

BSI Action Research Plan

Research Focus: **ESOL 400 Student Subsequent Success in English 100** Action Research Team: **ESOL. Dept.** Term: **SP 08**

Research Question	Outcome Results	Conclusions & Recommendations	Links
<p>1.1 Most students attempt ESOL 400 (ENGL 400 until 2004) multiple times before continuing on to English 100 and (1.2) of those who continue, the retention and success rates are higher or the same as students who have either placed in or come through the English series.</p> <p>2.1 What is the percentage of ESOL 400 students who subsequently enroll in ENGL 100 or 105, (2.2) how many times do they repeat the course before successfully completing, and (2.3) how many successfully complete as compared to students who have either been placed into English 100 or come through the English series?</p>	<p>1.1 In fact, within four terms, subsequent course repeats in ESOL 400 after taking ESOL 840 turn out to be as low as 0% and never higher than 12.5%.</p> <p>1.2 The data show that when subsequent course repeats are included in the subsequent success calculations, ESOL students enrolling in ENGL 100/105 classes succeed at a slightly higher rate than students entering ENGL 100/105 through the non-ESOL channels.</p> <p>2.1 The percentage of subsequent enrolling is 71.6, varying fall semester to fall semester from 66.7% to 75%</p> <p>2.2 ESOL 400 students who take ESOL 100/105 repeat ENGL 105 at rates that averages 18.2%, varying fall to fall from 12.8% to 22.2%</p> <p>2.3 See 1.2 above</p>	<p>1.1 No action needed</p> <p>1.2.1 Since students in the ESOL 400 to ENGL 100 cohort could include those who both placed in and passed into ESOL 400, track the ENGL 100 success of the subset cohort of students who both passed ESOL 840 and then passed ESOL 400 on their path into ENGL 100. 1.2.2 Track subsequent success rates of ESOL students who took native speaker ENGL 100/105 sections compared to the nonnative speaker sections: ESOL 400 to ENGL 100NNS to next ENGL classes; ESOL 400 to ENGL 100/105NS to next English classes.</p> <p>2.1 Data show 50% success rates in ESOL 840, subsequent course success rates of 84% in ESOL 400 and 75% in ENGL 100/105. Because new students enter the sequence at every level, we still can't say for sure that of the 100 students who enter ESOL 840, 50 of those same 100 eventually pass with repeats, 42 of those original 100 eventually succeed in ESOL 400, and 32 of those same 100 go on to pass ENGL 100/105. Recommend longitudinal tracking of entering-ESOL 840 cohort through ENGL 100/105 along with follow-up/exit questions to identify reasons for lack of success or, if found, gaps in persistence. Tease out evening ESOL 841, 842 to see how these student success patterns affect the data.</p> <p>2.2 Compare the ESOL 400 to ENGL 100/105 repeat rates to those of all other students passed into ENGL 100/105 as well as those placed into ENGL 100/105.</p>	<p>SLOAC</p>

Action Research Guiding Questions

1. What are some of the evident trends found in the research (e.g., look for highs and lows across the data points, as well as outliers and patterns and differences in the population segments)?
 - 1.1 Except for ESOL 400 and former ESOL students in ENGL 100/105, while retention rates have held steady, success rates have dropped Fall 2001- Fall 2006 as much as 20%.
 - 1.2 Success rates are lowest at the 810 and the 840 levels.
 - 1.3 When repeats are counted toward successful course completions, students taking ESOL 400 or ENGL 100/105 succeed at a rate slightly above the rate of those who take the placement test for ESOL 400 and even those native speakers who either passed into or took the placement test for ENGL 100/105.
 - 1.4 Sorting out by ethnicity, Hispanics (females and males) had the lowest subsequent enrollment from ESOL 400 to ENG100/105 with a 52% average, as well as lower success rates, for example in ESOL 400 73% and in ENGL 100 58%.
2. How might you explain the more salient trends?
 - 2.1 It may be that success rates have been dropping with increased emphasis in rigor resulting from the impending 2009 increase in graduation requirements and a marked trend toward academic English in texts and curriculum.
 - 2.2 Most striking is that the success rate for ESOL 840 is just 50%. The next lowest success rate is at the entering ESOL 810 level where the success rate is 56 %. The explanation is different for each level. ESOL 840 is a prerequisite course for transfer level ENGL 400, which has a UC standard of 5000 words of expository composition. ESOL 840, then, serves as an academic reading and writing prep course, and as an entree/gate keeper to academic English. Writing essays, students face a challenge in time and commitment. Once through ESOL 840, the ESOL cohort seems to stabilize in performance. ESOL 810 is open entry at this lowest level, with no placement “floor.” For many students this class could be a big jump. For the first time taking college classes for grades, compared to adult school with no required attendance and no grades.

2.3 Including successful repeats in the reports has reversed the previous finding that placed students perform better than those passed into a course. The next round of research may confirm what looks to be the situation now: As a cohort of ESOL students makes its way through from ESOL 840 through ENGL 100/105, the cohort experiences its greatest shock and attrition at the ESOL 840 level, but after that the students who persist perform reasonably successfully right through ENGL 100/105.

2.4 The year 2002 was a year of severe economic downturn and resulted in Fall 2003 cancellation of course sections. There was a large peak in enrollment in ESOL and increase in sections in 2002. In 2003, there was a reduction in sections and an increase in fees. ESOL sections went from 12 to 17 to 11 respectively from F2001, F2002, F2003, and ENGL 400 sections went from 3 to 5 to 3 in those same years. These changes seemed to have affected Hispanics disproportionately. For 2002 students, subsequent 2003 enrollment immediately dropped from 86% to 50% for Hispanic students going from ESOL 400 into ENGL 100, and the overall success of that group in ENGL 100 was just 38%. Not so drastically 2002, subsequent enrollments dropped by just 17% for Hispanics going from ESOL 840 into ESOL 400, but the trend was still downward, with a Fall 2005 subsequent enrollment at 73% compared to the 100% Fall 2001 subsequent enrollment. That same year Fall 2002, Asians and Filipinos were not significantly impacted. Overall, our Hispanics drop out more. Some of our Hispanics may be under-prepared academically when performance is compared to the performance of other students, but even more marked is a clear link to a lack in socioeconomic flexibility to weather cost increases and section cutbacks.

How do the snapshot data points (e.g., term or year) compare to the benchmark data (e.g., averages)?

Again, what is most dramatic is the 85.7 % of a cohort of 7 Hispanic 2001 ESOL 400 students who went on to enroll in ENGL 100/105 previous to the post 9/11 cutbacks compared to just 50% of the cohort of 26 2002 Hispanic ESOL 840 students who went on to enroll in ENGL 100/105. The answer may very well be that when hotel, airport, and restaurant jobs closed down, Skyline experienced a surge of students that were just here to take a course to upgrade their skills until they found new jobs.

What is reasonable benchmark performance?

It is hard to know for sure how to set a benchmark standard because ESOL statistics are often based on such low numbers. Once the total population is divided into five levels, some subcategories might consist of only 4-5 students. ESOL is also affected by the community college multiple missions of enrichment, certificates, AA/AS, and transfer. Our statistics can get thrown off when programs are offered in the high schools, for example. As a working rule-of thumb it seems reasonable to aim for 75% subsequent course enrollments and 75% success rates. These numbers may be too ambitious at the entry ESOL 810 level and the prerequisite-to-transfer-credit ESOL 840 level.

What general conclusions can you draw from the data?

Most of the ESOL data show a general downward trend for percentages of subsequent course enrollment and success in ESOL classes. The opposite has happened for ESOL 400 students who enter ENGL 100/105, where ESOL students meet our 75% success rate target, outperforming the 69.5% success rate for students who enter ENGL 100/105 through all other means. It seems that our feeder course ESOL 400, through a combination of skills enhancement and performance standards enforcement is sending forward students who can succeed in this key benchmark class.

What decisions or recommendations based on the data can you make (including additional research)?

One important consideration is that during this time of success for ESOL students passing into and succeeding in ENGL 100/105, at least some of the semesters included special ENGL 100 sections. Now that these sections have been dropped, we should monitor the results to see if there is a drop in the success rate. Another might be to see if there is any difference in success rates for ESOL students who take ENGL 100 as opposed to ENGL 105. See the chart other recommendations for further research.

What other questions are there that may need to be answered by research to help inform the decisions or recommendations?

None other identified at this time.