



A Linguistic Odyssey toward Employability: A Tracer Study of the Academic and Professional Development Pathways of AB English Language Graduates

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aims to analyze graduates' demographic profiles, employment status, skills application, and satisfaction dimensions related to leadership, communication, management, and personal development, by situating these outcomes within broader socio-educational expectations about employability and workforce readiness.

Methodology: Using a descriptive research design and complete enumeration, data were collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms. The variables included age, gender, civil status, year of graduation, employment status, job position, salary range, and reasons for unemployment. Descriptive statistics were employed to examine patterns in employment conditions, skill utilization, and job satisfaction.

Main Findings: Most respondents were 22–35 years old, female, single, and recent graduates (2024). Most graduates were employed, while others pursued further studies, reflecting diverse post-graduation pathways. Employed respondents commonly held contractual or regular positions, with monthly earnings ranging from ₱10,000 to ₱20,000. Communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills were identified as essential competencies in the workplace. Salaries and benefits were the most influential factors in job acceptance and retention. While graduates reported overall job satisfaction, they highlighted the need for improved workplace communication, clearer feedback mechanisms, and enhanced opportunities for personal and professional development.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study provides one of the limited tracer-based analyses focusing specifically on AB English Language graduates in the Philippine context. Beyond documenting employment outcomes, it underscores the social significance of tracer studies in evaluating higher education's responsiveness to labor market realities and graduates' socio-economic integration. The findings offer evidence-based insights for curriculum enhancement—particularly through project-based learning and qualitative, skills-oriented pedagogies—to strengthen graduate preparedness, career mobility, and long-term professional sustainability.

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1. INTRODUCTION

As the global job market undergoes rapid transformation, higher education institutions face increasing pressure to equip graduates with the necessary skills to thrive in a complex and competitive world. While academic knowledge remains crucial, institutions must prioritize the development of a strong foundation in 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, creativity, adaptability, and collaboration skills [1].

Educational institutions have a fundamental responsibility to equip their graduates with the necessary competencies and ensure their employability [2]. Higher education institutions should cultivate highly skilled graduates who can contribute to national development [3]. However, while the number of tertiary graduates continues to rise, there is a significant portion that remains inadequately prepared for the workforce [4]. To address this challenge, higher education institutions must ensure their programs are relevant and adaptable. This requires aligning curriculum with industry standards and conducting regular graduate tracer studies, as mandated by Commission on Higher Education through National Higher Education Research Agenda 2 (NHERA-2). These studies are crucial for program accreditation and provide insights into graduate outcomes, ensuring that institutions meet the evolving needs of the workforce [5]. While English language education equips graduates with valuable skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication, there is a lack of specific research on the employment outcomes of AB English Language graduates in the Philippines [6]. There is limited empirical evidence on how specific programs, such as AB English Language, effectively equip graduates with the necessary 21st-century skills. This is particularly evident in the Philippines, where the unemployment rate among young graduates remains high [7].

The employability of graduates has become a critical concern for higher education institutions. It ensures that graduates possess the necessary skills and competencies to thrive in a complex and competitive world. While previous studies have explored the broader value of English Language skills, there is also a need of more focused research on the specific programs like AB English Language. Tracking the career paths of university graduates has become crucial in evaluating the effectiveness of higher education. Researchers are increasingly interested in understanding how well universities prepare students for the workforce and in identifying factors that contribute to successful career outcomes [8]. To ensure that academic programs remain relevant and effective on preparing graduates for the workforce, regular evaluations should be made [9].

This study investigated the career experiences and outcomes of graduates from the Bachelor of Arts in English Language at the University of Southern Mindanao. Specifically, it examined the graduates' employment status, job satisfaction, and how their education has prepared them for their careers. This study provided a valuable insight for both graduates and the university in improving the program's effectiveness and ensuring that it equips students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the dynamic job market.

This study, conducted at the University of Southern Mindanao during the academic year 2024-2025. It investigated the career paths and employment outcomes of Bachelor of Arts in English Language graduates from 2022 to 2024. Specifically, it examined the graduates' demographic profiles, encompassing age, gender, civil status, and year of graduation, and their employment profiles, including current employment status, employment location, time taken to secure initial employment, indicators of job acceptance and retention gross monthly income, and initial job level. Furthermore, the research identifies the most useful skills acquired during their college education and assesses their level of job satisfaction across motivation and compensation, leadership and communication, and management and personal development factors. The findings of this tracer study are expected to yield a comprehensive overview of the graduates' postgraduate experiences, which will not only showcase the effectiveness of the BA English Language program and its capacity to foster diverse career opportunities but also provide essential data for the program's self-assessment and curriculum development. This study is grounded in Human Capital Theory, pioneered by economist Gary S. Becker [10] as cited in Cornillez et al. [11]. Human Capital Theory suggests that investments in education and training enhance an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities, leading to increased economic value and employability. The theory emphasizes the role of education in equipping individuals with transferable skills, such as communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving, which are highly sought after by employers across various industries [12].

In educational research, this theoretical perspective is widely used to explain how academic preparation translates into workplace competence. Human Capital Theory in the context of education refers to the skills and knowledge obtained by the students that serves as their foundation for future endeavors and success in workplace [13]. Human Capital Theory encourages educational programs to develop well-rounded individuals capable of adapting to changing workplace demands. This not only benefits graduates by increasing their career flexibility and long-term employability, but it also helps employers find skilled workers who can contribute meaningfully across various situations.

Furthermore, this theory provides a valuable lens for examining how the AB English Language program in University of Southern Mindanao contributes to the human capital development of its graduates. This will explore how the program equips the graduates with transferable skills necessary to navigate the job market. To

complement the economic and skills-based focus of Human Capital Theory, this study is also anchored in Tomlinson's Graduate Capital Model by Michael Tomlinson [14], which suggested that the success of graduates in the job market is influenced by a multifaceted resource, not just technical skills.

There are five key capital types that graduates possessed that contribute to their success in the 21st century job market: human capital, social capital, cultural capital, psychological capital, and identity capital. This model provides comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to the graduate employability beyond just technical skills. It highlights the five key capitals and how are these utilized to navigate the job market and achieve career success. Hence, by understanding the purpose of this model, institutions can identify the strengths of the students and hone these capitals that will lead them to success in their future job [14].

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design to track the post-graduation experiences of AB English graduates from 2022 to 2024, providing an overview of their career paths, employment outcomes, and skill utilization [10]. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and cross-tabulations were used to analyze employment trends and patterns among graduates [11]. To strengthen the social dimension of the analysis, the study examined the relationships between selected socio-demographic variables—such as gender, family background, and type of employment—to determine how social factors influence employment opportunities and career trajectories [12]. These relationships were interpreted within broader social and labor market contexts, recognizing the role of socioeconomic status and gender dynamics in shaping graduate outcomes [13]. The findings provide empirical bases for recommendations in social and educational policy, particularly in promoting equitable access to employment, improving curriculum relevance, and strengthening institutional support for graduate transition to the workforce [14].

2.2. Respondents

The respondents of this study are all graduates of the AB English Language program from the academic years 2022 to 2024. A complete enumeration approach was employed, wherein all identified graduates within the specified period were invited to participate in the study to ensure comprehensive coverage of the target population. However, the analysis was based solely on the responses that were successfully retrieved and validated during the data collection process. This approach allowed the study to capture a broad range of post-graduation experiences while acknowledging the practical limitations of response availability. Despite this limitation, the obtained responses were considered sufficient to provide a meaningful representation of graduates' employment outcomes and career trajectories.

2.3. Sampling Procedure

This study used complete enumeration approach to select respondents which aimed to include all AB English Language graduates from the University of Southern Mindanao between the years 2022 and 2024. However, while all graduates are invited to participate, the study's analysis were only based from graduates who chose to respond. Limited participations were attributed to various factors, including constrained by work schedules, time allocation, and difficulty in contacting other graduates.

2.4. Research Instrument

The survey questionnaire used in this study was adapted from the Commission on Higher Education Graduate Tracer Survey, which is a nationally recognized and standardized instrument for assessing graduate employability and job outcomes. Content validity is ensured as the instrument covers essential domains such as employment status, job relevance, and skills utilization that are aligned with the objectives of the study. To further establish validity, the modified instrument was reviewed by subject-matter experts in language education and research methodology to ensure clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items for AB English graduates. Minor revisions were made based on expert feedback to improve item wording and contextual suitability. These procedures ensured that the instrument adequately measured the intended variables of the study.

2.5. Data Collection Procedure

To collect the data, the researcher identified respondents by complete enumeration approach. The standard modified standard Graduate Tracer Survey questionnaire developed by Commission on Higher Education and Tracer Study on the employability and job satisfaction were used as the primary instrument for data collection. This survey was designed to gather quantitative data from all of AB English Language graduates from the University of Southern Mindanao between the years 2022 to 2024. The survey is self-administered and was conducted online through google forms. Participation is voluntary and all responses were kept confidential.

2.6. Data Analysis Procedure

The data were collected through the Graduate Tracer Study Survey administered via Google Forms to facilitate efficient distribution and retrieval of responses from the graduates. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequencies, percentages, means, and corresponding verbal interpretations to summarize the respondents' employment characteristics. This method enabled the researcher to examine the distribution of graduates across different employment categories, including employment status, job alignment, and sector of work. Descriptive analysis also provided a clear overview of trends in graduates' career paths and skill utilization after graduation. Overall, this approach allowed for a systematic and objective interpretation of the data, supporting meaningful conclusions relevant to graduate employability and program outcomes.

2.7. Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in a manner that respects the rights and privacy of all respondents. Respondents are fully informed about the purpose of the study, their participation, and the potential benefits and risks through informed consent forms which were obtained from each respondent prior to their involvement in the study. While their full participation in the study was necessary, respondents had the right to withdraw at any point without any adverse consequences. All collected data were treated with utmost confidentiality and were only used exclusively for the purposes of this research. The researcher has adhered to all relevant guidelines and regulations to ensure that the study is conducted ethically and responsibly, protecting the rights and the well-being of the participants.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Demographic Profile

Age. The age distribution of the survey respondents revealed a range from 22 to 35 years old. The data indicates a concentration within the mid- twenties age bracket. While 33.8% of respondents were 24 years old, and 32.5% were 23 years old. Participants, aged 22 and 25, represented 14.3% and 11.8% of the sample, respectively. The remaining age groups, including ages 26, 27, and 35, comprised a smaller percentage, each below 3%.

The concentration of respondents in the 23-24 age bracket aligns with the typical age of recent college graduates in the Philippines, reflecting the early career stages of these AB English Language graduates. Tracer studies often capture this demographic as they track the initial employment outcomes of graduates shortly after their academic programs (Commission on Higher Education, 2020). This age group is relevant to the report of Creswell & Creswell [15], that ages 21 to 24 are the ideal ages of college graduate who were products of K to 12 Curriculum to secure employment.

Recent tracer studies have shown that the transition from higher education to the workforce is a critical period, with graduates facing various challenges in securing stable employment [15], [16]. The age distribution in this study suggests that the respondents' experiences are particularly relevant to understanding these early career transitions. Graduates who aged 22 might have pursued education at an early stage and took smaller units. The relatively lower representation of older age brackets 26-35 might indicate that these individuals have either moved into more advanced career stages or have potentially pursued further education or career shifts. This is consistent with findings in other tracer studies, where older graduates may have already established themselves in their respective fields, influencing their participation in surveys focused on early career experiences [16].

The findings are also supported by research on graduate employability, which highlights the importance of the first few years after graduation in establishing career paths and building professional networks [17]. The respondents' age distribution underscores the significance of understanding the challenges and opportunities faced by recent graduates as they navigate the transition from academia to the professional world. In the Philippines, the age distribution also reflects the country's demographic profile, with a huge number of youth population entering the work force. This highlights the importance of aligning higher education's curricula with the needs of the labor market to ensure successful transitions for young graduates [18].

Sex. As shown, most of the respondents were female (76.3%), while 23.7% were male. There is a gender disparity observed in this study, with a predominant female representation, is a notable characteristic that warrants further examination. The high percentage of female respondents (76.3%) suggests a potential trend in the distribution of graduates from AB English Language programs or reflects a broader pattern in the professions typically pursued by these graduates.

The dominance of female graduates might be attributed to the perceived perception that the career paths and opportunities of the program are historically and stereotypically dominated by females, which might be the opposite for the career choices for most males. This gender imbalance may reflect societal trends where certain humanities and language-related fields are often perceived as more aligned with female interests or aptitudes [19]. Studies have shown that gender role socialization can influence academic and career choices, leading to a higher concentration of women in fields such as education, communication, and language studies [20].

In the Philippines, the high representation of female graduates in language-related fields may also be linked to cultural and societal norms that emphasize nurturing and communicative roles for women [21]. These

norms can influence career aspirations and choices, leading to a higher proportion of women pursuing degrees in humanities and social sciences. Moreover, tracer studies in the Philippines have indicated that female graduates often exhibit higher participation rates in certain professions, such as teaching and customer service, which are common career paths for AB English Language graduates [22]. This may explain the higher representation of female respondents in this study. It is important to acknowledge that gender disparities in academic and professional fields can have implications for career opportunities and advancement. Understanding the factors that contribute to these disparities is crucial for promoting gender equality and ensuring equitable outcomes for all graduates.

Civil Status. The data indicates that most of the participants at 96.1% identified as single, while a small minority at 3.9% are being married. The overwhelmingly high percentage of single respondents in this study might signify that most graduates prioritize building their career first before marital unions. Given that the age distribution of respondents is primarily within the early to mid-twenties, this result is relevant. Establishing careers and gaining professional experience often takes precedence over forming marital unions.

The small percentage 3.9% of married respondents might represent individuals who chose to marry earlier or who have established partnerships while pursuing their education. This minority group could offer unique perspectives on balancing early career development with family life. In the Philippine context, where family structures and traditions hold significant cultural value, the timing of marriage is often influenced by socioeconomic factors. Young professionals frequently prioritize securing stable employment and financial independence before considering marriage [23].

Tracer studies in the Philippines focusing on recent graduates have also reported a similar trend, indicating that most graduates are single as they enter the workforce (Commission on Higher Education, 2020). The high percentage of single respondents in this study may therefore reflect the typical demographic profile of recent AB English Language graduates. The civil status of graduates can influence various aspects of their career trajectories, including geographical mobility, financial planning, and work-life balance. Understanding the distribution of civil status within this sample can provide valuable insights into the social and economic contexts influencing the professional experiences of AB English Language graduates.

Year of Graduation. The table shows the number of respondents graduated in the years 2022, 2023, and 2024. The most frequent year of graduation was 2024 with 57.14%, followed by 2023 with 25.97%, and 2022 with 16.88%. The data indicates that the sample primarily consists of recent graduates, with a majority having graduated in the last two years. This suggests a focus on the most recent experiences and outcomes of the AB English Language program graduates. The distribution of graduation years among the respondents indicates a strong representation of recent graduates, with a significant majority having graduated in 2024. This concentration of very recent graduates suggests that the survey effectively captured the immediate post-graduation experiences of AB English Language students.

The predominance of 2024 graduates at 55.8% likely reflects the timing of the survey, which was conducted relatively soon after their graduation. This high representation is typical in tracer studies, which aim to gather data on graduates' initial employment outcomes and experiences shortly after they complete their academic programs [22]. The presence of graduates from 2023 at 27.3% and 2022 at 16.9% provides a broader perspective, allowing for comparisons across different cohorts. These earlier graduates may offer insights into how career trajectories evolve over time and how experiences may differ for those who have been in the workforce for a slightly longer period. The recent nature of the respondents' graduation years underscores the relevance of the findings to current trends in graduate employability and the transition from academia to the professional world. This is particularly important in the Philippine context, where the labor market is dynamic and evolving rapidly.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Age	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
24	26	33.8
23	25	32.5
22	11	14.3
25	10	12.9
26	2	2.6
27	2	2.6
35	1	1.3
Sex		
Female	58	75.3
Male	19	24.7
Civil Status		
Single	74	96.1
Married	3	3.9
Year of Graduation		

2024	43	55.8
2023	21	27.3
2022	13	16.9
N=	77	100

3.2. Employment status

Employment Status. As shown in the table, 70.1% of the respondents were employed, 28.6% were unemployed, and a small percentage 1.3 % indicated they had never been employed. The data reveals that majority of the AB English Language graduates surveyed are employed at 70.13%. This indicates a relatively high employment rate among the respondents. However, a portion at 28.57% reported being unemployed, highlighting potential challenges in the transition from graduation to employment. The 1.30% who have never been employed likely represent recent graduates still actively seeking their first job.

The 70.13% employment rate among graduates reveals that the AB English Language program is producing graduates that possess necessary skills and qualifications that are valued and highly sought after by employers. This result is consistent with findings in recent tracer studies in the Philippines, which often report varying employment rates depending on the specific programs and industries surveyed. According to Odilovna [24], the ability of graduates to secure employment is influenced by factors such as industry demand, the relevance of skills acquired during their education, and the overall economic landscape.

The 28.57% unemployment rate among the respondents is a concern that merits further investigation. This data suggests that some graduates might have potential challenges in the labor market for AB English Language graduates, including pursuing advance or further study, no job opportunity, and lack of work experience. The small percentage 1.30% of respondents who have never been employed may represent very recent graduates still in the process of seeking their first job. This is typical in the early stages of a tracer study, where some graduates are still transitioning into the workforce.

The data indicates that pursuing advanced studies is the primary driver of unemployment among the surveyed AB English Language graduates. This suggests that a portion of these graduates are prioritizing further education to enhance their qualifications or pursue specific career paths. This aligns with the study of Monteiro et al., [25] where individuals seek advanced degrees to improve their employability and career prospects. It was also found that pursuing advanced degrees can lead to higher earnings and better job opportunities in the long term. This may explain why some of the unemployed respondents are prioritizing further studies.

Recent studies by Goulart et al., [26] highlight the importance of aligning higher education curricula with the demands of the labor market to enhance graduate employability and emphasized that unemployment among recent graduates is often linked to a mismatch between the skills acquired in college and the requirements of available jobs. According to Garcia & Kleyn [27], the need for practical, industry-relevant training is crucial in reducing graduate unemployment.

Present Work Status. As shown in the table, the most common present employment status was contractual with 42.59%, followed by regular or permanent with 37.04%. Other statuses were self-employed with 11.11%, temporary with 9.26% which represented small percentages. The data reveals that contractual employment is the most prevalent work status among the employed AB English Language graduates, closely followed by regular or permanent positions. This suggests that most of the graduates do not have tenure of office, and this might be attributed to various reasons, including pursuing advance studies or gaining experience. This distribution highlights the evolving nature of employment in the contemporary labor market, where non-permanent work arrangements are increasingly common.

The high percentage of contractual employment may also reflect the flexibility and project-based nature of certain industries that employed AB English Language graduates, such as content creation, online education, and customer service. Recent studies have shown a growing trend towards flexible work arrangements, including contractual and freelance positions, especially among younger professionals. It was found that contractual employment can offer flexibility and autonomy, but it may also lead to job insecurity and lower benefits compared to permanent positions [28].

The 37.04% in regular or permanent positions suggests that a huge portion of graduates have also secured stable employment, which might imply that the skills they acquired and developed from the program are thriving within their workplace, which is essential for long-term career development and financial security. This finding aligns with the importance of job stability in early career stages, as emphasized by studies on graduate employability and highlighted that securing permanent employment is a crucial factor in establishing a solid career foundation and building professional networks [29].

The smaller percentages in self-employed at 11.11% and temporary at 9.26% statuses indicate a diverse range of employment experiences among the graduates. These statuses may reflect individual preferences, industry-specific practices, or transitional phases in their careers. The prevalence of contractual employment emphasizes the need for graduates to develop adaptable skills and manage the uncertainties associated with non-

permanent work arrangements. It also highlights the importance of understanding the implications of different employment statuses on career trajectories and job security.

Location of Current Employment. As shown in the table, the vast majority of respondents work locally at 96.05%, while 3.95% work abroad. It indicates that they have primarily found career opportunities within their home country. This suggests that the local labor market provides ample opportunities for graduates with their skills and qualifications. The high percentage of local employment is consistent with the general trend in the Philippines, where many graduates find employment within the country's growing service and education sectors. Recent labor market studies have highlighted the increasing demand for professionals with strong communication and language skills in various local industries. The reports on the growth of service-oriented jobs that often require strong communication skills, which are prevalent among AB English Language graduates (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2021). These findings may suggest that there is a strong demand of AB English Language graduates with the local area and indicates that the graduates possess skills that are highly sought by local employers, particularly in service and education.

The 3.95% of respondents working abroad, while a small minority, represents a segment of graduates who have pursued international career opportunities. This indicates that AB English Language graduates also possess skills that are valued in the global labor market. The trend of Filipino professionals working abroad is well documented, with many seeking better opportunities and higher wages in other countries. This phenomenon is often referred to as overseas Filipino workers and has economic implications for the Philippines [30]. The overwhelming preference for local employment among the graduates suggests that they are finding suitable career paths within the Philippines. This may be attributed to the growing demand for their skills in the local job market, as well as personal preferences for staying close to family and community.

Time Spent to Secure First Employment. As shown in the table, majority of respondents secured their first job within 1 to 6 months at 51.32%, followed by a portion landing their first job in less than a month at 36.84%. A smaller percentage took 1 year to less than 2 years at 7.89%, and a very small percentage took 7 to 11 months at 3.95%. The data may indicate that there is a quick and smooth transition into employment for the majority of AB English Language graduates, with a combined 88.16% securing their first job within six months of graduation. This rapid employment rate is similar to the findings of Zarifhonarvar [31] which suggests that the skills acquired during their education are in demand and that graduates are effectively transitioning into the workforce. It emphasizes the significance of early employment in establishing career paths and building professional networks, which is reflected in the high percentage of respondents finding employment within six months. Moreover, this employment trend may indicate the effectiveness of the program's curriculum in aligning with employer needs. Several factors may contribute to this rapid employment rate. The skills acquired during their education, such as strong communication, critical thinking, and adaptability, are highly valued by employers across various sectors. Effective job search behaviors, including networking and utilizing online platforms, also play a significant role in reducing the time to employment for graduates [32].

Graduates who took 1 year to less than 2 years, and 7 to 11 months to secure employment represent a smaller portion of the respondents. These individuals may have faced challenges in the job market, pursued further education, or had specific career preferences that prolonged their job search. This aligns with the study of Syzdykova et al., [33] which identified various factors influencing the job search duration for recent graduates, including economic conditions and job market competition. The overall trend of quick employment among the majority of respondents emphasizes the relevance of their skills in the current job market and the effectiveness of their job search strategies.

Indicators for Accepting the Job. The data shows the reasons why respondents accepted their jobs and the reasons why they are staying in their jobs, highlighting the role of motivation and compensation in job satisfaction. The data indicates that salaries and benefits were the primary reason for accepting the job, with 64.47% of respondents citing this factor. This finding may imply that financial compensation has an impact in job acceptance decisions. This aligns with research of Shaw [34], that emphasizes the importance of competitive compensation packages in attracting and recruiting talent, and found that competitive compensation packages significantly contribute to employee retention and overall job satisfaction, which suggests that it is also a key factor in job acceptance.

The second most cited reason was "Related to special skill" at 44.74%, suggesting that many respondents might have been drawn to positions that allowed them to utilize and develop their unique abilities. This result may indicate that job roles that are aligned with individual skill sets and the opportunities for professional growth are highly valued. This is supported by the study of Lee & Jung [35] which found that graduates find meaningful work when personal skills are utilized, indicating that skill utilization in work contributes to job satisfaction. Career challenges at 35.53% and proximity to residence at 21.05% also played a role in job acceptance, indicating that respondents might have considered both professional growth opportunities and practical considerations when making their job choices.

Indicators for Staying in Job. Similar to job acceptance, salaries and benefits remained the top reason for staying on the job, with 67.11% of respondents citing this factor. This may suggest that financial compensation

is not only a primary motivator for job acceptance but also a crucial factor in job retention. This reinforces the importance of competitive compensation in maintaining employee satisfaction and commitment. The reasons "Related to special skill" and "Career challenge" were also balanced, with 43.42% of respondents citing each. This may include opportunities to use specific language proficiencies, such writing and editing abilities, or communication expertise. This indicates that opportunities to utilize skills and engage in challenging work are important factors in retaining employees. This aligns with findings of Chang et al., [36] which revealed that intrinsic motivation and skill utilization are strong predictors in job satisfaction.

Other reasons, such as "Related to course/Program of study" at 39.42% may suggest that the job utilizes their degree, related to field of study, and allows them to expand their skills and knowledge in the field. "Proximity to residence" at 18.42% may suggest that the location of the job would reduce time consumption, lower transportation cost, and may be able to manage balance in work and personal life. Similarly, "Peer influence" at 18.42%, and "Family influence" at 6.58%, may indicate that various personal and social factors including strong relationship with colleagues, work environment, and work schedule that allows them to fulfill family responsibilities may also contribute to job retention. The data highlights the significant role of salaries and benefits in both job acceptance and retention. Additionally, opportunities to utilize skills and engage in challenging work are important motivators. Organizations should focus on providing competitive compensation packages and creating work environments that allow employees to utilize their skills and grow professionally to enhance job satisfaction and retention.

Gross Monthly Income. As shown in the table, majority of the graduates had an initial gross monthly earning between P10,000 to less than P15,000 at 34.21%. A percentage of 31.58% also earned P15,000 to less than P20,000. 19.74% of the respondents earned P25,000 and above. 10.53% of the graduates earned P5,000 to less than P10,000 and 3.95% earned below P5,000. The data indicates that a big portion of AB English Language graduates begin their careers with monthly earnings within the P10,000 to P20,000 range, suggesting these are the initial salaries for entry-level positions. According to San Juan [37], the average minimum salary wage in the Philippines is P8,061.06 and most graduates earn more, typically between P10,000 to P20,000. However, salaries may increase as the career and experience advances. This aligns with the report of Philippine Statistics Authority (2021) that indicate entry-level positions often offer lower wages, especially in certain sectors within the Philippine labor market.

The respondents earning P25,000 and above suggests that a segment of graduates secure higher-paying positions, potentially in specialized roles or industries that value their language and communication skills. This highlights the potential for career advancement and higher earnings as graduates gain experience and expertise. Consequently, the graduates earning P5,000 to less than P10,000 and below P5,000 may indicate that some graduates start with very low incomes, possibly due to the job that does not utilize their degree-level skills in English Language. This underscores the need for graduates to strategically plan their career paths and seek opportunities for upward mobility.

Job Level or Position. The table presents the respondents' first and current job level positions. Specifically, majority of the graduates began their careers in "Rank or Clerical" positions, but fewer are in this position now. This job position is comprised of graduates employed as office assistant, administrative assistant, customer service representative, school secretary, data entry clerk, inventory clerk, office clerk stenographer III, and transcriptionist. These positions provide foundational experience and allow graduates to develop essential workplace skills. In "Professional, Technical, or Supervisory" positions, more graduates currently employed in this position compared to the respondents held these positions as their first job. This category encompasses a wide array of positions. For professional, graduates were employed as high school teacher, college teacher, elementary teacher, writer, communication officer and information officer and librarian; the technical role of technical support representative; and supervisory positions like coordinator/head teacher, showcasing the versatility of an English Language degree.

For "self-employed," the data indicates fewer respondents were self-employed as their first job and decreased in current job. Graduates who held this job were employed as virtual assistants, online and private tutors, and freelance editors. Lastly, the "Managerial or Executive" roles. Graduates were employed as human resources manager, office manager, campaign manager, and chief executive officer. The distribution remained balance, where respondents occupying both positions as their first and current job. The data demonstrates their leadership and organizational capabilities as supervisors, managers, team leaders, project managers, or executive assistants. The data provide a snapshot of the respondents' job level differences between their first, and their current job.

The data indicates a shift in job levels from initial to current positions. Notably, there's a decrease in "Rank or Clerical" roles as first job to current job and a corresponding increase in "Professional, Technical, or Supervisory" positions as a current job. This may suggest that many AB English Language graduates experience upward mobility in their careers, transitioning from entry-level to more advanced roles. This progression aligns with the study of Pshembayeva et al., [38], which found that gaining experience and skills for advancement would lead to a career development. The slight increase in self-employment suggests a growing trend of entrepreneurship among the graduates, potentially driven by the desire for greater autonomy and flexibility. This trend is consistent

with the increasing prevalence of self-employment in the modern workforce, particularly among those with strong communication and organizational skills [39]. The "Managerial or Executive" category remains consistent, indicating that those who started in these roles have maintained them which may suggest that they are satisfied with their job. Thus, the data reveals that AB English Language graduates are experiencing career growth and diversification. This highlights the adaptability and versatility of their skill sets, which allow them to move into more professional and entrepreneurial positions over time.

Tabel 2. Employment Profile of the Respondents

Year of Graduation	2024	2023	2022	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Employed	25	18	11	54	70.13
Unemployed	18	2	2	22	28.57
Never Employed	1	0	0	1	1.30
Present Employment Status				Frequency	Percentage
Contractual				23	42.59
Regular or Permanent				20	37.04
Self-employed				6	11.11
Temporary				5	9.26
Location of Employment					
Local				73	96.05
Abroad				3	3.95
Time Spent to Secure First Employment					
1 to 6 months				39	52.32
Less than a month				28	36.84
1 year to less than 2 years				6	7.89
7 to 11 months				2	3.95
Indicators for Accepting the Job					
Salaries and benefits				49	64.47
Related to special skill				34	44.74
Career challenge				27	35.53
Proximity to residence				16	21.05
Indicators for Staying on Job					
Salaries and benefits				51	67.11
Related to special skill				33	43.42
Career challenge				33	43.42
Related to course/Program of study				30	39.42
Proximity to residence				14	18.42
Peer influence				14	18.42
Family influence				5	6.58
Gross Monthly Income					
P10,000 to less than P15,000				26	34.21
P15,000 to less than P20,000				24	31.58
P25, 000 and above				15	19.74
P5,000 to less than P10,000				8	10.53
Below 5,000				3	3.95
Job Level Position	First Job	Current Job	Frequency	Percentage	
Rank or Clerical	22	11	33	40.24	
Professional, Technical or Supervisory	11	20	31	37.80	
Self-employed	4	6	10	12.20	
Managerial or Executive	4	4	8	9.76	
Rank or Clerical	Professional	Technical	Supervisory	Self-employed	
Office assistant	Highschool teacher	Technical support representative	School coordinator	Virtual assistants	
Administrative assistant	College teacher		Head teacher	Online English tutor	
Customer service representative	Elementary teacher			Private tutor	
School secretary	Writer			Freelance editor/proofreader	

Data entry clerk	Communicati on officer
Inventory clerk	Information officer
Office clerk	Librarian
Stenographer III	
Transcriptionist	
Managerial	Executive
Human resources manager	Chief executive officer
Office manager	
Campaign manager	

3.3. Acquired Skills in College

Most Useful Skills Acquired. The data highlights the perceived utility of skills acquired during college, with communication skills being universally acknowledged by all respondents at 84.21%, followed by 75%, which found critical thinking skills highly valuable. 59.21% of the graduates emphasized problem-solving abilities. Human relations skills were also deemed important by 48.68% of respondents. Less frequently cited were entrepreneurial skills, at 13.16%. This latter category may encompass computer literacy, adaptability, creativity, writing, time management, and the four basic language skills.

The data reaffirms that communication skills are universally valued, which is aligned to the objectives of AB English Language Program in USM, aiming to develop and strengthen the students' proficiency in written and oral communication skills. This may indicate that the program is effectively developing a foundational skill that is essential across various professions and graduates were able to apply the use of communication skills in specific contexts, such in job interviews, customer service, and teaching. These real- world applications underscore the critical role of communication in professional success, emphasizing its centrality in workplace dynamics [40].

Critical thinking skills are also highly rated which are also relevant to the objectives of the program, aiming to develop the skills of independent critical thinking and analysis, as well as engage students to critical review of issue and opinions. This may indicate that these are applied in diverse contexts, including technical support, client management, and government roles. Respondents may have utilized this in instances where these skills were crucial for resolving complex issues and streamlining processes. This reinforces the increasing demand for these cognitive abilities in today's dynamic work environments, as noted by Dwyer et al. [41], which integrates earlier perspectives on cognitive skills.

Furthermore, human relations and problem-solving skills were also recognized by respondents which are also aligned to the objectives of the program which aims to foster analytical skills, simulate creativity, and strengthen the ability to communicate in any situation and may be applied in contexts involving leadership, teamwork, and classroom management, indicating their importance in fostering positive relationships and effective collaboration. Last is the entrepreneurial skills, which may suggest that graduates pursued a career which requires entrepreneurial abilities in their early careers. The diverse application of these skills across various sectors underscores their versatility and relevance in the professional lives of AB English Language graduates.

Table 3. Acquired Skills in College

Acquired Skills	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Communication skills	64	84.21
Critical Thinking skills	57	75.00
Problem-solving skills	45	59.21
Human Relations skills	37	48.68

3.4. Job Satisfaction

Leadership and Communication. The data presented in Table 4 reveals a generally high level of job satisfaction among respondents regarding leadership and communication within their workplace. Specifically, the highest satisfaction is observed in teamwork and collaboration with a mean of 3.79, followed by satisfaction with communication channels with a mean of 3.71 and the encouragement of open and honest communication, with a mean = 3.63. These findings may suggest that effective teamwork and clear communication channels significantly contribute to job satisfaction.

Recent research underscores the importance of effective communication and leadership in fostering positive work environments. For example, a study by Yuwono et al., [42] found that transparent and authentic communication from leaders significantly enhances employee trust and satisfaction. Moreover, communication channels that facilitate open dialogue and feedback contribute to a sense of inclusion and value among employees.

Men also emphasized that leaders who demonstrate strong communication skills and create an environment of trust are more likely to have satisfied and engaged employees. The data also reveals that they are satisfied with the communication during team meetings, with a mean = 3.46 and they feel their opinions are valued by team leaders with a mean of 3.41. These findings are relevant to the study of Ilyas et al., [43] which revealed that inclusive leadership has been shown to positively impact job satisfaction by creating a sense of belonging and empowerment. Inclusive leadership practices, such as valuing employee input significantly contribute to job satisfaction.

While the overall satisfaction is high, the lower mean scores for "My supervisor communicates expectations clearly and effectively", with a mean of 3.27 and "My leaders provide constructive feedback that helps me improve" with a mean of 3.32, suggest areas for potential improvement. These findings indicate that while communication is generally perceived positively, there may be room for enhancing clarity in communication and providing more effective feedback. This result is aligned with the study of Aguinis [44], which revealed that effective feedback and clear communication of expectations are crucial for employee development and job satisfaction.

The grand mean of 3.46, with a verbal interpretation of "Strongly Satisfied," may indicate that graduates perceive leadership and communication positively across all measured aspects. This high average satisfaction score may suggest that the organization is generally successful in fostering strong teamwork, accessible communication channels, and a supportive environment. The data demonstrates a strong positive perception of leadership and communication among the respondents. However, organizations should focus on enhancing supervisory communication and feedback mechanisms to further improve job satisfaction.

Table 4. Job Satisfaction in terms of Leadership and Communication

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I am satisfied with the level of teamwork and collaboration in my workplace.	3.79	Strongly Satisfied
I am satisfied with the communication channels used in my workplace.	3.71	Strongly Satisfied
Open and honest communication is encouraged in my workplace.	3.63	Strongly Satisfied
I am satisfied with the level of communication during team meetings.	3.46	Strongly Satisfied
I feel my opinions and ideas are valued by my team leaders.	3.41	Strongly Satisfied
I am satisfied with the work-life balance in my current position.	3.37	Satisfied
My leaders effectively resolve conflicts and address communication issues.	3.35	Satisfied
Leadership within my organization fosters open and honest communication.	3.33	Satisfied
My leaders provide constructive feedback that helps me improve.	3.32	Satisfied
My supervisor communicates expectations clearly and effectively.	3.27	Satisfied
Grand Mean	3.46	Strongly Satisfied

Legend:

3.26 - 4.00 - Strongly Satisfied

2.51 - 3.25 - Satisfied

1.76 - 2.50 - Dissatisfied

1.00 - 1.75 - Strongly Dissatisfied

Management and Personal Development. Table 5 illustrates a high level of job satisfaction regarding management and personal development among the respondents, with a grand mean of 3.45, indicating "Strongly Satisfied." The highest satisfaction is observed in the performance feedback received from management, with a mean of 3.67, suggesting that respondents find the feedback valuable and constructive. This is consistent with research Aguinis [44], which revealed that effective performance feedback is a crucial component of employee satisfaction and development.

Opportunities for learning and professional growth within the organization also received high satisfaction scores, with a mean of 3.59, indicating that respondents perceive their organizations as supportive of their development. This aligns with the study of Noe et al. [45] which found and emphasized that continuous learning and development contributes in fostering employee engagement and satisfaction.

Additionally, respondents expressed satisfaction with the management's support for professional growth, with a mean of 3.56, and the level of autonomy and decision-making authority in their roles, with a mean of 3.52. These findings are like the study of Zhang et al., [46] which suggest that employees value autonomy and managerial support in their professional development. Autonomy and support are key factors in enhancing intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction. The respondents also indicated satisfaction with career advancement opportunities, with a mean of 3.43, and the effectiveness of their immediate supervisors in providing guidance and support, with a mean of 3.41. These findings reinforce the importance of perceived career opportunities and supportive supervision in employee satisfaction.

The lower mean scores for "I am satisfied with the opportunities to take on new challenges and responsibilities," with a mean of 3.37, and "I feel my personal development is aligned with the company's objectives," with a mean of 3.17, may suggest that employers should improve these areas in workplace. The grand mean of 3.45, with a verbal interpretation of "Strongly Satisfied," indicates a high overall satisfaction with management and personal development aspects. This data may suggest that the organization is effectively meeting the developmental needs of its employees, specifically providing foundation for learning, growth, and feedback, which are essential for building careers, especially with young professionals. This is relevant with the research of Eisenberger [47] on job satisfaction, which consistently shown that employees who perceive positive management support and development opportunities report higher levels of satisfaction. The data demonstrates a strong positive perception of management and personal development among respondents [48] However, organizations should also focus on enhancing opportunities for new challenges and ensuring personal development aligns with company objectives to further improve job satisfaction.

Table 5. Job Satisfaction in terms of Management and Personal Development

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I am satisfied with the performance feedback I receive from management.	3.67	Strongly Satisfied
I have opportunities to learn and grow professionally within the organization.	3.59	Strongly Satisfied
I am satisfied with the management's support for my professional growth.	3.56	Strongly Satisfied
I am satisfied with the level of autonomy and decision-making authority I have in my role.	3.52	Strongly Satisfied
I am satisfied with the opportunities for career advancement in my current position.	3.43	Strongly Satisfied
My organization provides sufficient opportunities for personal development.	3.41	Strong Satisfied
My immediate supervisor is effective in providing guidance and support.	3.41	Strongly Satisfied
I am satisfied with the opportunities to take on new challenges and responsibilities.	3.37	Satisfied
I am satisfied with the level of teamwork and collaboration in my workplace.	3.33	Satisfied
I feel my personal development is aligned with the company's objectives.	3.17	Satisfied
Grand Mean	3.45	Strongly Satisfied

3.5. Social Implications of Graduate Employability

The findings of this study have significant social implications, particularly in highlighting the role of higher education in facilitating the integration of young graduates into the labor market. The high employability of AB English Language graduates underscores the value of language, communication, and critical thinking skills in addressing workforce demands and promoting social mobility among young professionals. This aligns with UNESCO's [14] assertion that higher education contributes to society not only by developing technical competencies but also by fostering lifelong learning and equipping graduates to participate meaningfully in social and economic life. However, the prevalence of contractual employment among graduates reflects broader labor market conditions that may limit job security and long-term economic stability, emphasizing the importance of supportive employment policies and institutional career guidance [49], [50]. Additionally, the gendered distribution of graduates highlights the need for inclusive and gender-responsive educational and employment practices, supporting previous research that indicates societal norms and educational pathways influence professional opportunities and workforce participation [13], [22]. Overall, the study reinforces the social contribution of higher education in preparing graduates to engage productively in society, while underscoring the shared responsibility of educational institutions, employers, and policymakers to support equitable and sustainable employment outcomes.

3.6. Education and Workforce Integration in the Linguistic Field

The findings of this study have important implications for education and workforce integration in the linguistic field, particularly in demonstrating how higher education prepares graduates to meet labor market demands. The high employability of AB English Language graduates highlights the relevance of language proficiency, communication, and critical thinking skills, which are essential for professional roles in education, communication, and related industries. This aligns with UNESCO's [14] view that higher education contributes to society not only by developing technical expertise but also by fostering lifelong learning, enabling graduates to adapt to evolving workplace requirements and contribute meaningfully to social and economic development. The prevalence of contractual employment suggests the need for curricula that integrate practical experiences, such as internships, project-based learning, and real-world simulations, to enhance graduates' readiness for diverse employment arrangements [51], [52]. Furthermore, the gendered distribution of graduates' points to the importance of promoting inclusive, gender-sensitive education and professional opportunities, supporting previous research that shows societal norms and educational pathways influence workforce participation and career trajectories [13], [22]. Overall, the study underscores the social contribution of higher education in the linguistic field by equipping

graduates with skills, knowledge, and adaptability necessary for workforce integration, career progression, and lifelong learning.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the post-graduation experiences of AB English Language graduates of the University of Southern Mindanao from 2022 to 2024, focusing on their employability, employment outcomes, skill utilization, and job satisfaction. Anchored in Human Capital Theory and Tomlinson's Graduate Capital Model, the findings demonstrate that the program equips graduates with relevant skills that support workforce entry and career progression. Most graduates were employed within a short period after graduation, primarily in contractual positions, reflecting both the employability of graduates and the flexible nature of the current labor market. Communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills emerged as the most valued competencies, underscoring the relevance of the AB English Language curriculum to workplace demands. Overall, the study concludes that the AB English Language Program provides a strong foundation for diverse employment pathways, while highlighting the need for continued curricular enhancement to support graduates' long-term career stability and advancement. Based on the findings of the study, several key recommendations are proposed to strengthen the AB English Language Program and guide future research. The program should enhance its curriculum by integrating industry-relevant training and professional development opportunities to improve students' graduate capital and readiness for the evolving job market. In addition, the incorporation of project-based learning and real-life work simulations is recommended to further develop students' practical, transferable skills and workplace competence. To deepen understanding of graduates' employment experiences, future studies should adopt qualitative research approaches that can capture richer, more nuanced insights into career pathways and job outcomes. Further research should also examine graduates' transitions from temporary to permanent employment, including the social, institutional, and individual factors that influence career progression and advancement.

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