiency levels ensures that all students, regardless of background, receive the help they need to progress.

Problem 3: What is the correlation between socioeconomic status and the language proficiency of the students?

Qualitative Insights

The scatter diagram in Figure 2 exhibits a moderate to strong positive correlation between socioeconomic status (SES)—coded from 1 to 7 based on household income—and overall English proficiency (averaged across the five macro skills). While there is a general upward trend, the data also show notable variation within each SES tier.

1. Low SES (1–3): Students from low-income families display a wide range of proficiency scores (0.20–0.80), indicating inconsistent academic outcomes. This pattern aligns with findings from Zhou et al. (2022), who noted that children from lower-income backgrounds often experience fluctuations in literacy outcomes due to varying support and exposure to language at home .

2. Middle SES (4–5): Students in these brackets cluster more tightly around moderate to high proficiency (0.60–0.85). Tsakiridou et al. (2023) observed similar patterns, attributing such consistency to stable home environments and access to consistent learning resources.

3. High SES (6–7): The majority of high-income students score above 0.70, with many exceeding 0.90. However, a few outliers still score low—a phenomenon noted by Khan & Shaikh (2022), who emphasized that despite financial advantages, personal and motivational factors heavily influence academic success.

Exceptions across SES Groups: Instances where lower SES students achieve high proficiency and high SES students score lower suggest that SES is not the sole determinant of language success. Liu & Thompson (2018) emphasize the roles of academic motivation and anxiety in shaping outcomes, reinforcing that individual traits alongside SES are crucial.

The scatter diagram confirms a positive SES–proficiency correlation, consistent with broader educational research. However, the spread within each SES group highlights the importance of personal, institutional, and environmental factors in shaping English language development.
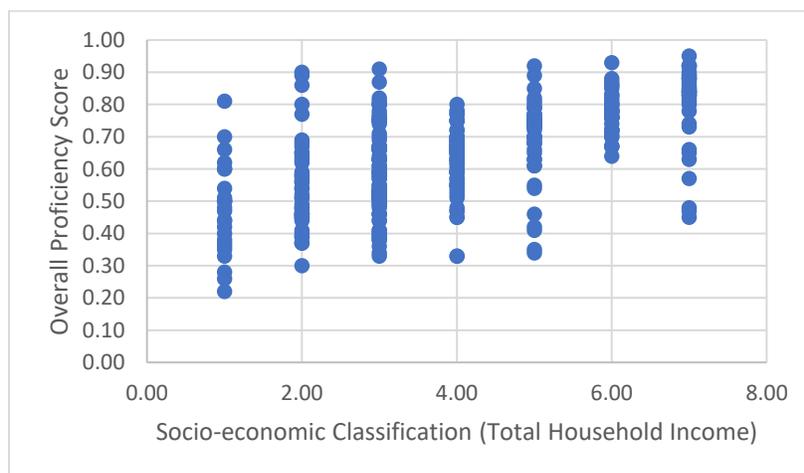

Figure 2. *Scatter Diagram for SES and English Proficiency Correlation*
Note: Classification based on PIDS Discussion Paper Series No. 2018-20
1 Less than ₱10,957 – Poor | 2 ₱10,957–₱21,194 – Low Income Class (but not poor) | 3 ₱21,194–₱43,828 – Lower Middle-Income Class | 4 ₱43,828–₱76,999 – Middle Middle-Income Class | 5 ₱76,999–₱131,484 – Upper Middle-Income Class | 6 ₱131,484–₱219,140 – Upper Income Class (but not rich) | 7 ₱219,140 & above – Rich

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to examine the relationship between Socioeconomic Status (SES) and English language proficiency among first-year college students at Granby Colleges of Science and Technology (GCST).

The analysis showed a moderate positive correlation, $r = 0.63$, $n = 338$, indicating that higher SES is associated with higher levels of English proficiency.

Finding out if the relationship was meaningful, a t-test was used. The result was a t-statistic of 13.87 with 336 degrees of freedom,

which is much higher than the required value of ±1.967 at the 0.05 significance level. The p-value was less than .001, showing that the correlation was statistically significant.

Research shows a clear connection between a student's family wealth and their performance in English tests. Students from higher-income families tend to score better, while those from poorer backgrounds often struggle more. This difference exists because money provides important learning advantages that help children develop stronger English skills.

Wealthier families can afford educational resources that make learning easier. These include books, private tutoring, reliable internet access, and exposure to English at home through books, media, and conversations. Having these tools gives students more practice and confidence in using English. On the other hand, students from low-income families often lack these resources, putting them at a disadvantage from the start. Financial stability also affects learning in less obvious ways. Studies by Liu and Thompson (2018) found that when families are not stressed about money, students can focus better on school. They feel more motivated and confident in their ability to learn. Zhou et al. (2022) noted that poverty creates stress and distractions that make learning more challenging. When students worry about basic needs, they have less mental energy for studying.

Table 8. *Correlation Between Socioeconomic Status and English Proficiency Among First-Year College Students*

Variables	1	2	t	df	p	Interpretation
1. Socioeconomic Status	—	.63**	13.87	336	< .001	Significant
2. English Proficiency		—				

Note. Pearson correlation coefficient. Two-tailed t-test, α = .05. p < .001.

The results show a statistically significant and robust positive correlation between socioeconomic status (SES) and English proficiency. Students from higher-income households generally achieve better English outcomes, likely because of greater access to educational materials, language-rich environments, and instructional support. These findings align with earlier research, as Hui and Chen (2024) demonstrated that SES predicts pragmatic awareness in English, and that motivational factors mediate this effect. Tan (2024) confirmed the consistent SES–academic success relationship, emphasizing that home literacy practices and resource access mediate the link . Moreover, Terasawa (2024) conducted cross-national research across Asia and affirmed that SES correlates with English proficiency, although contextual inconsistencies may affect the strength of this relationship .

However, since some lower-SES students achieve high proficiency and some higher-SES students score lower, SES appears influential but not determinative; personal drive, instructional quality, and situational conditions also matter. This suggests that targeted interventions for low-income students—such as motivational programs, enriched reading environments, and focused language support—could help level the field and foster more equitable educational outcomes.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were derived from the findings:

Most first-year college students at Granby College come from low to middle-income families, with many parents having no higher education and unstable employment. This likely affects the level of educational support students receive at home.

A significant proportion of students struggle with English language proficiency, particularly in writing, reading, and viewing. These are essential academic skills, and their deficiency may hinder students' ability to succeed in college-level tasks.

Listening is the only macro skill where a considerable number of students showed high proficiency, indicating that receptive auditory skills may be more developed due to environmental exposure or classroom learning.

The data suggest a need for institutional intervention to support students in enhancing their English proficiency, especially in productive skills such as writing and speaking.

Final Thoughts

The outcomes of this study confirm the long-standing concern that socioeconomic differences have a direct consequence on students' educational outcomes, especially in the progress of their English language skills. For many students at Granby College, academic difficulties may not be caused by a lack of motivation or potential, but rather by challenges such as economic hardship, inadequate educational support, and limited access to resources.

English proficiency is more than just a subject requirement; it is a crucial tool for academic success, career advancement, and global participation. Addressing the origins of low English proficiency therefore requires a comprehensive approach that combines institutional support, community involvement, and policy reform. Allocating inclusive and accessible language education is a crucial step toward educational equity.

Suggested Future Directions

To deepen the understanding of this issue and improve educational outcomes, future researchers are encouraged to:

Use multiple regression or path analysis to identify which specific components of SES (e.g., income, parental education, occupation) are the strongest predictors of each English macro skill.

Conduct longitudinal studies to assess how language proficiency evolves throughout college and whether SES-based gaps narrow or widen over time.

Explore qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, to better understand students' experiences and the challenges they face in developing English skills.

Examine the role of school resources and teaching quality in moderating the relationship between SES and language proficiency.

Investigate the impact of targeted interventions, such as writing clinics, speaking labs, or home literacy programs, particularly for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

By seeking these directions, future studies can provide more effective strategies for resolving the English language learning gap, which is anchored in socioeconomic inequality. These observations could also help inform national education policies and equitable distributions. Moreover, collaboration between educational institutions, government agencies, and community partners will be vital in adapting research findings into impactful programs. As the demand for English proficiency continues to grow in academic and professional settings, ensuring that all students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have the resources and support needed to succeed becomes a crucial educational and social priority.

Meanwhile, to address the gap in English language proficiency, researchers and teachers are encouraged to:

Implement targeted English enhancement programs that focus on writing, reading, and speaking skills. These could include remedial classes, writing workshops, or peer tutoring sessions.

Integrate multimedia and interactive learning strategies to strengthen viewing and reading comprehension, making learning more engaging and context-based.

Provide support for economically disadvantaged students through scholarships, resource access (e.g., books, internet), and mentoring programs that can help bridge the academic gap.

Train faculty members to identify struggling students early and apply differentiated instructional strategies that cater to varying levels of proficiency.

Conduct further studies to statistically analyze the relationship between socioeconomic status and each macro skill in English to validate trends and guide policy development..

The strategy employed aims to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, primarily for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Fortifying language instruction while addressing economic barriers can crucially improve students' academic performance. Collaboration among educators, institutions, and families is important to sustain these efforts. In the long run, closing the English language proficiency gap is key to promoting equity and success in higher education. The consistent commitment to these actions can help ensure that all students are equipped with the language skills needed for academic and professional growth.

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