

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents the research findings and discussion. The findings highlight the results of participants' descriptions of images, revealing insights into students' learning experiences and challenges in the Intensive English class. The discussion section provides a more in-depth analysis of these findings.

#### **A. Findings**

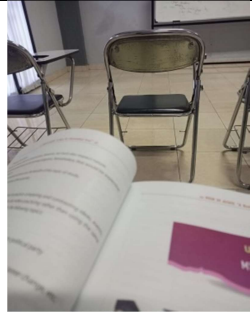
This section outlines the findings based on field data collection. The data were obtained through photographs taken by participants, intended to help students convey their experiences and challenges in the Intensive English class. Each photograph is accompanied by a description derived from interviews conducted by the researchers. These interviews provided deeper insight into the context and purpose of the photographs, as well as their relevance in illustrating the students' experiences and difficulties in the learning process.

##### **1. The Students' Learning Experiences in Intensive English Class**

This section illustrates how the 10 photographs provided by the students reflected their experiences and challenges in the Intensive English class. The researcher carefully examined each of the 10 pictures, which were accompanied by the findings from individual interviews with the stu-

dents. Subsequently, the researcher highlighted specific student statements that conveyed their experiences and difficulties encountered while learning in the Intensive English class.

Table 4.1 Photovoice of Student 1

(Photovoice of Student 1)		
	<p>I took this photo during a lesson, which reflects my overall learning experience in this course. It has been a positive journey where I have gained a substantial amount of new knowledge about English.</p> <p>Both the professor and my classmates have been very responsive and supportive, helping me better understand the material. One of the most enjoyable aspects has been the opportunity to interact with people who are skilled in English, which has greatly enhanced my ability to communicate in the language.</p> <p>I am also pleased with my academic performance, which turned out to be much better than I had</p>	<p>Positive Learning</p> <p>Support from Tutors and Friends</p> <p>Language Skills Development</p>

	<p>expected. At the beginning, I doubted whether I would even be accepted into the program, but I've learned that the key is simply to give it a try.</p> <p>Despite these positive experiences, one challenge I faced was my limited knowledge of grammar. This sometimes led to difficulties in understanding certain concepts and caused me to make mistakes when answering questions.</p>	<p>Personal Development</p> <p>Difficulty</p>
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This student's learning experience in the Intensive English course has been a deeply meaningful and rewarding journey. They have seen significant progress in their English knowledge, which is reflected in the satisfaction and joy they felt throughout the learning process. Each lesson provided new insights, particularly in enhancing their communication skills. The support from both the instructor and classmates has been invaluable, creating a responsive and collaborative learning environment that facilitated their understanding of the material and accelerated their academic progress.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of the experience has been the opportunity to interact with people more skilled in English. This not only

improved their communication ability but also boosted their confidence in using the language. Furthermore, they are pleased with their academic performance, which turned out to be much better than initially expected, further strengthening their confidence and motivation to continue improving.

However, the student did face challenges, particularly related to their limited understanding of grammar. This sometimes led to confusion in grasping certain concepts and making errors in answering questions. Despite these challenges, they have learned that the key to success is simply to try and keep persevering, appreciating the progress made along the way in their learning journey.

Table 4.2 Photovoice of Student 2

(Photovoice of Student 2)		
	<p>This photo was taken during a workshop with a Japanese speaker who is a professional in the field of Language Teaching.</p> <p>Attending a workshop with Japanese professionals as part of the Intensive English class was an incredibly proud moment, as it felt like a significant privilege.</p> <p>It became even more rewarding with the presence of exceptionally supportive friends who encouraged my progress in improving my English skills.</p> <p>However, one of the challenges I faced</p>	<p>Meaningful Learning</p> <p>Support from Tutors and Friends</p>



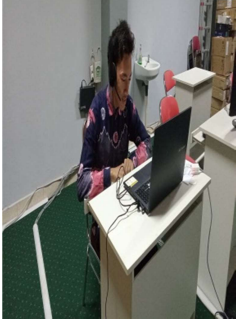
them greatly enhanced their confidence and made their progress in English both enjoyable and achievable.

Despite the excitement and pride, the experience also came with notable challenges. One of the main difficulties was the unexpected introduction of the IELTS test during the program. Students were caught off guard, as they had not been informed about it beforehand, which left them feeling unprepared. The pressure was intensified by the simultaneous requirement to prepare for the TOEFL test at the end of the course. Both tests have entirely different focuses and structures, making it difficult to prioritize and allocate sufficient time for each.

This overlap in preparation created a stressful environment where students had to divide their attention between mastering the skills needed for both TOEFL and IELTS. The contrasting demands of these tests required significant adaptability, testing their ability to manage their time effectively and stay focused. Balancing the workshop, regular coursework, and the dual test preparation added to the complexity, leaving many students feeling overwhelmed.

Table 4.3 Photovoice of Student 3

(Photovoice of Student 3)
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	<p>This photo was taken during the TOEFL listening test, which was part of a highly beneficial learning experience. Throughout the course, we received valuable guidance on both active and passive English skills, and we were given free TOEFL and IELTS tests to assess our progress. These tests not only measured our ability but also motivated us to improve further.</p> <p>However, one of the biggest challenges I faced was mastering active skills like writing and speaking. These were difficult because I rarely practiced them outside of class, and developing fluency required consistent effort.</p> <p>Despite the struggle, the support from instructors and peers helped me keep improving, making the learning experience both rewarding and motivating.</p>	<p>Positive Learning &amp; Chance to take TOEFL and IELTS</p> <p>Difficulty</p> <p>Support from Tutors and Friends</p>
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According to the student, the Intensive English program offered a highly rewarding and enriching learning experience. They highlighted how the program provided structured guidance in developing both active and passive English skills, ensuring a well-rounded approach to language acquisition. Additionally, students were given the unique opportunity to take

TOEFL and IELTS tests free of charge. These tests not only served as a measure of their progress but also motivated them to apply what they had learned and aim for further improvement in their English proficiency. The inclusion of these tests added significant value to their learning journey, offering a practical assessment of their skills.

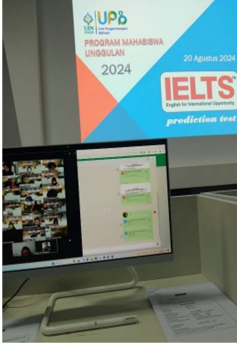
However, the student also acknowledged facing challenges, particularly with active skills such as writing and speaking. These areas were described as especially difficult because they had not been accustomed to practicing them regularly. Writing demands clarity and coherence, while speaking requires confidence and fluency—skills that can only be honed through consistent practice and real-life application. The lack of habitual use of these skills in their daily routine posed a barrier to their mastery.

Despite these difficulties, the student expressed a strong determination to overcome the challenges. They recognized the importance of consistent effort and taking advantage of the program's supportive environment and resources. Through perseverance and the opportunities provided, they aimed to strengthen these active skills and become more comfortable using English in both written and spoken communication. Overall, the program was seen as a valuable milestone in their language-learning journey, blending both opportunities and challenges to foster meaningful progress.

Table 4. 4 Photovoice of Student 4

(Photovoice of Student 4)
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	<p>I took this photo during an IELTS lesson.</p> <p>In this intensive English class, I'm truly grateful to have met such amazing friends and teachers. Without them, the class would have been much less enjoyable.</p> <p>However, I was initially shocked when I found out that there would be an IELTS test. I wasn't prepared for it at all—I had no prior knowledge about the IELTS, and it stressed me out. Even after two weeks of studying for it, I still didn't feel any more confident; in fact, my fear only increased. But then, when I heard Ms. Thai-batun Nisa explain that the IELTS test was a gift for us English class students, since we didn't have native speakers like the Arabic class, my perspective changed. I stopped worrying so much. Alhamdulillah, I was able to do well on the test.</p>	<p>Positive Learning Support from Tutors and Friends Difficulty</p> <p>Chance to take the IELTS</p> <p>Personal Development</p>
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The student's experience in the Intensive English class was marked by a blend of gratitude, challenges, and eventual success. They highlighted the importance of the supportive community of friends and teachers, which made the learning environment enjoyable and engaging. Without their encouragement, the student felt that the class would have lacked the vibrancy

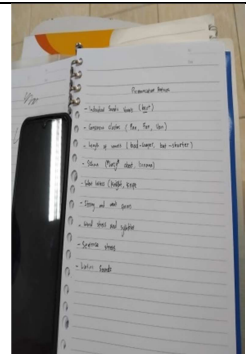
and enthusiasm needed for effective learning. This positive atmosphere played a crucial role in fostering the student's motivation and resilience throughout the course.

However, the journey was not without difficulties. The announcement of an unexpected IELTS test came as a significant shock. The student felt entirely unprepared, having no prior knowledge about the test format or expectations. This lack of familiarity created substantial stress and fear, which persisted even after two weeks of focused learning. Despite their efforts, the pressure seemed insurmountable, and their anxiety about the test continued to grow.

A turning point came when their teacher, Ms. Thaibatun Nisa, reframed the test as a privilege and an opportunity for the English class students. She explained that the IELTS test was provided as a "gift" to compensate for the absence of a native speaker, which other language classes, like Arabic, benefited from. This shift in perspective helped alleviate the student's fears and enabled them to approach the test with a renewed sense of purpose and calm.

Ultimately, the student was able to perform well on the test, expressing gratitude for the chance to take on this challenge. This experience highlighted the importance of a supportive learning environment and the power of reframing challenges as opportunities for growth. It became a defining moment in their language-learning journey, showcasing their ability to overcome obstacles and achieve success.

Table 4.5 Photovoice of Student 5

(Photovoice of Student 5)		
	<p>I took this photo during the learning process. My learning experience at Intensive English class has been incredibly meaningful. I see it as a great opportunity to enhance my language skills, particularly in communication and writing. The friendly and interactive learning environment has made me more excited to engage in the lessons.</p> <p>The lecturers are extremely supportive, offering patient guidance and fostering a positive and encouraging learning atmosphere.</p> <p>However, I've faced some challenges during my time at Intensive English class. I find it hard to understand certain topics, particularly in grammar and new vocabulary. Besides that, I often feel less confident when speaking in front of others, but I am making a conscious effort to overcome this weakness, taking small steps to improve each day.</p>	<p>Meaningful Learning Language skills development</p> <p>Support from Tutors</p> <p>Difficulty</p>

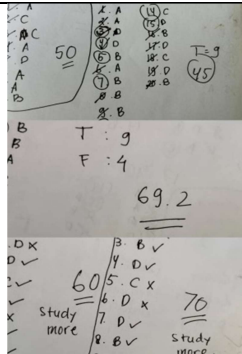
The students' learning experience at Intensive English class has been incredibly meaningful. She view it as a valuable opportunity to improve their language skills, particularly in communication and writing. The learning environment at Intensive English class is both friendly and interactive, which has significantly increased her enthusiasm for learning. The lecturers are highly supportive, offering patient guidance and fostering a positive atmosphere that encourages students to actively participate in class.

However, the students have faced several challenges throughout their learning journey at Intensive English class. It has been challenging to understand certain topics for her, especially when it comes to grammar or expanding their vocabulary. These aspects of language learning can be complex and require additional time and effort to master.

Another challenge the student have experienced is a lack of confidence when speaking in front of others. She felt nervous or unsure during oral presentations or discussions, which can impact her performance and participation. However, despite these difficulties, the student are actively working to overcome these challenges, taking gradual steps to improve their speaking skills and build their self-confidence over time. This continuous effort is part of the students' broader commitment to growth and progress in her language-learning journey.

Table 4. 6 Photovoice of Student 6

(Photovoice of Student 6)
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	<p>This is a photo of my TOEFL test scores at the beginning of the learning process.</p> <p>At the start of my journey, I was scoring under 50 on TOEFL practice tests, and I felt shocked and discouraged. Most of my classmates, especially those from the English teaching department, were performing much better, and I felt out of place as a student from the Syariah department. Early TOEFL lessons were tough, and I often felt down.</p> <p>However, with determination and support from friends and tutors, I started improving. The unexpected IELTS test came next, and I initially feared my score would be worse. But with everyone's help, I was able to push through. The target was a band 6, and despite my doubts, I achieved a 6 in speaking! Alhamdulillah, through hard work and support, I was able to overcome these challenges.</p>	<p>Difficulty</p> <p>Support from Tutors and Friends</p> <p>Personal Development</p>
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The participant initially struggled with low TOEFL practice scores, consistently scoring below 50. This was a source of discouragement, partic-


ularly as the participant observed their classmates, especially those from the English language teaching department, performing much better. As a student from the Shariah department, the participant felt overwhelmed and out of place, grappling with the difficulty of keeping up with the pace of the program. The initial weeks of TOEFL preparation were especially challenging, and the participant experienced significant frustration and feelings of inadequacy.

Despite these early setbacks, the participant demonstrated resilience and perseverance. With ongoing support from peers and tutors, the participant's attitude towards learning began to shift. The collaborative environment within the class, where classmates shared resources and helped each other, played a key role in reducing feelings of isolation and discouragement. Over time, the participant started to see improvements in their scores, leading to a greater sense of achievement and motivation.

An unexpected challenge arose when the IELTS test was introduced. Initially, the participant doubted their ability to perform well, especially given their struggles with TOEFL. However, the supportive atmosphere continued, with tutors setting a target band score of 6 for the IELTS. Despite initial skepticism, the participant managed to achieve a band 6 in speaking. This outcome was seen as a significant achievement, not only because it surpassed the participant's expectations but also because it was a direct result of their persistence and the strong support system around them. The participant's success highlights the importance of both individual effort and a

nurturing, collaborative learning environment in overcoming academic challenges.

Table 4. 7 Photovoice of Student 7

(Photovoice of Student 7)		
	<p>This photo was taken during the opening of the Intensive English class, a moment I truly appreciated and felt grateful for. It was an incredible opportunity to join the Intensive English class this semester, and I was excited to meet new friends who shared the same passion for learning. The atmosphere in the classroom felt comfortable and enjoyable, with no awkwardness at all. I was also fortunate to meet amazing tutors who inspired me so much that I even started to think about pursuing a master's degree in teaching English! From the post-test, class lessons, fun activities, and the final tests (TOEFL and IELTS), the entire experience was enriching and enjoyable, though I was a bit nervous about taking the IELTS for the first time.</p> <p>The biggest challenge I faced in this pro-</p>	<p>Support from Tutors and Friends</p> <p>Meaningful Learning Chance to take TOEFL and IELTS</p>

	<p>gram was that I'm not a native speaker, and I don't come from an English department—I studied Arabic. When asked why I didn't pursue Arabic further, I explained that I wanted a new experience and, most importantly, because I've always had a strong passion for the English language. Despite this, I often felt insecure compared to my classmates, especially since some of them were very fluent in speaking English. I was hesitant to speak up, fearing I wouldn't measure up to their level.</p> <p>However, one of our tutors reassured us by saying, "You don't have to worry about your grammar or anything else—just speak up. We're not natives, right? When English speakers learn Indonesian and make mistakes, do we laugh at them? No, right? So, we should have the same mindset. We're all here to learn together. Just go with the flow." This advice helped me gain more confidence, and I learned to focus less on my mistakes and more on improving my speaking skills.</p>	<p>Difficulty</p> <p>Difficulty</p> <p>Personal Development</p>
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The participant began the Intensive English class with excitement and gratitude, appreciating the opportunity to join the program and meet classmates who shared a similar passion for learning. They felt comfortable in the welcoming environment, where engaging lessons and supportive tutors inspired them to consider further studies in English teaching. Despite some initial nerves, the participant enjoyed the lessons and found the experience fulfilling, especially the opportunity to take both TOEFL and IELTS tests.

However, the participant faced challenges due to being a non-native English speaker from the Arabic department. They felt insecure compared to their more fluent classmates, which made them hesitant to speak up in class. This lack of confidence was a significant hurdle in their learning process, despite their passion for English.

The turning point came when a tutor reassured the class to focus on speaking without worrying about making mistakes. This advice helped the participant understand that language learning involves trial and error, and they began to feel more confident in speaking. The supportive environment and emphasis on progress over perfection helped the participant overcome their initial insecurity and improve their speaking skills.

Table 4. 8 Photovoice of Student 8

(Photovoice of Student 8)
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	<p>This photo was taken during a game we played at the beginning of class, marking the start of an incredible experience in the Intensive English class. I am deeply grateful to God for this opportunity, as it allowed me to be surrounded by smart and talented individuals. It was a surprising and unforgettable experience, even though I often felt insecure entering the class. I struggled to keep up with the discussions and felt stressed watching my classmates speak English so fluently and confidently, unlike me. Still, I reminded myself that experience is the best teacher, and this class has inspired me to continue learning English whenever I can, even if only a little at a time.</p> <p>One of my biggest challenges was adapting to the class, especially during speaking lessons. I often felt left behind because my classmates responded so quickly, while I needed more time to process and reply. This created significant stress for me, as I also had to juggle other activities outside of class. However, the Inten-</p>	<p>Positive Learning Environment</p> <p>Difficulty</p> <p>Personal &amp; Language Skills Development</p> <p>Difficulty</p>
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	<p>sive English class pushed me to work harder and helped me develop my skills over time.</p> <p>By the end of the course, I realized how much I had grown. What I once considered just a subject to study had now become a part of my life. English is no longer just a lesson—it is something I will continue to learn and improve upon for the rest of my life, no matter how difficult it may seem.</p>	<p>Personal Development</p>
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The participant reflected on their experience in the Intensive English class with a mixture of awe and gratitude. They described it as an extraordinary opportunity, highlighting their surprise at being surrounded by smart and talented peers. Despite their initial excitement, the participant admitted to struggling with feelings of insecurity and stress. They felt intimidated by the proficiency of their classmates and found it challenging to follow discussions in class. Nevertheless, the participant viewed these challenges as valuable learning experiences, recognizing that growth often comes from stepping out of one's comfort zone. They credited the class with inspiring them to continue learning English, even in small increments during their free time.

Adapting to the class environment was identified as the participant's biggest hurdle, particularly during speaking lessons. They found it difficult to match the quick responses of their peers, which left them feeling behind and under significant pressure. This stress was compounded by the need to balance their studies with other responsibilities, making it harder to focus on language learning. However, these difficulties did not deter the participant; instead, they motivated them to persevere and work on improving their English skills.

By the end of the program, the participant experienced a significant shift in perspective. What once seemed like a daunting subject became an integral part of their life. They expressed a commitment to continuing their English language journey, acknowledging that while it may be challenging, it is a lifelong endeavor they are now willing to embrace. This transformation reflects the impact of the Intensive English class, not only as a platform for academic growth but also as a source of inspiration and personal development.

Table 4.9 Photovoice of Student 9

(Photovoice of Student 9)		
	<p>This photo shows me with my friend (the one wearing glasses) on the final day of the Intensive English class when grades and certificates were distributed. This class was my first experience with inten-</p>	

	<p>sive English learning, and it exceeded my expectations. I initially thought it would be similar to classes in UPB or my department, but it was completely different.</p> <p>The lecturers used creative and engaging methods that made every session exciting.</p> <p>My favorite part was the speaking debates, where I learned to express ideas spontaneously. The topics were fun and interesting, making the process enjoyable and helping me improve my speaking skills.</p> <p>However, I faced challenges, especially with writing. It was difficult to write structured sentences quickly without relying on a dictionary, and I sometimes struggled to recall words. My first attempts needed many revisions, but with practice, my writing improved significantly. Overall, this class was a valuable experience that helped me grow and develop my English skills.</p>	<p>Positive and Meaningful Learning</p> <p>Difficulty</p> <p>Personal and Language Skills Development</p>
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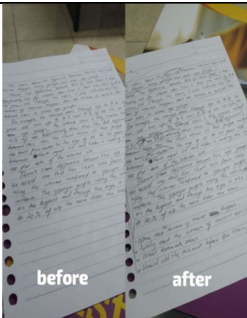
The researcher observed that the Intensive English class offered a transformative learning experience for the student. On the final day of the

program, as grades and certificates were distributed, the student reflected on their journey. Initially, they had anticipated that the teaching methods and learning style would resemble those from UPB or their department. However, they were pleasantly surprised to find that the Intensive English class provided a completely different and dynamic learning environment. The lecturers employed creative and engaging methods, sparking excitement and motivation to attend classes daily.

One highlight of the program, as noted by the student, was the speaking debate sessions. These sessions focused on developing spontaneity and fluency in expressing ideas. The debates were centered around fun and varied topics, making them both enjoyable and highly effective for improving speaking skills. The student described these activities as a significant opportunity to grow, showcasing their enthusiasm for the lessons provided.

Despite the overall positive experience, the student faced challenges in mastering writing skills. They found it mentally taxing to construct well-structured sentences quickly without relying on a dictionary. Additionally, moments of forgetting certain words or meanings added to their difficulties. The student received considerable feedback and revisions during their initial attempts, but with persistence and practice, they demonstrated notable improvement. This progression highlighted the student's determination and resilience, underscoring the Intensive English class program's impact in fostering their growth in English proficiency.

Table 4. 10 Photovoice of Student 10

(Photovoice of Student 10)		
	<p>This photo shows my writing paper after being corrected by the teacher. My experience in the Intensive English class has been both exciting and challenging. While I enjoyed the interactive lessons and activities, I found it difficult to stay focused during writing and speaking lessons. Writing required me to organize my thoughts clearly, and speaking made me nervous, especially when I had to respond quickly. I often felt behind compared to my classmates, which made me doubt my abilities. However, the support from my peers and tutors kept me motivated. The constructive feedback, like the corrections on my paper, helped me improve. By setting small goals and persevering, I was able to push through and finish the program.</p>	<p>Difficulty</p> <p>Support from Tutors and Friends</p> <p>Personal and Language Skills Development</p>

The student's experience in the Intensive English class was a mix of excitement and challenges. They appreciated the opportunity to learn in an engaging environment with motivated peers, which helped them develop

their English skills. However, they struggled with writing and speaking tasks, particularly in organizing thoughts clearly and responding quickly during speaking activities. These difficulties led to feelings of frustration and insecurity, especially when comparing themselves to more confident classmates.

Despite these challenges, the student received valuable feedback from tutors, which motivated them to continue improving. Support from peers also helped build their confidence. By focusing on small goals and persevering, the student gained a deeper understanding of the learning process, recognizing English as an ongoing, rewarding journey.

## **2. The student's difficulties when learning in Intensive English class**

This section highlights the challenges experienced by students in the Intensive English class, as observed and documented by the researcher. Student 1 faced difficulties due to limited grammar knowledge, which often caused misunderstandings of certain concepts and led to mistakes when answering questions. This lack of a solid grammatical foundation created obstacles in achieving accuracy and confidence in their language use.

Student 2 experienced frustration and stress due to the sudden announcement of an IELTS test. The lack of prior notice left them feeling unprepared, and the additional burden of preparing for both TOEFL and IELTS tests, which have distinct formats and focuses, further compounded



their difficulties. The divided focus made it challenging to dedicate sufficient effort to either test, intensifying their pressure.

Student 3 struggled with mastering active skills like writing and speaking. As these skills require consistent practice and application, the student's limited exposure outside the classroom made the learning process more challenging. Nevertheless, the encouragement and guidance from tutors and classmates provided motivation and helped them make steady progress.

For Student 4, the unexpected IELTS test posed a significant challenge. The suddenness of the announcement, coupled with a lack of familiarity with the test format, created substantial anxiety. Even after two weeks of focused preparation, the pressure felt insurmountable, and the student continued to feel overwhelmed by the demands of the test.

Student 5 has several challenges, such as understanding complex grammar rules, expanding vocabulary, and overcoming nervousness during oral presentations, which further complicated their learning experience.

Student 6 found low TOEFL practice scores particularly discouraging. This was exacerbated by comparing their performance with classmates, especially those from the English language teaching department, who appeared to excel. This comparison further impacted their confidence and motivation.

For Student 7, being a non-native English speaker from the Arabic department was a significant obstacle. The student felt insecure and hesitant to

participate in class, especially when comparing their abilities to more fluent peers. This lack of confidence often hindered their ability to engage fully, despite their enthusiasm for learning English.

Adapting to the Intensive English class environment was Student 8's greatest challenge, particularly during speaking lessons. The student found it difficult to keep pace with classmates who were quick to respond, leading to feelings of being left behind and added pressure to perform.

Student 9 experienced difficulties in mastering writing skills, particularly in constructing well-structured sentences quickly without relying on a dictionary. Instances of forgetting certain words or meanings further compounded their struggles, making writing a mentally exhausting task.

Lastly, Student 10 struggled with staying focused during writing and speaking lessons. They found it challenging to organize their thoughts clearly in writing and felt nervous responding quickly during speaking activities, which often led to self-doubt.

## **B. Discussion**

### **1. The Students' Learning Experience in Intensive English Class**

Based on the findings, researcher draw several conclusions about participants' experiences learning in intensive English classes based on the findings.

**a. Positive and Meaningful Learning**

Many students reported experiencing positive and meaningful learning processes, resonating with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2018), which emphasizes the role of intrinsic motivation in fostering meaningful learning.

- Student 1 shared how engaging interactions with supportive peers and instructors made the learning process enjoyable.
- Student 5 found the interactive classroom environment motivating and inspiring for deeper learning.

This aligns with Mercer et al. (2018), who argue that a supportive learning environment fosters emotional engagement, enhancing students' overall learning experience. Activities that spark interest and provide a sense of achievement contribute to meaningful learning experiences.

**b. Support from Tutors and Friends**

Support from tutors and peers emerged as a critical factor in shaping students' learning experiences. This is consistent with Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), which highlights the importance of social interaction in learning.

- Student 3 and Student 6 highlighted how peer and instructor support helped them overcome learning challenges, such as speaking and writing difficulties.

- Student 7 gained confidence from a tutor's reassurance, encouraging her to speak without fear of mistakes.
- Student 8 found emotional support from peers essential for overcoming insecurities.

These findings align with Phuong et al. (2020), who emphasize that social support reduces language anxiety and enhances learners' self-confidence, creating a collaborative and positive learning environment. Likewise, Fadillah (2014) points out that good relationships with classmates are crucial for boosting motivation. The positive qualities of peers help students form strong bonds, creating a classroom atmosphere that is supportive and motivating, particularly in language learning.

### **c. Language Skills Development**

Improving language skills was a central aspect of students' experiences. The findings align with Output Hypothesis Swain (1985) and Suzuki & Kormos (2024), which underscores the importance of producing language actively to enhance proficiency.

- Student 1, Student 9, and Student 10 mentioned how activities like debates and writing corrections improved their speaking and writing skills.
- Student 3 noted that a combination of active and passive activities enhanced overall language abilities.

However, some students, such as Student 8, struggled to keep up with their peers' pace, reflecting the challenges of self-perception in learning (Mercer et al., 2018). These findings highlight the need for differentiated instruction to cater to diverse learning needs.

**d. Chance to take the TOEFL and IELTS Tests**

The opportunity to take TOEFL and IELTS tests was a significant aspect of the learning experience, serving as both motivation and a challenge. According to Attribution Theory (Weiner, 2018), how students perceive their success or failure in these tests influences their motivation.

- Student 3, Student 4, and Student 6 shared how these tests gave them clear targets to strive for, motivating their efforts.
- Student 2 experienced pressure from preparing for two different tests but acknowledged their value in measuring progress.

This aligns with Ellis (2021), who posits that assessments can serve as tools for self-evaluation and motivation despite the stress they may induce.

**e. Personal Development**

The learning experience extended beyond language acquisition, contributing to students' personal growth. Research

indicates that experiential learning fosters confidence and a positive self-perception (Mercer et al., 2018).

- Student 6 gained confidence after improving her TOEFL scores and achieving her IELTS target, overcoming initial self-doubt.
- Student 7 was inspired by the teaching methods to consider pursuing higher education in English teaching.
- Student 8 began to view English not just as a subject but as an integral part of her life.

These experiences align with Oxford & Amerstorfer (2018), who suggest that small achievements build self-efficacy, encouraging learners to pursue long-term goals.

## **2. The Students' Challenges while Learning in Intensive English Class**

Based on the findings, researcher found several difficulties experienced by participants when learning in Intensive English class.

### **a. Limited Knowledge of Grammar**

Grammar proficiency remains a cornerstone of effective language learning, yet it is often a major stumbling block for learners. Students 1, 5, and 9 struggled with grammatical accuracy, resulting in misunderstandings and errors when constructing sentences. This aligns with Ellis (2021), who asserts that

grammar learning is complex due to its abstract rules and the differences between learners' first and target languages. The lack of a solid grammatical foundation hinders learners from achieving fluency and precision in communication.

Sweller (2019) Cognitive Load Theory further explains that grammar learning can overwhelm working memory, especially when learners are required to process multiple linguistic elements simultaneously. To address this, research advocates for a combination of explicit grammar instruction and contextualized practice (Lightbown & Spada, 2019), ensuring learners can apply grammatical knowledge effectively.

**b. Sudden Announcements of Test**

The unexpected IELTS test announcement presented a significant challenge for Students 2, 4, and 8. The lack of preparation time exacerbated test anxiety, leaving students unprepared for the distinct demands of both the TOEFL and IELTS tests. Horwitz et al. (1986) Foreign Language Anxiety highlights the detrimental effects of high-pressure testing environments on learner performance and motivation.

Moreover, Wei et al. (2018) suggest that unforeseen assessments can create psychological stress, limiting learners' ability to perform to their full potential. Structured test preparation programs, along with timely communication about assessments,

are essential to mitigating such stress and fostering confidence in learners.

**c. Mastering Active Language Skills (Speaking and Writing)**

Productive language skills like speaking and writing were particularly challenging for Students 3, 8, and 10. These tasks demand real-time cognitive processing, including organizing ideas, recalling vocabulary, and ensuring grammatical accuracy. Nation (2020) emphasizes that mastering these skills requires consistent practice and meaningful interaction. However, many learners, such as Student 3, faced limited opportunities to practice outside the classroom, impeding their progress.

Sweller (2019) theory explains how cognitive overload can result in hesitation or errors, particularly during speaking tasks. Writing challenges, such as organizing thoughts under time constraints, also mirror these cognitive demands. Oxford (2021) notes that peer collaboration and teacher feedback play vital roles in helping learners gradually improve these skills.

**d. Confidence Issues**

Anxiety plays a crucial role in foreign language learning and teaching, as highlighted by Fadillah (2015), who asserts that it significantly influences students' success or failure. This aligns with confidence issues reported by Students 6, 7, and 8, who expressed difficulties in participating actively in class due to



self-comparisons with more proficient peers and fear of making mistakes. Horwitz et al. (1986) describe this phenomenon as communication apprehension, a core element of Foreign Language Anxiety, which discourages learners from engaging in the interactive activities essential for language acquisition.

To address these challenges, Christyani (2022) emphasizes the importance of teachers creating a less stressful learning context and fostering a friendly, lively classroom climate to boost students' self-confidence. Fadillah (2013) further advocates for English teachers to design and organize diverse classroom activities that encourage students to become more confident and active. Such activities provide opportunities for students to interact, collaborate, and practice language skills in a supportive environment, reducing anxiety and building competence.

This approach complements Dörnyei (2020) recommendation of implementing confidence-building strategies, such as constructive feedback and encouragement, which help learners overcome their fears and engage more effectively in class. Additionally, Vygotsky Sociocultural Theory (1978) underscores the importance of a positive classroom environment in fostering a sense of belonging and reducing feelings of isolation among learners.

By integrating these strategies—creating a supportive and lively atmosphere (Christyani, 2022), organizing diverse and engaging activities (Fadillah, 2013), and offering encouragement and constructive feedback (Dörnyei, 2020)—teachers can effectively mitigate the negative impacts of anxiety. This holistic approach helps enhance students' confidence, promotes active participation, and ultimately improves outcomes in foreign language learning.

**e. Balancing Academic Responsibilities**

Students 5 and 10 struggled to balance the demands of the Intensive English program with other academic and personal commitments. This challenge reflects broader findings in SLA literature, where learners often cite time constraints as a barrier to language acquisition (Chen & Zhang, 2020). Managing academic responsibilities requires prioritizing tasks and allocating sufficient time for language practice, which can be difficult amidst competing demands.

Oxford (2021) notes that effective time management strategies, such as setting realistic goals and breaking tasks into manageable segments, can alleviate stress and enhance productivity. Institutions can support learners by offering flexible schedules and resources tailored to individual needs.