

# Perceived English-Speaking Proficiency Among Criminology Students in UM Digos College: Basis for Enhancement Program

Anrea Julie T. Caballero, Charles Gabriel Furog, Jhon Carlo E. Madjos, and \*Hipolito B. Quillip Jr.,

PhD Department of Criminal Justice Education, University of Mindanao Digos College, Philippines

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100601012>

Received: 20 June 2026; Accepted: 25 June 2026; Published: 10 July 2026

## ABSTRACT

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-comparative research design to assess the perceived English-speaking proficiency of Criminology students at UM Digos College and to develop an enhancement plan based on the results. The data was collected through an adapted survey distributed to two hundred ninety-one (291) students across different year levels. Statistical analysis focused on three core indicators: practicing, grammar, and communication. Results revealed a high overall level of English-speaking proficiency. In distinction, no significant variation was found when grouped by gender or age; however, significant differences were observed when analyzed by year level, with second-year students showing the lowest proficiency. A three-day enhancement program was proposed to improve oral communication, grammar usage, and speaking skills among target students through interactive tasks. To ensure continuous improvement, follow-up assessments are recommended to evaluate the program's effectiveness in enhancing students' communicative competence, particularly in preparation for their academic and professional development.

**Keywords:** English-speaking proficiency, criminology students, language enhancement program

## INTRODUCTION

Students encounter various challenges in oral communication, such as having a limited vocabulary, a lack of confidence, and not being articulate enough in English, which hinders their ability to communicate effectively. Kabellow et al. (2020) explained that the concern about becoming professionals emphasizes the importance of strong oral skills. Applying the concept in the Criminology program, as they are required for class presentations such as reporting, recitations, and discussions that require English speaking. Communication, written and oral, is the number one skill that criminology students should polish (Ayawan & Martin, 2022). Hence, as Cerna (2020) postulates, students must possess good oral competency in English to express themselves clearly and effectively.

In learning the English language, several factors, including age, sex, year level, aptitude, intelligence, learning styles, personality, and exposure to English, influence the rate of learners' mastery and predict their success in gaining proficiency with the language, as cited by Meniado (2020). In addition, Okio (2023) recognized gender as one of the essential positive factors that plays a specific role in second language attainment, and as discovered by Liu Zeyun et al. (2023), where a significant gender disparity in the impact of female students on academic performance in English, with a notable greater influence observed among female students compared to their male counterparts.

A study by Aziz and Kashinathan (2021) revealed that students are often deprived of this form of learning when it comes to communication. Learners experience nervousness when speaking English, fear speaking in front of others, and lack self-confidence. Green (2021) suggests that academic learners should be engaged in various activities, such as participating in discussions, socializing with peers, and asking and answering questions. Considering this, Gouvin et al., cited by Dyshkant et al. (2021), revealed that some students may be introverted and uncomfortable participating in class. A professor's role is to help these students realize the value they hold when they speak their minds.

Bautista & Del Valle (2023) stated that speech helps communicate ideas, suggestions, and comments most naturally and reliably in the Philippines. To master speaking skills, learners need to practice. Additionally, EO 210 of the Department of Education establishes a policy to strengthen the use of English as a medium of instruction in the educational system and to develop students' aptitude, competence, and proficiency in the English language. Students should be provided with engaging and interesting content emphasizing the importance of effective speaking, reading, and writing skills (Eclarin, 2021). In the local context, Palmero (2020) concluded that oral competency is the most crucial skill, as students with expertise in the language are typically referred to as speakers. English aims to enhance students' ability to use the language effectively and accurately in communication.

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory of Communication (1969) posits that effective communication can be observed and imitated by individuals who employ clear, respectful, and impactful communication. On the other hand, the Cognitive Dissonance Theory, proposed by Leon Festinger (1957), explores the psychological tension that arises when individuals hold conflicting beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors. It suggests that humans have a natural drive to seek consistency and coherence in their thoughts. Recognizing this conflict prompts individuals to actively seek a resolution. Additionally, the Transmission Model of Communication, developed by Weaver and Shannon (1948), presents communication as a linear process in which a sender encodes a message, which is then transmitted through a channel and decoded by the receiver, emphasizing the importance of clarity and accuracy in conveying information.

The aftereffect of this study would give beneficial to the students, especially Criminology students of UM Digos College as learning English improves oral communication, to be able to effectively comprehend and communicate, which would be a great help to them in developing their skills and abilities, this would also give the Administrators the benefit to determine on how they can support in improving the oral communication competency of the students in relation to English-speaking proficiency, to be able to provide strategies and materials, as well as accelerate their students. Moreover, the outcome of this research can also benefit the Faculty of the Criminology department by developing and enhancing new programs that will aid criminology students in their future applications to various organizations. Furthermore, this can help future researchers expand their studies, put their suggestions into practice, and use the findings as a reference.

## Research Objectives

The study assessed the perceived level of English-speaking proficiency among criminology students at UM Digos College. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following:

1. To identify the demographic profile of criminology students of UM Digos College in terms of:
  - 1.1 age;
  - 1.2 gender, and
  - 1.3 year level.
2. To identify the students' perceived level of English-speaking proficiency in terms of:
  - 2.1 practicing;
  - 2.2 grammar, and
  - 2.3 communication.
3. To determine the difference in the students' perceived level of English-speaking proficiency in terms of demographic profile.
4. To create an enhancement plan for Criminology students with lower perceived level of English-speaking proficiency.

## METHOD

### Respondents

The respondents for this study included 291 Criminology students from UM Digos College, aged 18 to 28, from all year levels, enrolled in the second semester of the 2024-2025 school year, and were selected using simple random sampling. On the other hand, exclusion criteria disqualify respondents from different departments, those below 18 years old, and apprentices from other schools. As cited by Owen (2021) simple random sampling is a method with a sample that can be chosen by assigning each individual in the population, where they are selected from the  $n$  units, in a way that every possible combination of  $n$  units is equally likely to be the chosen sample, with sample 5 sizes comparative to stratum sizes which would lead to equal inclusion probabilities for all individuals.

### Instrument

The study adapted the survey questionnaire entitled "Study on Students Speaking Potential" developed by Melendrez, Tongco, and Betco (2020), employing a Likert scale to evaluate the practices and approaches used by criminology students to improve their English-speaking skills. To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, the researchers conducted a pilot test with 30 respondents, yielding an overall reliability index of 0.939, which indicates that the questionnaire is suitable for use. Also, in assessing the perceived level of English-speaking proficiency of the criminology students in UM Digos College, the following scale was utilized:

Table 1. Descriptive Scale for Perceived English-speaking Proficiency Levels

| Numerical Value | Range of Means | Scale Level | Descriptive Meaning                                                                                        |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5               | 4.20 – 5.00    | Always      | This measurement means that the respondent's perceived level of English-speaking proficiency is very high. |
| 4               | 3.40 – 4.23    | Often       | This measurement means that the respondent's perceived level of English-speaking proficiency is high.      |
| 3               | 2.62 – 3.42    | Sometimes   | This measurement means that the respondent's perceived level of English-speaking proficiency is moderate.  |
| 2               | 1.81 – 2.61    | Rarely      | This measurement means that the respondent's perceived level of English-speaking proficiency is low.       |
| 1               | 1.00 – 1.80    | Never       | This measurement means that the respondent's perceived level of English-speaking proficiency is very low.  |

### Design and Procedure

The research employs a quantitative descriptive-comparative research design, examining the correlation between two variables that may be identified as characteristics of an experimental phenomenon, aiming to modify the groups within a population without manipulation, and collect numerical data to assess the perceived level of English-speaking proficiency (Siedlecki, 2020). The procedure involves the following process in gathering the data: (1) the researchers secured the letter of permission to the Research Publication Center, Office of Criminal Justice Education, Dean's Office, and the Director of UM Digos College; after gaining the approval, an adapted questionnaire was then conducted to 30 respondents to determine the validity and reliability of the questionnaire through a pilot testing, once obtained, provided that it is good to be utilized, the questionnaire was administered to 291 respondents with the informed consent to keep their answers confidential, their responses was collected afterwards to be encoded in excel systematically, upon completion of the tabulation, the data were submitted to

the statistician to be analyzed and assess the profile of the respondents, identify their perceived level of English-speaking proficiency, and determine the differences in terms of the profile.

In addition, the following statistical tools were used to analyze and interpret the data: frequency was essential in representing the demographic profile and addressing the problem. The percentage was used to determine the ratio for the data on the profile. Further, researchers employed methods to describe the students' perceived level of English-speaking proficiency, and the Kruskal-Wallis test, a non-parametric statistical treatment, was used to identify significant differences in the levels of English-speaking proficiency among criminology students, analyzed by gender, age, and year level.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This study was conducted in strict adherence to ethical protocols and guidelines set forth by the Research and Publication Center of UM Digos College. Proper authorization and consent were also obtained from the study sample, in which the respondents were assured that all their rights were fully protected.

**Voluntary Participation.** The participation of the Criminology students was voluntary to avoid forceful interaction; there was no coercion involved in conducting the study.

**Confidentiality and Privacy.** This study utilized primary data; therefore, it was necessary to ensure that no personal or confidential information from the respondents was included and that the privacy of individuals was respected throughout the research process.

**Informed Consent Process.** The survey questionnaire presented to them was clear and comprehensive. The respondents were fully aware of the study's purpose.

**Benefits.** The results of this study can provide valuable insights for Criminology students, institutions, and future researchers, helping them improve organizational performance.

**Plagiarism.** The researchers ensured the accuracy of citing ideas from other writers and scholars. The study undergoes grammar and plagiarism checking via Grammarly and Turnitin software to ensure accuracy and prevent plagiarism and fabrication.

**Falsification.** The research adheres to the APA 7th edition style citation format rules to ensure no misrepresentation or alteration of data gathered during the study occurs.

**Conflict of Interest.** No conflict of interest was involved in this study. Researchers ensured that there was no professional judgment regarding primary claims, such as the respondents' welfare or validity, that was influenced by secondary interests, such as financial or academic gains or recognition.

**Deceit.** The paper does not contain any untruthful information that could harm the respondents' welfare. The research-maintained truthfulness throughout the process, ensuring no misleading practices were used in presenting or interpreting the data.

**Veracity of Data Interpretation.** The data were interpreted empirically and precisely, adhering to the highest standards of academic integrity. There was no manipulation involved.

**Fabrications.** No deceit or untruthfulness was used to harm the respondents' welfare.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Profile of the Respondents**

This section outlines the results of the relative distribution of the Criminology students of UM Digos College. Table 1 presents the respondents in the survey and the frequency of participation, as indicated by the data. A

total of 291 students participated in the study, providing a breakdown by gender, age, and year level.

Table 2. Characteristics of 291 respondents included in the study

| Profile              | f   | %    |
|----------------------|-----|------|
| <b>Gender</b>        |     |      |
| Female               | 79  | 27.1 |
| Male                 | 201 | 69.1 |
| LGBTQ                | 5   | 1.7  |
| Preferred Not to Say | 6   | 2.1  |
| <b>Age</b>           |     |      |
| 18-21 years old      | 216 | 74.2 |
| 22-24 years old      | 69  | 23.7 |
| 25-28 years old      | 6   | 2.1  |
| <b>Year Level</b>    |     |      |
| First Year           | 79  | 27.1 |
| Second Year          | 63  | 21.6 |
| Third Year           | 99  | 34.0 |

As seen in Table 2, males were the dominant respondents in the study, accounting for 69.1% (n=201), while females accounted for 27.1% (n=79), LGBTQ+ members for 1.7% (n=5), and 2.1% preferred not to disclose their identity. The results indicate that the students who responded to the survey were predominantly male. Additionally, the majority of them were between the ages of 18 and 21 years old, representing 74.2%, followed by those between 22 and 24 years old, with 23.7%, and a total of 69 students. The remaining 6, representing 2.1%, were between 25 and 28 years old. Results also show that the majority of respondents are third-year students, accounting for 34.0% (n=99), followed by first-year students at 27.1% (n=79), second-year students at 21.6% (n=63), and fourth-year students at 17.2% (n=50).

### Perceived Level of English-speaking Proficiency

As shown in Table 3, results illustrates that the following indicators are associated with significance in terms of identifying the 291 Criminology students, as study revealed that the respondent's perceived level of English-speaking proficiency is 3.88, which measurement signifies that it is often observed that the students' English-speaking skill is high, meaning, they are frequently elaborate practicing, grammar, and communication.

Table 3. Perceived Level of English-speaking proficiency of the criminology students, n = 291

| Indicators | $\bar{x}$ | SD   |
|------------|-----------|------|
| Practicing | 3.76      | 0.69 |
| Grammar    | 3.93      | 0.69 |

|                |             |             |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Communication  | 3.94        | 0.80        |
| <b>Overall</b> | <b>3.14</b> | <b>0.30</b> |

**Practicing.** The items under the first indicator, established mean scores ranged from 4.05, indicating how respondents use new words and expressions while speaking, to 3.45 when asking speakers to repeat what they are saying and slow down, thus showing that the respondents' perceived level of English-speaking proficiency is high. This means that the respondents' measurement of English-speaking proficiency in terms of practice is often applied, ensuring they are knowledgeable in discovering new words and how to express them. As a result, a profound understanding of English-speaking proficiency would lead to higher enhancement and enable full implementation through practice.

Su and Sazalli (2024) showed most students prefer using interaction when learning in English-speaking as it is accessible and flexible in terms self-directed learning, and diverse teaching resources, further demonstrated the successful and effective implementation in English-speaking instruction as part of an educational reform process, with the use of regulation, confidence, supportive environment, and practice (Alhasan et. al., 2024).

**Grammar.** The items under the second indicator produced highly similar mean scores (4.08 to 3.65), indicating the difference in how students learned about the culture of English but did not apply it when speaking, which was interpreted as high. This means that the respondents' measurement of English-speaking proficiency in terms of practice is often observed. Likewise, students were eager to learn English; they try to expound on what they recognize, paying attention to pronunciation, the terms, and learn from their previous mistakes; however, they are not interested in using them while speaking. Moreover, to display enhanced fluency, accuracy, and proper construction of grammar while speaking, Sarabi et al. (2024) cited that emergent abilities are the most agreeable instructional interference, where students are encouraged to focus on actual application to achieve a good interaction and ensure a better way of delivering context.

**Communication.** While the last items under the third indicator showed minimal variation (4.05 to 3.79), this means that the respondents' measurement of English-speaking proficiency in terms of practice is often observed. That such reliability is shown implies that their practice is widely used and demonstrates involvement in communication activities that contribute to their development and ability. Tarabelsi et. al. (2024) discussed that students prefer to use interactional strategy which makes them seek for help from the people involved in the conversation, and helps them cope with the communication problems that they may encounter, as McDuffie (2021) emphasize the production of speaking as sending a message to a listener to intensify students' awareness about speaking and develop potential methods for educators is needed to expand their teaching efficacy (Deng, 2024).

The learning strategy for English-speaking ability is based on a system organized accurately to improve students' communication competency. As Zhang and Lu (2024) highlighted, students with greater exposure to English-speaking environments tend to demonstrate better speaking skills. Raj and Baisel (2024) concluded that when it comes to speaking proficiency it is crucial to develop the language learners' improvement in their communication skills by providing more opportunities, activities, and participation to practice in a group discussion to apply their knowledge, also, it is recommended that assisting students' oral competence in a way that suits their needs would also help them (Yuko et. al, 2022).

### Difference in the Perceived Level of English-speaking proficiency in terms of profile

As shown in Table 4, the Kruskal-Wallis tests revealed that gender identity was not associated with significant differences in English-speaking proficiency among the 291 criminology students. For the practicing indicator, mean ranks ranged from 117.10 (LGBTQ) to 151.70 (male), but this difference was not statistically significant,  $\chi^2(3) = 3.21$ ,  $p = .360$ . Similarly, the grammar indicator produced highly similar mean ranks across the four groups (141.90–149.96) and did not reach significance,  $\chi^2(3) = .25$ ,  $p = .969$ . Communication ranks also showed minimal variation (132.80–152.00) with  $\chi^2(3) = .16$ ,  $p = .984$ , and the overall proficiency scores (128.40–147.47) yielded  $\chi^2(3) = .36$ ,  $p = .949$ .

Table 4. Kruskal-Wallis test on the differences in the English-speaking proficiency of the criminology students when analyzed by gender

| Indicators    | Groups               | N   | Mean Rank | Chi-Square | df | Asymp. Sig. |
|---------------|----------------------|-----|-----------|------------|----|-------------|
| Practicing    | Female               | 79  | 134.02    | 3.209      | 3  | .360        |
|               | Male                 | 201 | 151.70    |            |    |             |
|               | LGBTQ                | 5   | 117.10    |            |    |             |
|               | Preferred Not to Say | 6   | 136.83    |            |    |             |
|               | Total                | 291 |           |            |    |             |
| Grammar       | Female               | 79  | 149.96    | .249       | 3  | .969        |
|               | Male                 | 201 | 144.63    |            |    |             |
|               | LGBTQ                | 5   | 141.90    |            |    |             |
|               | Preferred Not to Say | 6   | 143.25    |            |    |             |
|               | Total                | 291 |           |            |    |             |
| Communication | Female               | 79  | 146.48    | .158       | 3  | .984        |
|               | Male                 | 201 | 145.96    |            |    |             |
|               | LGBTQ                | 5   | 132.80    |            |    |             |
|               | Preferred Not to Say | 6   | 152.00    |            |    |             |
|               | Total                | 291 |           |            |    |             |
| Overall       | Female               | 79  | 143.37    | .357       | 3  | .949        |
|               | Male                 | 201 | 147.47    |            |    |             |
|               | LGBTQ                | 5   | 128.40    |            |    |             |
|               | Preferred Not to Say | 6   | 146.17    |            |    |             |
|               | Total                | 291 |           |            |    |             |

\* $p < 0.05$

Taken together, these results indicate that female, male, LGBTQ, and “preferred not to say” participants reported comparable levels of English-speaking ability across all measured dimensions. Thus, Lin et al. (2025) exposed that there is no significant difference between genders, as they display similar levels of learning. Ma and Abdul (2022) also demonstrated that the respondents' genders did not differ significantly in their strategy use, which did not influence speaking efficacy (Hoesny et al., 2023).

As shown in Table 5, the Kruskal-Wallis analysis indicated that students' age was unrelated to their English-speaking proficiency. For the practicing indicator, mean ranks were nearly identical across the three age groups—146.92 for 18–21-year-olds, 142.91 for 22–24-year-olds, and 148.58 for 25–28-year-olds—and the test was not significant,  $\chi^2(2) = 0.13$ ,  $p = .939$ . Grammar proficiency did not differ by age (mean ranks of 148.81, 137.96, and 137.25, respectively;  $\chi^2(2) = 0.94$ ,  $p = .624$ ). Communication scores showed slightly higher ranks for the 22–24 group (159.16) compared to the others (141.94 and 140.75), but this variation was non-significant,  $\chi^2(2) = 2.23$ ,  $p = .327$ . Overall proficiency mean ranks (145.53, 147.65, and 144.08) likewise produced a negligible  $\chi^2(2) = 0.04$ ,  $p = .982$ . Thus, there is no evidence that age category influences any dimension of English-speaking ability in this sample.

Table 5. Kruskal-Wallis test on the differences in the English-speaking proficiency of the criminology students when analyzed by age

| Indicators    | Groups          | N   | Mean Rank | Chi-Square | df | Asymp. Sig. |
|---------------|-----------------|-----|-----------|------------|----|-------------|
| Practicing    | 18-21 years old | 216 | 146.92    | .126       | 2  | .939        |
|               | 22-24 years old | 69  | 142.91    |            |    |             |
|               | 25-28 years old | 6   | 148.58    |            |    |             |
|               | Total           | 291 |           |            |    |             |
| Grammar       | 18-21 years old | 216 | 148.81    | .944       | 2  | .624        |
|               | 22-24 years old | 69  | 137.96    |            |    |             |
|               | 25-28 years old | 6   | 137.25    |            |    |             |
|               | Total           | 291 |           |            |    |             |
| Communication | 18-21 years old | 216 | 141.94    | 2.233      | 2  | .327        |
|               | 22-24 years old | 69  | 159.16    |            |    |             |
|               | 25-28 years old | 6   | 140.75    |            |    |             |
|               | Total           | 291 |           |            |    |             |
| Overall       | 18-21 years old | 216 | 145.53    | .037       | 2  | .982        |
|               | 22-24 years old | 69  | 147.65    |            |    |             |
|               | 25-28 years old | 6   | 144.08    |            |    |             |
|               | Total           | 291 |           |            |    |             |

\* $p < 0.05$

In addition, as cited by Roberts (2024), Brucki and Rocha analyzed the age of the students who responded to the survey, indicating that age is not a predictor of fluency scores. Peyvandi and Goudarzpouraragh (2022) also calculated and critically assessed that this factor does not affect the speaking performance of learners, but helps identify strategies, motivational levels, and explore ways to improve proficiency (Amoah & Yeboah, 2021).

As shown in Table 6, the Kruskal–Wallis tests revealed that English-speaking proficiency differed significantly by year level across all four indicators. For the practicing dimension, mean ranks were 164.52 for first-year students, 99.22 for second-year students, 166.29 for third-year students, and 135.51 for fourth-year students,  $\chi^2(3) = 30.05$ ,  $p < .001$ . Grammar proficiency similarly varied—mean ranks of 164.49, 91.11, 170.32, and 137.78, respectively— $\chi^2(3) = 39.69$ ,  $p < .001$ . Communication scores followed the same pattern (first = 152.26; second = 95.25; third = 166.43; fourth = 159.61),  $\chi^2(3) = 30.77$ ,  $p < .001$ . Finally, overall proficiency mean ranks (160.97, 90.24, 169.80, and 145.47) produced  $\chi^2(3) = 38.13$ ,  $p < .001$ . In each case, second-year students had the lowest ranks while third-year (and, to a lesser extent, first-year) students had the highest. These findings indicate that year level is strongly associated with differences in English-speaking ability, with proficiency peaking in the middle years of the program.

Table 6. Kruskal-Wallis test on the differences in the English-speaking proficiency of the criminology students when analyzed by year level

| Indicators | Groups     | N  | Mean Rank | Chi-Square | df | Asymp. Sig. |
|------------|------------|----|-----------|------------|----|-------------|
| Practicing | First Year | 79 | 164.52    | 30.052*    | 3  | .000        |

|               |             |     |        |         |   |      |
|---------------|-------------|-----|--------|---------|---|------|
|               | Second Year | 63  | 99.22  |         |   |      |
|               | Third Year  | 99  | 166.29 |         |   |      |
|               | Fourth Year | 50  | 135.51 |         |   |      |
|               | Total       | 291 |        |         |   |      |
| Grammar       | First Year  | 79  | 164.49 | 39.693* | 3 | .000 |
|               | Second Year | 63  | 91.11  |         |   |      |
|               | Third Year  | 99  | 170.32 |         |   |      |
|               | Fourth Year | 50  | 137.78 |         |   |      |
|               | Total       | 291 |        |         |   |      |
| Communication | First Year  | 79  | 152.26 | 30.774* | 3 | .000 |
|               | Second Year | 63  | 95.25  |         |   |      |
|               | Third Year  | 99  | 166.43 |         |   |      |
|               | Fourth Year | 50  | 159.61 |         |   |      |
|               | Total       | 291 |        |         |   |      |
| Overall       | First Year  | 79  | 160.97 | 38.133* | 3 | .000 |
|               | Second Year | 63  | 90.24  |         |   |      |
|               | Third Year  | 99  | 169.80 |         |   |      |
|               | Fourth Year | 50  | 145.47 |         |   |      |
|               | Total       | 291 |        |         |   |      |

\* $p < 0.05$

Nora et al., as cited by DeRosa (2023), calculated that institutions began to focus on retaining second-year students. Sha et al. (2025) found that students' motivation is ignored mainly at the intermediate level, and it is essential for instructors to motivate students and encourage them to speak English. In line with this, low vocabulary, difficulty with grammar, fear of being ridiculed, and lack of communication can vary significantly by year level (Rahayu et al., 2020). Moreover, another study by Sihotang et al. (2021) and Suparlan (2021) found that individuals naturally possess speaking skills and can be acquired through learning, especially in English, resulting in the development of fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and comprehension as skills.

## Enhancement Plan

### Program

Title: English-speaking Involvement Workshop

### Rationale:

Based on the results analyzed, the researchers propose a three-day program that would suit the target group, second-year Criminology students at UM Digos College. In this program, researchers gathered data to enhance the English-speaking Involvement Workshop, where all participants were required to practice and improve their English skills. As shown in Table 6, it is clear that second-year students need to expand, nurture, and refine their vocabulary to help prepare them for their future careers.

Mohammed (2020) declared English as a tool for cross-cultural communication, a means of achieving success, and a lingua franca or a fad. Table 6 indicates that most 2nd-year students at UM Digos College experienced difficulty with speaking proficiency, which differed significantly across all year levels. In resolution to this,

Zaragoza (2023) added that programs such as workshops is essential for learners to receive equal opportunities to participate from the activity in English-speaking, with the support and encouragement from the faculty and other students of their department, and cited a suggestion about the need to implement the program for the success of English learners by providing them quality education that closes the achievement gap.

During the 3-day program, students were encouraged to interact in English as much as possible. They would be provided with scenarios to use the medium, which can help motivate them and keep them engaged in learning the language. Some students may feel shy while speaking in front of others, so giving them chances to talk in smaller, more private settings can be helpful. Students are divided into groups for activities and provided with resources from the department, emphasizing the importance of promoting academic success.

Table 7. Program Plan of the Activity

| Objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Plan of Activities                                            | Persons Involved                                                       | Time Frame                         | Materials Needed                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| To be able the students have confidence while speaking, have fluency in public interaction, and engage in activities such as; impromptu, oral interpretation, extemporaneous, and informative speech, develop a critical thinking and argumentative skills. | Speech Competition and Debate with Guidance and Demonstration | All DCJE Professors, Guest Speaker, and 2nd year Criminology students  | First Day                          | Papers and Pen, Sound System (speakers), Projector and Screen      |
| To enhance English-speaking proficiency of criminology students (2nd year), and provide them academic support in proper usage or construction of grammar, improve vocabulary and oral based interactions.                                                   | English Language Peer Mentoring                               | 2nd year and Upper-year Criminology students                           | Second Day (First Session)         | Books related on Speaking, Papers and Pens                         |
| To allow students to participate technology-based resources into English-speaking learning, by providing accessible and interactive platforms, where they learn how to access and use them.                                                                 | Digital Resources and Support Tools                           | Selected DCJE Professors, and 2nd year Criminology Students            | Second Day (Second Session)        | Computer Laboratory and Stable Internet connection                 |
| To expand students listening and reading efficiency, vocabulary acquisition, understanding of context-based communication, enhance critical thinking and analytical skills.                                                                                 | English Movie Marathon with In-depth Analyzation and Reviews  | Selected DCJE Professors, Upper-year and 2nd year Criminology students | Third Day (Closing of the Program) | Projector, Laptop, Sound System (with Microphone) and Certificates |

These program activities will help enrich the students' abilities and support them in their language growth, confidence, and collaborative competence. This would also enhance the Criminology students' learning engagement, improve their English-speaking performance, and effectively foster both academic and real-life aptitude.

## CONCLUSION

This study aimed to determine the perceived English-speaking proficiency among Criminology students at UM Digos College and to prepare an enhancement program. Using a quantitative descriptive-comparative approach, the researchers identified three distinct indicators: practicing, grammar, and communication. The gathered data indicate that the majority of respondents were male, aged 18 to 21 years old, and third-year students, with a perceived level of English-speaking proficiency being high. Moreover, the determined perceived level of

English-speaking proficiency, based on the respondents' profiles, resulted in no significant difference in terms of age and gender; however, it differed significantly by year level across all four indicators, as English-speaking ability is strongly associated with the second year of the program. The findings indicated that second-year students exhibited the lowest proficiency rankings. The three-day enhancement program aims to enable students to improve their oral communication skills through interactive activities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study results have helped the researchers formulate and provide advice and some tips, and these are the following recommendations.

Criminology students can practice speaking English and apply it in actual conversations, learn and clarify terms they do not understand, and participate in an enhancement program to effectively improve and develop their oral communication skills.

Administrators may provide strategies, materials, and activities that focus on inspiring students to practice speaking more, thereby improving the oral competency of students in relation to English-speaking proficiency. Faculty might develop and enhance new programs that aid criminology students in their applications to various organizations, offering them a wide range of opportunities, by implementing activities, inviting guest speakers, and providing the necessary resources.

Future researchers could expand their studies to assess and identify the differences in determining students' perceived level of English-speaking proficiency. They could also consider creating accessible and effective programs and activities that work sufficiently for the targeted students, implementing their suggestions, and using the findings as a reference.

## REFERENCES

1. Alhasan, R. F., Huwari, I. F., Alqaryouti, M. H., Sadeq, A. E., Alkhalidi, A. A., & Alruzzi, K. A. (2024). Confronting English-speaking anxiety: A qualitative study of Jordanian undergraduates at Zarqa University. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 15(6), 1782-1790. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1506.03>
2. Ayawan, J. E., Duyapat, N. O., & Martin, A. B. (2022). An analysis of the oral communication barriers in face-to-face communications towards the development of an intervention program in speaking. *SocSci. J.*, 31, 183. <https://doi.org/10.47577/tssj.v31i1.6487>.
3. Bandura, A. (1969). Social-learning theory of identificatory processes. *Handbook of socialization theory and research*, 213, 262. <https://dl.icdst.org/pdfs/files4/7d2b55f8203eced977f6618f17e820e2.pdf>
4. Bautista, R.A. & Del Valle, J.M. (2023). Communicative Competence and Oral Language Usage of Filipino Learners in English. *International Journal of Educational Management and Development Studies*, 4 (1), 1 - 23. <https://doi.org/10.53378/352957>
5. Cerna, J. C. a. D. (2020). Level of English proficiency of freshman criminology students in the University of Eastern Philippines. *IJEMS*. <https://doi.org/10.14445/23939125/IJEMS-V6I2P113>
6. DeRosa, E. L. (2023). Academic advising's hidden role in fostering validation/belonging leading to improved grades. *NACADA journal*, 43(2), 121-135. <https://meridian.allenpress.com/nacada-journal/article/43/2/121/498954>
7. Dyshkant, O. V., Dichek, N. P., Beschastnyy, V. M., Savishchenko, V. M., & Hurskyi, V. Y. (2021). Pedagogical and psychological settings for training of student lawyers in framed professional communication. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 5(11), 77-87. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2021-0107>
8. Eclarin, J. K. G. (2021). Competencies covered, classroom strategies, and assessments of Senior High School English Teachers on selected schools in Iloilo City (Unpublished master's thesis). Central Philippine University. <https://repository.cpu.edu.ph/handle/20500.12852/1449>
9. Green, C. (2021). The oral language productive vocabulary profile of Children Starting School: A resource for teachers. *Australian Journal of Education*, 65(1), 41–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0004944120982771>.

10. Hoesny, M. U., Setyosari, P., Praherdhiono, H., & Suryati, N. (2023). The correlation of speaking self-efficacy, speaking proficiency and gender in esp context. *Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction*, 13(2), 191-199. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1386745.pdf>
11. Kabbellow, J. K., Omulando, C., & Barasa, P. L. (2020). Oral communication challenges encountered during the instruction of English language in secondary schools in Kenya. <https://doi.org/10.24940/ijird/2020/v9/i2/FEB20062>
12. Kashinathan, S., & Aziz, A. A. (2021). ESL learners' challenges in speaking English in Malaysian classroom. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 10(2), 983–991. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v10-i2/10355>
13. Lin, Y., Mohamad, M., & Mahmud, M. I. (2025). Exploring the relationship between English-speaking self-efficacy and English learning motivation among polytechnic EFL learners. <https://aweij.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/4.pdf>
14. Liu, Z., Guo R., & Tian M. (2023). The effect of teacher gender on students' academic achievements: based on the perspective of Teacher-student gender matches, education and economy, 39(3), 64-74. <https://bonoi.org/index.php/bece/article/download/1166/756/2471>
15. Ma, R., & Abdul Samat, N. (2022). Chinese undergraduate students' language learning strategy use in flipped English learning and its relationships to gender and proficiency. 170-184. [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=4273646](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4273646)
16. McDuffie, A. (2021). Verbal communication. In: Volkmar, F.R. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders*. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91280-6\\_1709](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91280-6_1709)
17. Melendrez, A., Betco M., & Tongco, R. (2020). Studying the Students Potential in Speaking Skills. <https://www.slideshare.net/slideshow/survey-questionnaire-228232171/228232171>
18. Meniado, J. C. (2020). Demographic variables and English proficiency of adult language learners: A correlational study. *education quarterly reviews*, 2(1), 52-66. <https://doi.org/10.31014/aior.1993.02.01.38>
19. Mohammed, M. A. A. (2020). English language and globalization. *Intl. J of Novel Research in Education and Learning*, 7(1), 5-11. <https://www.noveltyjournals.com/upload/paper/English%20Language%20and%20Globalization-2182.pdf>
20. Okio, P. (2023). The Effect of Gender Differences on Foreign Language Learning. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4(2), 28-39. <https://doi.org/10.47604/ijl.1872>
21. Owen, T. E. (2021). Variance approximation approaches for the local pivotal method. <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/variance-approximation-approaches-local-pivotal/docview/2559386277/se-2>
22. Palmero, G. M. G. (2020). Oral communication proficiency and learning engagement of grade 11 students in English. *Global Scientific Journal*, Vol 7 (8). [https://www.globalscientificjournal.com/researchpaper/ORAL\\_COMMUNICATION\\_PROFICIENCY\\_AND\\_LEARNING\\_ENGAGEMENT\\_OF\\_GRADE\\_11\\_STUDENTS\\_IN\\_ENGLISH.pdf](https://www.globalscientificjournal.com/researchpaper/ORAL_COMMUNICATION_PROFICIENCY_AND_LEARNING_ENGAGEMENT_OF_GRADE_11_STUDENTS_IN_ENGLISH.pdf)
23. Peyvandi, A., & Goudarzpouraragh, A. (2022). Investigating the relationship between age and speaking strategies of adults in German language learning (Elementary level). *Journal of Foreign Language Research*, 12(2), 92-110. <https://doi.org/10.22059/jflr.2022.335414.920>
24. Rahayu, A. S., Anggraeni, E. A., Saputra, I., Astari, N. U., Betiya, V. M., & Septiyana, L. (2020). Analyzing speaking problems faced by EFL colleges learners. *lexeme: Journal of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics*, 2(1), 11. <https://doi.org/10.32493/ljlal.v2i1.6990>
25. Raj, Kewin Anten, Jr, & Baisel, A. (2024). Mobile learning and verbal proficiency: A cross-sectional study investigating English speaking skills enhancement. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 15(5), 1409-1418. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1505.03>
26. Roberts, S. M. (2024). The effect of age, education, and early speech and language therapy on aphasia outcomes and recovery (Doctoral dissertation, UCL. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10194455/>
27. Sarabi S., Rashtchi, M., & Rezaie, G. (2024). The effects of interactionist versus interventionist dynamic assessment models on Iranian EFL learners' speaking sub-skills: a mixed-method study. *Asian Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 9(1), 12. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-023-00237-x>

28. Siedlecki, S. (2020). Understanding descriptive research designs and methods. *Clinical nurse specialist CNS*, 34, 8-12. <https://doi.org/10.1097/NUR.0000000000000493>.
29. Sihotang, A., Sitanggang, F., Hasugian, N., & Saragih, E. (2021). The Effective way to develop speaking skills. *Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 9(1), 188–196. <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v9i1.1777>
30. Su, D., & Sazalli, N. (2024). The attitudes of Chinese college students towards utilizing blended learning to enhance their English-speaking skills. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 15(4), 1117-1127. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1504.09>
31. Suparlan, S. (2021). Factors contributing students' speaking anxiety. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 9(2), 160-169. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v9i2.3321>
32. Tarabelsi, N., Aboud, F., & Shamsi, A. F. (2024). Investigating Arab students' communication strategies in speaking English as a medium of instruction. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol15no2.16>
33. Yuko, G. B., Lee, J., & Peng, X. (2022). Failed policy attempts for measuring English speaking abilities in college entrance exams: Cases from China, Japan, and South Korea. *English Today*, 38(4), 271-277. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078420000346>
34. Zaragoza, G. L. (2023). A quantitative analysis of Latinx English learner reading and mathematics achievement in a dual language immersion program in the new Latinx diaspora. <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/quantitative-analysis-latinx-english-learner/docview/2806406760/se-2>
35. Zhang, G., & Lu, H. (2024). Impact of English-speaking environments and Chinese language pronunciation on the speaking proficiency of English learners in China: A comprehensive study. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 53(3), 45. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-024-10065-wSPSS Outputs>