

San Bernardino Valley College

Implications of ESL Theory for the English Program at SBVC

A report on the
studies conducted
during the fall 2001
sabbatical
leave



By

Anasuya Pal, Ph.D.

Department of English
San Bernardino Valley College
San Bernardino, California 92410

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Summary

This one-semester sabbatical leave (Fall 2001) has given me the much-needed opportunity to reevaluate my theoretical insights on applied psycholinguistics and ESL pedagogy and reformulate their practical implications, particularly in terms of my own instructional experience and responsibilities at the SBVC. This report summarizes the result of these studies. Specifically, I have focussed on examining (a) the nature of conflict between the aspirations and abilities that hinder our ESL students' preparation for Freshman Composition, (b) the cultural and socio-economic components of this 'conflict', and (c) its linguistic implications, in order to seek a pedagogic remedy to the problem of under-performance of our ESL students. Since success in "Freshman Composition" is basic to the success of our transfer programs college-wide, the importance of this study hardly needs to be emphasized.

As is explained in the following pages, I have been able to use this opportunity to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Modeling the ESL reading process such that it can help identify the factors that affect the learning of English by our ESL students (this model is shown in Figure 2 and will be published in Professor Lynne Diaz-Rico's forthcoming book on ESL Pedagogy).
2. Integrating my survey data on language learning behavior of the SBVC ESL students (Table 4) with the available cross-national cultural insights (Figure 3) and their pedagogic implications for ESL classes (Table 2).
3. Evaluating the implications of the above in terms of sociolinguistic characteristics of SBVC students and the demographic and pedagogic trends.

The result has been the formulation of two proposals for adjusting our English and ESL course offerings to the evolving sociolinguistic dynamics: (a) starting a new 4-unit course **ESL 015 (ESL Preparation for College Writing)** that will help prepare our generation 1.5 students for Freshman Composition (ENGL 101) and parallel the existing course ENGL 015 (Preparation for College Writing) that will now be able to focus on the native speakers; and (b) strengthening the basic skills course for native speakers, ENGL 914 — by raising its units from 3 to 4 — in the same way as we have already done for our ESL stream. The details of these proposals are given in appendices I and II.

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1. About this study

These pages report the results of my studies during the semester-long sabbatical leave (Fall 2001) that I have just completed. I availed this opportunity to

- study about the nature of culture in the ESL context by exploring the core values, practices and beliefs of our 'main stream' culture vis-à-vis those of the other cultures represented by the students who usually come to our ESL classes, in order to examine the areas of either perceived or potential conflict that might hinder the student's learning of the language;
- learn about the 'Diversity Tolerance' and 'Conflict Resolution' process that leads to peace knowledge in order to be able to incorporate the teaching of peacemaking skills into our course outlines; and
- improve my understanding of the sources for assimilation of native language (L₁) versus those of the target language (L₂: English, for most of our students) that leads to the acquisition of 'survival English'.

These three issues represent different approaches to understanding and trying to tackle what I have, particularly in my decade-long experience at the SBVC, seen as a conflict between our academic ideals and their practicability. Academic pursuit, by its very nature, strives for excellence and accepts failure only as a means towards achieving success. But teaching English is increasingly emerging as an area where success implies having to accept more and more of less and less! For Instance, community colleges statewide have about the same retention and success rates in humanities, of which English is a significant part, as in all their other programs. In Fall 2000, these numbers worked out, to about 80% and 65%, respectively. But the corresponding numbers for SBVC were 78.5% (retention) and 61% (success) for all programs combined and appreciably less, 72% and 55% respectively, for humanities. This is despite the fact that we have a well conceived sequence of English courses (Figure 1) and, being aware of the large proportion of ESL speakers amongst our potential students, offer numerous ESL courses at variety of hours in order to cater to this need. But these ESL classes have usually been the hardest to fill, despite the relatively high failure rates of our ESL students in passing ENGL 015, our preparatory course for ENGL 101, the English composition and reading course here that is required for transfer to most 4-year colleges and universities. Obviously, these students either lack the basic language skills that they need for success in ENGL 015, or have poor language

learning skills. A third alternative also exists. Perhaps the simple reason why our ESL course offerings have fewer takers than we would like is that they somehow fail to satisfy the needs of our target students and may not, therefore, be as well conceived as we thought.

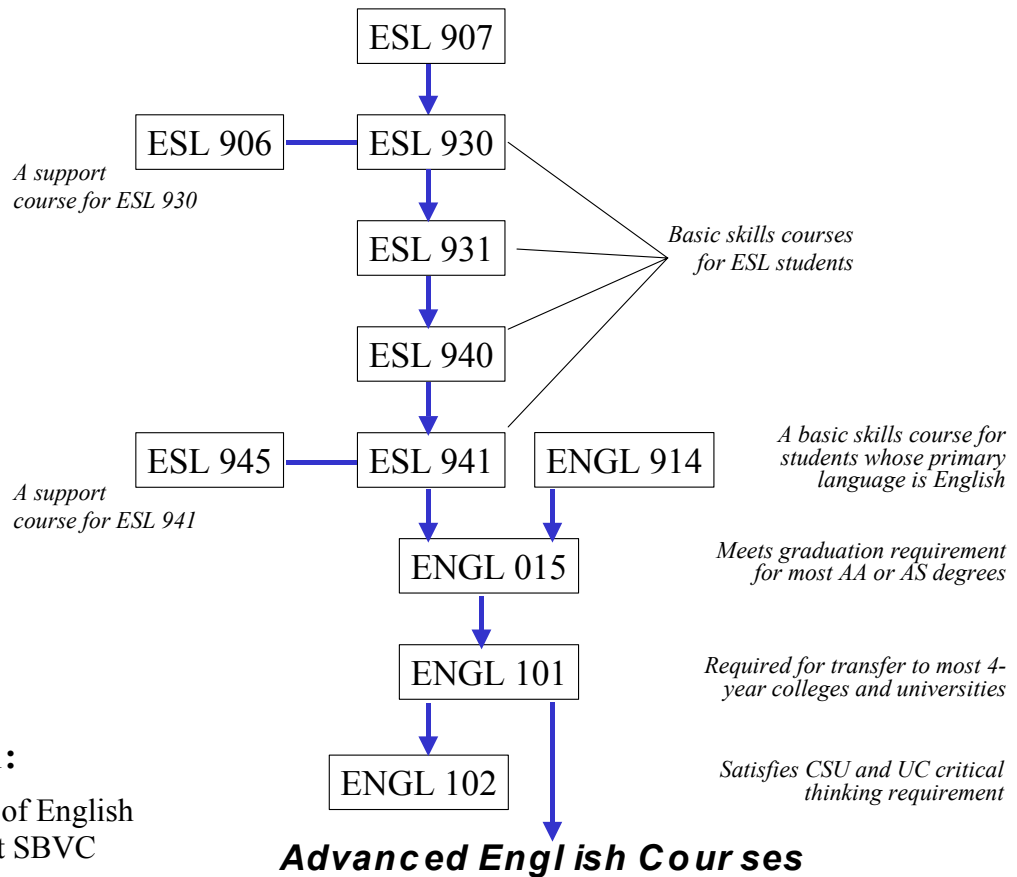


Figure 1:
Sequence of English
Courses at SBVC

Perhaps cultural and socioeconomic factors too can explain the apparent failure of this linguistically and pedagogically sound sequence to satisfy the needs of its target clientele. ESL teachers with multicultural sensitivity and knowledge of cross-cultural communication do play a special role as cultural mediators, after all. Teachers who are aware of the students' needs at various stages of their adjustment to the academic demands of language learning and the stresses of life will help students to be more successful learners. If ESL teachers offer cultural understanding, they too can receive it, if they offer language exchange, their second language skills improve, and if they offer empathy, they become better human beings. Teaching culturally is a challenging task but it can be transformed into an art.

During the present sabbatical leave, therefore, I have sought to combine psycholinguistic insights on language learning process with current pedagogic practices and our socioeconomic situational variables in order to understand how best I can help enhance the effectiveness of our ESL and English program. This work has involved

- using the libraries at University of California, Los Angeles and Riverside, for the journals and publications on language acquisition theory and empirical research and for the relevant data in U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population reports and in U.S. Education Department's Digest of Educational Statistics and Education Statistics Quarterly;
- Internet-based research using the databank at California Community College Chancellor's Office, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics, and University of Michigan's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition; and
- joining the discussions section of Professor Lynne Diaz-Rico's **EESL-607 (Principles and Practices in TESOL)** class at California State University, San Bernardino, on a regular basis throughout the Fall 2001 Quarter, in order to be able to fuse my own theoretical knowledge and practical insights with the current research and advances in TESL theory and practice.

What follows summarizes the results of this study, and is presented here in four sections. First, in section 2 that immediately follows, we examine the implications of theoretical insights on second language instructional pedagogy. This examination is conducted in terms of pedagogic differences between L1 (first language) and L2 (second language) classrooms with regard to learning processes, cross-cultural characteristics and learning behavior. Our sociolinguistic scene is then examined in Section 3, by comparing the student demographic and performance patterns at SBVC with those in California community colleges in general, on one hand, and the challenges the overall demographic trends pose to the TESOL (Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages) practitioners. Section 4 examines the emerging curricular trends in ESL and English in other California community colleges, compares the English program at SBVC with them, and presents the changes that would align our English program with this trend. The last section of this report analyzes the likely impact of the proposed changes.

2. L₁-L₂ Differences and Their Pedagogic Implications

Psycholinguistics and Language Acquisition:

Learning the Second language (L₂) basically implies acquiring the language of literacy and reading is the first step in this process. Understanding how one learns to read can therefore guide us in formulating the necessary pedagogic approaches. Learning to read is a complex process, however. Even in the native or first language (L₁), the failure to develop appropriate reading skills at an early stage of the learning process can grievously impair the learner's communicative ability. This is more crucial for L₂, where the learning process is usually formal, no matter whether it implies a subconscious acquisition or conscious learning. Much of our theoretical understanding of language acquisition comes from psycholinguistics, the study of psychological states and mental activity associated with the acquisition and use of language, including writing and reading, based on which we now know* that formal reading is not a visual process alone. Instead, it involves two kinds of information:

- visual information from the printed page, and
- the non-visual information that comes from what we already know about the world in general.

Indeed, the more that is already known *behind the eyeball*, the less is the visual information required. This is precisely what the process of retrieving meaning, the goal of any reading task, is all about and fuses the psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic dimensions of the reading process. Figure 2 shows how these two dimensions can be adapted into a multi-stage process that the reading process really is. Ideally, this comprises two stages — (a) simple comprehension and (b) advanced comprehension — no matter whether the target language is L₁ or L₂. Here, simple comprehension implies the ability to follow the instructions available either in an instruction

Only a small part of the information needed for reading comprehension comes from the printed page. More often than not, comprehension precedes the identification of individual words.

* Jean Berko Gleason, Nan Bernstein Ratner, Gleason Berko and Glea Berko: **Psycholinguistics** (International Thomson, 1997)

Frank Smith, **Understanding Reading : A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Reading and Learning to Read** (Lawrence Erlbaum, 1994)

Kenneth Goodman, **On Reading: A Common-Sense Look at the Nature of Language and the Science of Reading** (Heinemann, 1996).

Stephen Krashen, **The Natural Approach : Language Acquisition in the Classroom** (Prentice Hall, 1996).

manual or “online”. Advanced comprehension involves “reacting” to the reading text, on the other hand, in order to analyze and dissect the text and retrieve the information from it. In terms of the modern workplace, this implies being able to understand the written or “online” instructions and solve the problems or design new formats, with or without the templates as the case may be. Reading is a *psycholinguistic guessing game*, therefore, in the words Kenneth Goodman* had first used to describe this process more than three decades ago.

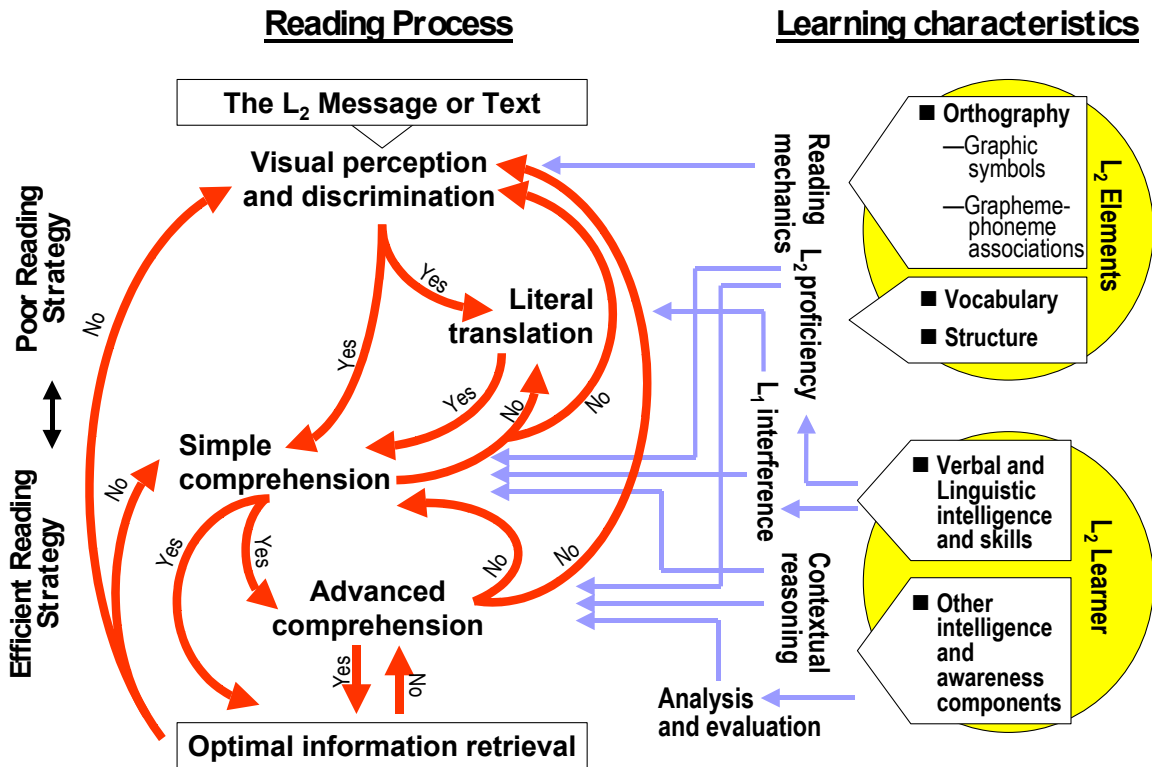


Figure 2: Understanding the reading process as it applies to a typical ESL class in a California Community College. Adapted from Pal†.

In practice, though, many of the jobs now available seldom call for any advanced level of literacy beyond the associate degree and many of the workers manning these jobs may not have any literacy in the native language itself. In such cases, understanding the written instructions involves literal translation from L₂ to the L₁. Ironically, this is also where culture plays a crucial role, at the same time when

* Kenneth Goodman, *The Psycholinguistic Nature of the Reading Process* (Wayne State Univ. Press, 1968).

† Anasuya Pal: “Reading in a Second/Foreign Language — A Conceptual Appraisal”. *The ESPecialist*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 1-24 (1989).

globalization and the advances in communication technology are transferring many of the service jobs across the borders. Learning and teaching to read, without which we can hardly advance to the writing skill, is not always the same in L₁ as in L₂, therefore. Table 1 summarizes their similarities and differences.

Table 1: Similarities and differences between reading in L₁ versus L₂

<p><u>Similarities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— knowledge of content, formal and linguistic schema.— involves interaction between the reader and the text. <p><u>Differences:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— developed than the former, so limiting the competence in the target language.— phonetically, semantically, and rhetorically different from that of L₁.— skills but has not honed the sociocultural skills sufficiently in order to perceive texts in a culturally authentic and specific way whereas the end result, comprehension, is based on linguistic data.
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Adapted from Singhal*

Clearly, an efficient L₂ reader is one who not only has the linguistic skills in L₂ but has also acquired the necessary sociocultural dexterity to be equally comfortable in moving from one cultural scene to another. As for the instructor teaching a mixed class like our ENGL 015 or ENGL 101 at SBVC, these differences between the L₁ and L₂ reading processes can produce the pedagogic nightmares that are designed to limit the effectiveness of teaching, and therefore impair instructional performance. As for ENGL 101, though, the hope is that most of the ESL students would have refined their sociocultural skills by the time they have completed ENGL 015. The question is whether this would apply to the ENGL 015 class as well.

* Meena Singhal, "A Comparison of L1 and L2 Reading: Cultural Differences and Schema". *The Internet TESL Journal* (<http://iteslj.org>), vol. 4, no. 10 (1998).

Cultural Differences and L₂ Pedagogy:

This brings us to the question of how cultural differences impact instructional strategies and effectiveness. The question of culture raises a miscellany of rather complex and intractable issues whose management requires a greater degree of expertise than what an ESL or English instructor is generally equipped to cope with. Nonetheless, as was noted at the outset itself, teachers who are aware of their students' needs at various stages of adjustment to the demands of language learning will help students to be more successful learners.

In general, cultural differences affect the classroom environment most in terms of the different value orientations and these differences are often examined relative to the American values* like individualism, monochronic time, future and action orientation, man's supremacy over nature, youthfulness and informality, competitiveness and relative equality of genders.

Cross-cultural differences and intercultural communication has been a fertile field of research, particularly in the context of multinational business, and the most influential work in this field has been that of Hofstede[†]. Based on 116,000 survey results from 40 countries, this study has identified four dimensions of cultural variability — uncertainty avoidance, power distance, masculinity/femininity and individualism-collectivism. Two of these dimensions, power distance and individualism-collectivism, are most relevant in our context. Power distance here is the deference to authority and the other dimension, individualism-collectivism, was the confirmation of Hall's[‡] initial proposal. This is because, as shown in Figure 3,

Culture

- implies the meanings shared by members of a social group;
- comprises the distinguishing characteristics as perceptions of wealth, values and normative behavioral patterns;
- is transmitted through leaning and interactions within a given social environment; and
- influences the biological process by defining eating habits, preferences and tastes, aesthetics, concepts of pleasure and pain, physical ornaments etc.

* P.R. Harris and R.T. *Morgan, Managing Cultural Differences* (Gulf Publishing Co., 1993).

† Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values* (Sage, 1980).

Geert Hofstede, Cultural Differences in Teaching an Learning. *International Journal of Inter-cultural Relations*, vol. 10, pp. 301-320 (1986).

‡ E.T. Hall, *The Silent Language* (Doubleday, 1959).

these dimensions display a rather tight correlation. Note that the greater the propensity for collectivism, the greater tends to be the acceptance of large power distance, whereas the greater the propensity for individualism the greater tends to be the diminution of power distance.

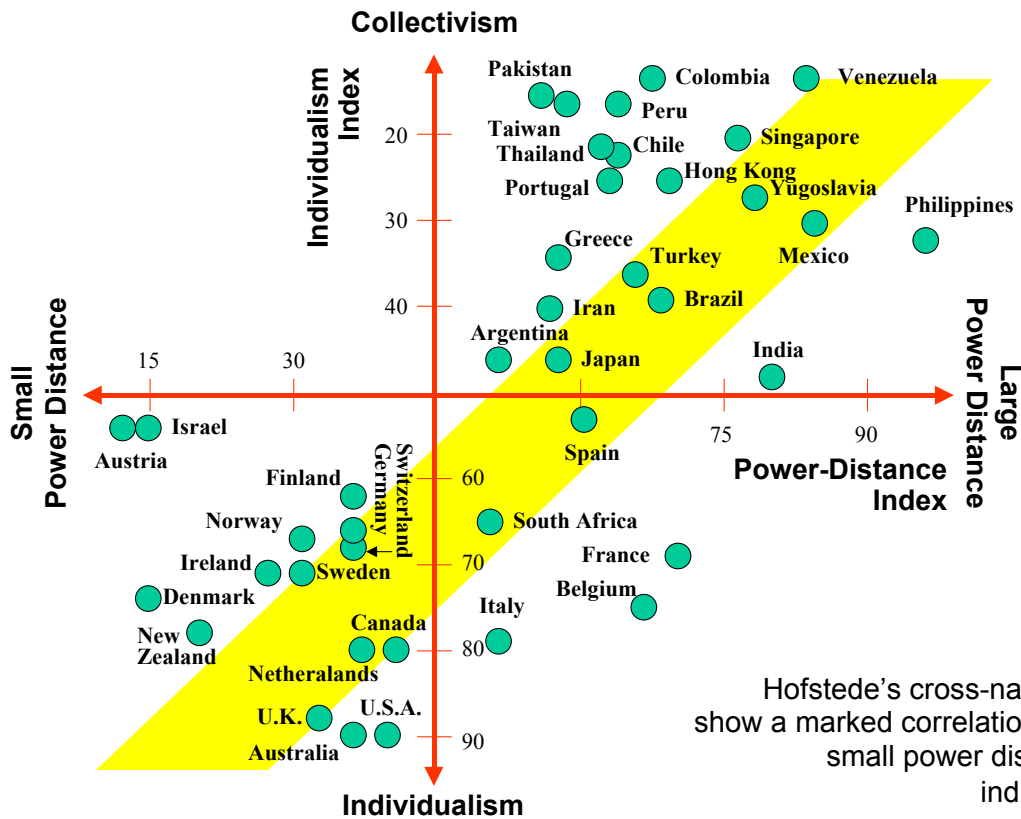


Figure 3:

Hofstede's cross-national data show a marked correlation between small power distance and individualism.

An immediate implication of Figure 3 for our English and ESL classes should be readily apparent. Note that most of our non-native speaking students come from the collectivist large-power distance cultures (e.g., Latin America, East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East) whereas the L₁ students belong to our individualistic small power-distance culture. Different pedagogic strategies are needed for the different culture-groups, therefore. Table 2, adapted from Nelson*, shows how the classroom practices are likely to differ between individualist versus collectivist cultures on one hand, and between the small versus large power distance cultures on the other.

* Gayle Nelson. Individualism/Collectivism and Power Distance: Applications for the ESL classroom. *The CATESOL Journal*, vol. 12, pp.73-91 (2000)

Table 2: The likely classroom differences between

- individualist versus collectivist cultures (top) and
- small power distance versus large power distance cultures (bottom)

Individualist	Collectivist
<p>Students tend to be active learners Students often speak up in class without being specifically called on by the teacher. They frequently ask the teacher questions if they do not understand a point or need clarification.</p> <p>Dynamic groups Some teachers divide students into small groups to complete specific tasks. The membership in the groups often changes during the course of the class.</p> <p>Teacher should be impartial Teachers are expected to be impartial and to treat all the students equally, no matter what the status.</p> <p>No need to maintain face Maintaining face is not particularly important and is of no relevance.</p>	<p>Students tend to be passive learners Students speak up in the classroom when specifically called on by the teacher, and seldom volunteer. They seldom raise their hands to ask any questions of the teacher.</p> <p>Groups tend to be static Teachers seldom use small groups in class; and if they do, the students often prefer to stay the same group, so leaving the group membership intact.</p> <p>Preferential treatment is accepted Some students may receive preferential treatment based on their memberships in particular groups.</p> <p>Maintaining face is important No one should ever lose face or cause someone else to lose face.</p>
Small Power Distance	Large Power Distance
<p>Learning requires students' participation Students expected to participate in their own learning, to talk in class, and to ask questions.</p> <p>Teachers need to earn respect Teachers generally earn the respect of their students by their fairness in treating the students and by having classroom interaction on the course material.</p> <p>Informal classroom culture Classrooms may appear informal to the members of higher power distance cultures, as teachers and students may dress informally, chairs may be arranged in an "informal" configuration, and classroom norms of respect and behavior may be less rigorous.</p> <p>Effective teaching is a learner-centered activity An effective teacher is expected to know the subject matter but also enable student-teacher and student-student interaction.</p>	<p>Students' learning is the teacher's task Teacher is the authority who presents the material and initiates communication.</p> <p>Teachers expect respect The position as teachers is enough for the teachers to expect the respect of their students. This respect is also expressed in the way students address their teachers.</p> <p>Formal classroom culture Classrooms may appear formal, especially to the members of lower power-distance cultures, as teachers and students may dress more formally, chairs and desks may be arranged in neat rows, and the classroom norms of respect and behavior may seem more rigorous.</p> <p>Effective teaching is a teacher-centered activity An effective teacher is expected to know the subject matter and to transmit that knowledge to the students.</p>

Adapted from Gayle Nelson's work referenced earlier.

Clearly, this Table shows that mixing the students from diametrically opposite cultural groups would be hazardous to the L₁ as also L₂ students, unless and until the latter have acquired adequate cultural sophistication in L₂ reading. Suppose, for instance, that we have an English composition and reading class one-half of which hails from the collectivistic large power distance cultures of Latin America and the other half are the L₁ speakers from our individualistic small power distance culture. If the teacher focuses on our linguistically underprepared L₁ students by trying learner centered activities then the effect will be one of discouraging our sociolinguistically disadvantaged L₂ learners, and vice versa. In other words, it will be hard to find an instructional strategy that will simultaneously satisfy the needs of both these learner groups.

The Learning Strategies of ESL Learners:

The third theoretical track explored here has been to examine the language learning strategies that our ESL students use and if they differ from the strategies that are usually considered positive. For instance, the basic premise in culture-based matrices in Figure 3 and Table 2 is that cultural differences can make the learning strategies of different social groups mutually incompatible. We therefore need to examine how compatible the language learning strategies of SBVC ESL students, who belong to collectivist-large power distance group, are with the individualist-small power distance group that our L₁ students belong to. That will tell us if it is pedagogically advisable, or otherwise, to mix the sociolinguistically disadvantaged L₂ learners with linguistically underprepared L₁ students.

The concern for mapping the learning strategies of effective learners has already produced a general consensus* on the factors that characterize positive learning strategies. As for the ESL students at SBVC, I have earlier conducted a questionnaire survey of 80 Hispanic and Asian students in my ESL classes, whose results are directly relevant to our present context. This self-reporting survey comprised a total of 51 question items that were earlier used by Politzer and McGroarty† in a study relating learning behavior to the gains in linguistic and

* Rebecca Oxford, *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know* (Heinle & Heinle, 1990).

J. Michael O'Malley and Anna Uhl Chamor, *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995).

Andrew Cohen, *Strategies in Learning and Using a Second Language* (Addison-Wesley, 1998).

† Robert Politzer and Mary McGroarty, "An Exploratory Study of Learning Behaviors and their Relationship to Gains in Linguistic and Communicative Competence", *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 103-123 (1985).

communicative competence. These question items formed three groups (Table 3) and differentiated “positive” learning behaviors from the “negative” ones.

Table 3: The “positive” versus “negative” language behaviors, as identified in the survey questionnaire

<p>Classroom Behaviors</p>	<p>“Positive” behavior: The student says correct form to oneself on noting other’s error or corrects fellow student’s mistake when asked to do so, usually says the answers to himself/herself even if teacher has not asked for it, often guesses the meaning of a sentence from the speaker’s actions or expressions and the meaning of new words from the rest of the sentence, usually asks the teacher to repeat a phrase or word that is not understood or to know if it is the example of a recently learned rule or to know when and by whom an expression can be used, seeks explanation on noticing an exception to a rule.</p> <p>“Negative” behavior: The student answers only when he/she is completely sure of the right answer, repeats or learns phrases without understanding for the fear that asking for an explanation will disrupt the class, speaks to fellow students (in class) in the native language.</p>
<p>Individual Study Behaviors</p>	<p>“Positive” behavior: The student often tries to get the general meaning of a sentence or paragraph before looking up the unfamiliar words, often looks up words in a dictionary, sometimes talks to oneself in the L₂.</p> <p>“Negative” behavior: The student tries to memorize sentences without analyzing them, looks up all the unfamiliar words first and writes them in the text before reading it, generally associates words or phrases in the native language instead of L₂ and then memorizes them.</p>
<p>Interaction Behaviors</p>	<p>“Positive” behavior: The student seeks help when he/she doesn’t know how to express an idea, tries to rephrase when the listener doesn’t understand, asks for confirmation when he/she is not sure of having used correct grammar, corrects himself/ herself on noticing a mistake, asks for repetition when he/she doesn’t understand someone.</p> <p>“Negative” behavior: The student sometimes prefers keeping silent than making mistakes and sometimes avoids exposure to L₂ because of the mental fatigue involved in dealing with a foreign language, mentally frames the sentence in the native language first and then translates into L₂, prefers talking only to the native speakers at social gatherings.</p>

As can be clearly seen in this Table, it is not that these negative behaviors really retard learning. Rather, this distinction between the so-called positive versus negative behaviors rests on the theoretical distinction between language learning versus acquisition, made by Krashen for instance, that separates behaviors conducive of linguistic competence from the ones that aid the acquisition of communicative competence. The Politzer and McGroarty study thus found that ‘negative’ behaviors promote linguistic skills and ‘positive’ behaviors the communicative skills. The Politzer and McGroarty study also found statistically significant difference between the Asian and Hispanic students, as the latter scored higher in the surveys but made poorer gains in language learning.

Table 4 summarizes the results of this survey. Notice that statistically significant differences between question-item means are found for the classroom and interaction behavior but not for the individual study behavior. Perhaps this was only to be expected, however, for the simple reason that the students in Politzer and McGroarty study came from graduate classes and it is doubtful if the SBVC students sampled here aspire to attain that educational level as yet. This Table also summarizes the statistical comparison of SBVC sample with expected behavior item mean and with what would be expected of random answers. These numbers were estimated as follows. If responses to positive behavior question items were all in the affirmative (= 1 in our scoring scheme) and those to the negative behavior question items were in the negative (= 0), then the expected item mean would be 0.79 (= 11/14) for classroom behavior, because 3 out of the total 14 question items in this set were for negative behavior, 0.80 (= 12/15) for individual study and 0.78 (= 14/18) for interaction behavior. For completely random responses, on the other hand, question item mean = 0.50 for each of these sets. Pursuing these alternatives would be unnecessary, of course, if the results of a survey of this type were to be as clear cut as theory requires. Unfortunately, neither the SBVC sample that was subsequently extended to a total of 198 students, nor the Politzer and McGroarty study, satisfy this condition.

Table 4: Statistical comparison of the results of SBVC sample on student learning behaviors with those of Politzer and McGroarty study and under other assumptions explained in the text.

	Expected Mean	SBVC Students		Politzer & McGroarty		Are the SBVC sample statistics significantly different, at $\alpha = 0.05$, from		
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Politzer and McGroarty data?	Expected Mean?	Random Process?
Classroom Behavior	0.79	0.61	0.18	0.69	0.19	YES	YES	YES
Individual Study	0.80	0.64	0.16	0.65	0.19	NO	YES	YES
Interaction Behavior	0.78	0.62	0.18	0.72	0.19	YES	YES	YES

The results in Table 4 yield a simple inference. The SBVC question-item mean values differ significantly from the expected mean and are clearly nonrandom. The learning behavior of these students diverges markedly, therefore, from those conducive of communicative competence and towards those promoting linguistic proficiency. In terms of instructional pedagogy, this reinforces the inference drawn in the preceding section. Had the language learning behavior of our ESL

students favored communicative competence, mixing them with the L₁ students in a single class would have posed no problem. ***The results of this study thus suggest that putting our L₂ and L₁ students in a single ENGL 015 or ENGL 101 class creates a divided forum in which the L₁ students are required to seek communicative competence at the same time as the L₂ students are seeking linguistic proficiency!***

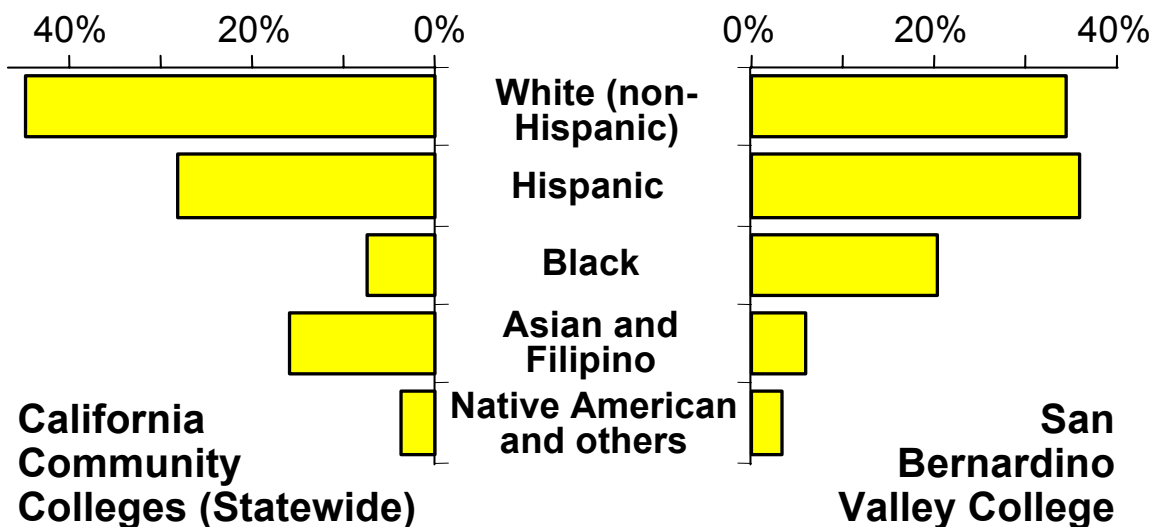
3. The Sociolinguistic Scene

The linguistic background of SBVC students:

Let us now examine the sociolinguistic background that forces this desperate mix of students in our ENGL 015 and ENGL 101 classes, so making our task of teaching English such a pedagogic nightmare. Indeed, ethnicity and economy are the two factors that have combined to create this complexity in our English classes.

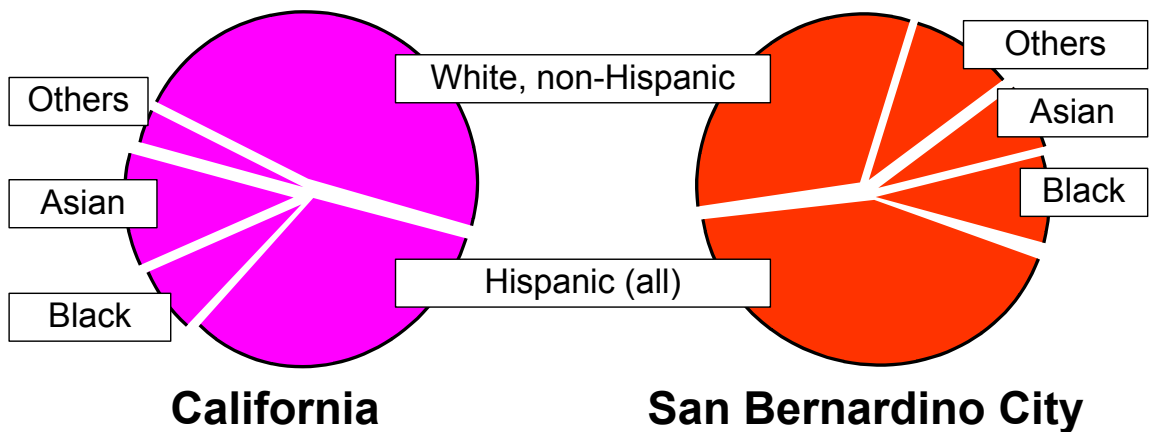
Figure 4 compares the ethnic makeup of SBVC students with that of community college students statewide, based on the Fall 2000 semester enrollment data. Note that SBVC has a larger proportion of Hispanic and Black students, and a smaller proportion of Asian (including Filipino) students, than community colleges in California in general.

Figure 4: Comparing the ethnic composition of SBVC student community with that statewide. (Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office).



This reflects the reality of the San Bernardino community itself, as can be seen in Figure 5 where we compare the ethnic makeup of San Bernardino city with that of the state of California. Note that Hispanics rather than non-Hispanic Whites are the largest ethnic group in the City.

Figure 5: Unlike the State, non-native speakers of English (Hispanics and Asians) outnumber the native speakers (Whites and Blacks) in San Bernardino. (Sources: U.S. Census Bureau and San Bernardino City Government)

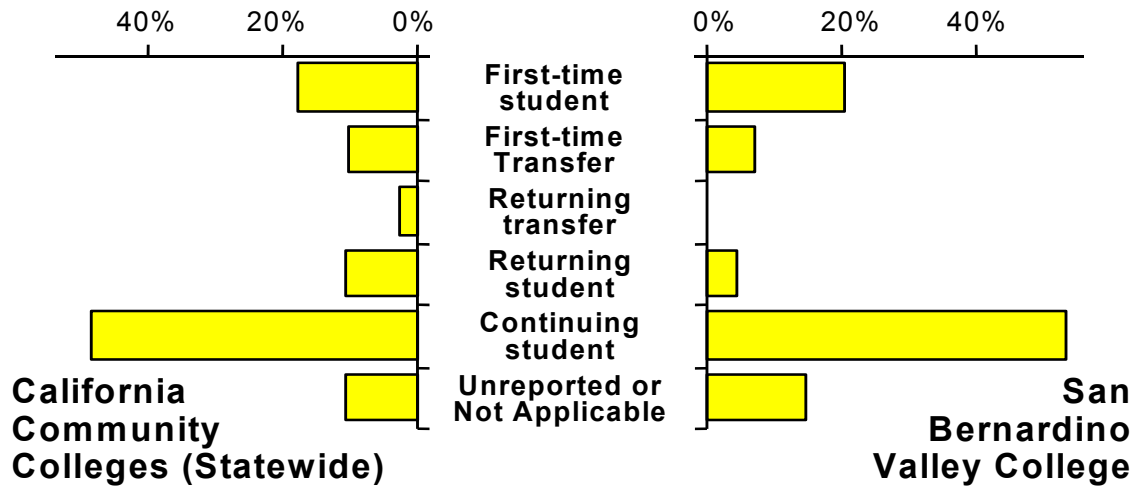


Combining the White (non-Hispanic) and Black segments of these populations as the native speakers of English, on one hand, and the Hispanic and Asian segments as the non-native speakers on the other, it can be seen that non-native speakers (= 49.9%) outnumber the native speakers (= 40.4%) in San Bernardino City. The corresponding statewide proportions are 43.5% and 53.1%, respectively. This suggests that, compared to an average California community college, there is a far greater potential demand for ESL programs at the SBVC.

The academic profile of SBVC students:

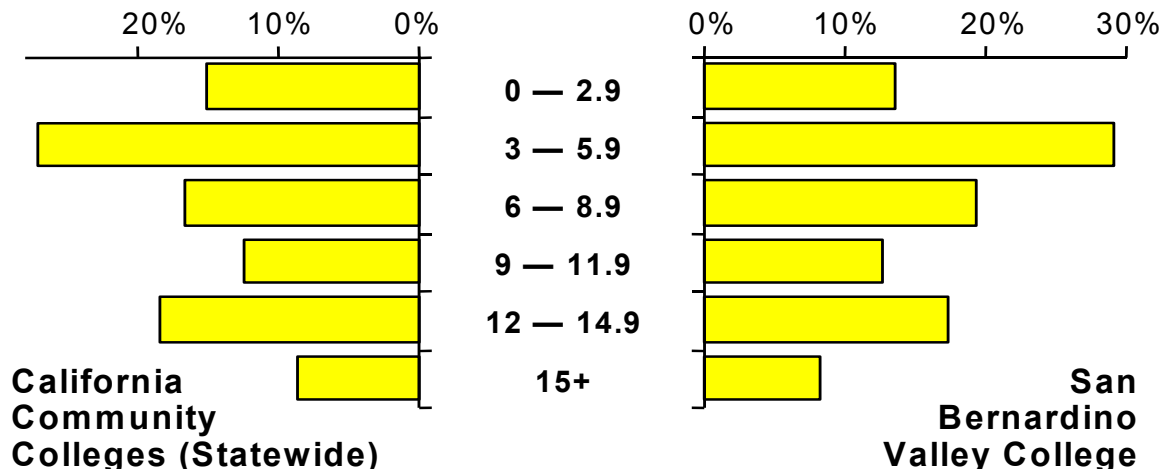
Much like the other community colleges, the majority of SBVC students are either continuing (53.2% in Fall 2000) or first-time (20.6% in Fall 2000) students. This can be seen in Figure 6 where these statistics for the Fall 2000 semester are compared with the corresponding statewide community college enrollment data.

Figure 6: About 75% of the community college enrollees are either continuing or first-time students. (Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office).



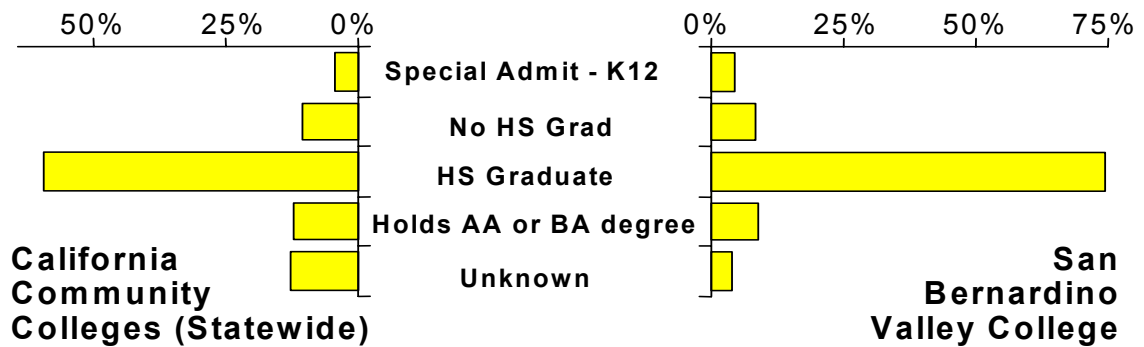
In terms of the average unit-load too, the student population at SBVC is typical of an average community college in California. As shown in Figure 7, full-time students (i.e., those with 12 or more units) accounted for only about a quarter of the total community college enrollments in SBVC and elsewhere in Fall 2000. These figures exclude the non-credit enrollments that accounted for 13.5% of the total unit load in Fall 2000 statewide. This number is likely to be as much or more for SBVC because fewer of our students tend to transfer to the 4-year colleges and universities than what is the average for community colleges in California.

Figure 7: Much like the other community college enrollees, 70-75% of the SBVC students take less than 12 units per semester. (Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office).



This is despite the fact that SBVC enrollees comprise a much larger proportion of High School graduates than the California community colleges in general. This can be seen in Figure 8 where we compare the Fall 2000 SBVC statistics with the statewide data.

Figure 8: Compared to the California community colleges in general, SBVC has a higher proportion of High School graduates. (Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office).



Ordinarily, with such a large proportion of high school graduates coming in, we should expect SBVC transfer rates to exceed the state average. The question why fewer SBVC students are transfer-bound is one that continues to be a matter of considerable concern college-wide, therefore. The problem is that the transfer rates are hard to measure. This is largely because a student who comes to the community college does not necessarily seek transfer to a 4-year college or university. Indeed, many of them come to the community college merely to shop around and see if transfer is indeed what they wish to pursue. A recent NCES (National Center for Educational Statistics) study of this issue* thus found that only a quarter of all beginning post-secondary students enrolled at public 2-year institutions nationwide in 1989-90 had transferred to 4-year institutions by Spring 1994. This proportion jumped to 36% for the students who expected to complete bachelor's degree or higher, and to 40% for the students enrolled in 12 or more credit hours. Thus, as SBVC has the same proportion of enrollees taking 12-plus units as the average community college in California, then one wonders why its significantly higher proportion of High School graduates has not translated into a comparable, if not proportionately higher, transfer rate.

*Ellen Bradburn and David Hurst, "Community College Transfer Rates to 4-year Institutions Using Alternative Definitions of Transfer", *Education Statistics Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 3 (Fall 2001).

Part of the answer perhaps lies in the economy. More often than not, students pursue formal education based on its perceived economic benefits, after all. Our transfer rates are unlikely to improve, then, if our students found a 2-year college education to be all that they need in order to accomplish their economic goals. This is consistent with the recent job-growth projections for 2000-10 by Bureau of Labor Statistics, summarized in Table 5, which suggests that the fastest growth during this period is expected to come through Associate degree or community college education.

Table 5: Employment and total job openings by education or training: 2000-2010 (source: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecopro.t04.htm>)

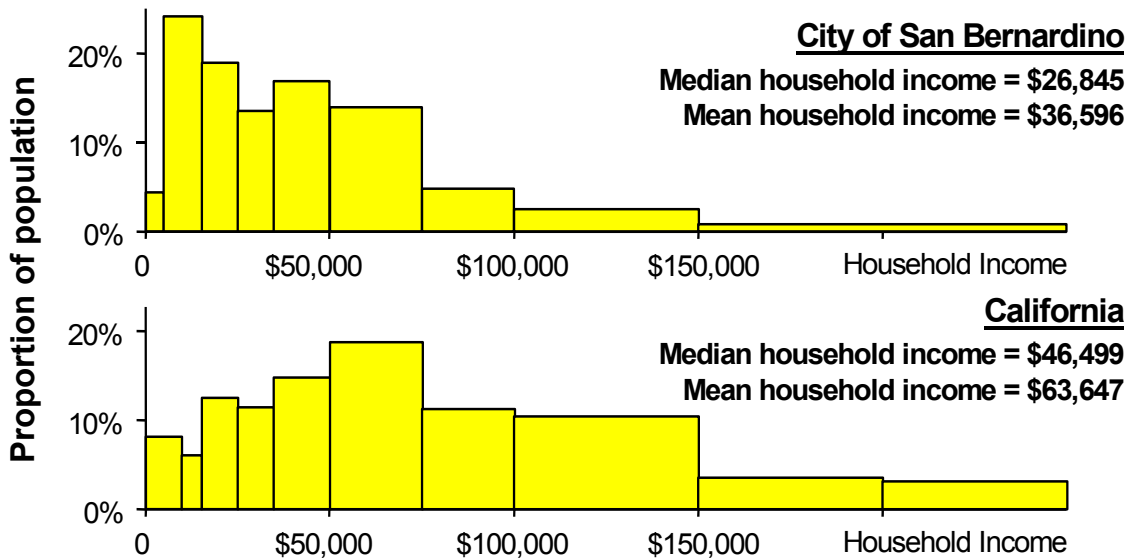
	Total Number Employed and/or Jobs Available		Change during 2000-10
	2000	2010	
<u>Formal Education</u>	41.83 million	51.16 million	22.29%
Post-Baccalaureate	12.27 million	14.75 million	20.19%
Baccalaureate	17.80 million	21.81 million	22.50%
Associate	5.08 million	6.70 million	31.83%
Post-Secondary Vocational	6.68 million	7.89 million	18.16%
Work-related Training	103.76 million	116.60 million	12.37%
Total	145.59 million	167.75 million	15.22%

To this we should add the fact that, as shown in Figure 9 which compares the income profile of the city of San Bernardino with that of the State of California, San Bernardino is a relatively poor part of California. The economy today is largely knowledge based. Therefore, the poorer a community the less likely it would be to either demand higher education or pursue when it is available.

These factors have two implications for our SBVC English program. Overall, they emphasize that the success of our English program is critical to the transfer goals of the College. All transfer bound students are bound to pass through our English program, after all. Any improvement in the efficiency of our English program is therefore bound to positively impact the SBVC transfer rate. Likewise, as for our English program itself, these sociolinguistic factors suggest that our students can be broadly grouped into two. One is the ESL group, whose need to learn the English language is what our existing sequence of ESL courses, from ESL 907 to

ESL 941 (Figure 1), seeks to serve. The number of such students is rather small, however. As 70-75% of our credit students are High School graduates (Figure 8), these ESL students comprise only a fraction of the 25-30% of our other students. The other group comprises the “limited English” students who, having graduated from our local High Schools, come straight to either ENGL 015 or ENGL 101 but mostly speak Spanish at home are yet to acquire the ESL skills that they need in order to succeed in these courses.

Figure 9: Household income and benefits, in 2000 inflation-adjusted dollars, for the city of San Bernardino (top) and the State of California (bottom). (Source: U.S. Census Bureau).



How large would this second group be? Since 70-75% of our students come in from the local high schools and 50-55% of our students are non-native speakers, these two factors perhaps combine to make 35-40% of our ENGL 015 and ENGL 101 classes. Even if only one-half to two-thirds of them need ESL, these classes end up with 20-25% of students whose College English needs require that they receive ESL-focussed instruction.

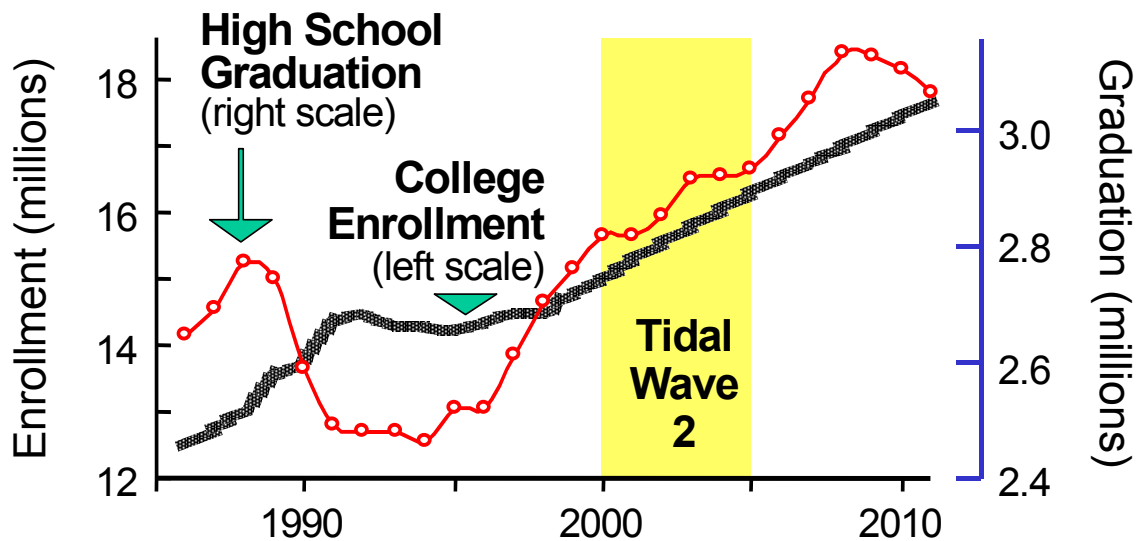
Based on these ethnicity and enrollment data, 20-25% of our ENGL 015 and ENGL 101 students need ESL skills.

4. The Evolving TESL Response

The Coming Wave of Generation 1.5 Students:

This second group of potential ESL students that has been identified here is not unique to the SBVC, however. Rather, college English programs all over the U.S. are becoming increasingly aware of their presence. As the number of students in our schools has increased, so has the number of high school graduates and their influx into the colleges. This trend, which educational demographers have dubbed as the “Tidal Wave 2” is expected, as shown in Figure 10, to continue well into this decade. Most of these students are immigrants and U.S. residents born abroad, and have been exposed to the American culture and schooling, but are still in the process of learning English. They therefore form a distinct group by themselves and are often dubbed as “Generation 1.5”.

Figure 10: Colleges are now bracing for the arrival of a rising number of high school graduates, often called the “Tidal Wave 2”, an increasing proportion of whom can be grouped as “Generation 1.5” (Source: National Center for Education Statistics).



Two characteristics make the English language learning needs of Generation 1.5 unique*. One, since they have been in the U.S. for some time and have been schooled here, they are acculturated as well as orally fluent. Two, since they are

* Linda Harklau, Kay Losey and Meryl Siegal (Ed.). *Generation 1.5 Meets College Composition: Issues in the Teaching of Writing to U.S.-Educated Learners of ESL* (Lawrence Erlbaum, 1999).

still in the process of learning formal English, their writing is poor and grammar is weak. As Brett Thomas* notes in the December 2001 issue of *CATESOL NEWS*, these create problems in assessing and placing them in the appropriate English and ESL classes. These problems can be broadly grouped as follows:

- Sometimes these students get misplaced in low-level ESL classes, based on their poor grammar and writing.
- Their acculturation and oral fluency sometimes gets them mistakenly placed in very high-level English classes.
- Having already gotten placed out of ESL at the secondary school level, these students themselves feel too confident of their communicative competence to accept being placed in the ESL classes.

The result is the same in all these cases. Despite a plethora of already available facilities that can help an ESL learner prepare well for the Freshman Composition class, we are unable to help this group of learners whose numbers are certainly likely to rise. Indeed, their misplacement affects the rest of the class adversely, no matter whether it is a beginning ESL class, a preparatory class for Freshman English Composition, or the Freshman English Composition class itself.

The Alternative Responses:

These “at-risk” Generation 1.5 students clearly need remedial courses in both, writing and grammar. It is not that native speakers do not need similar remediation. More often than not, they indeed do. At the SBVC, for instance, we offer two courses to cater to this need, ENGL 015 (Preparation for College Writing) and ENGL 020 (Grammar), and the units earned in both these courses apply for the Associate degree. These courses do not address the typical need of Generation 1.5 students, however.

In order to examine how we can address this problem, therefore, let us examine the practice in our sister community colleges elsewhere in California. There have, in the main, been three kinds of responses to resolve this problem:

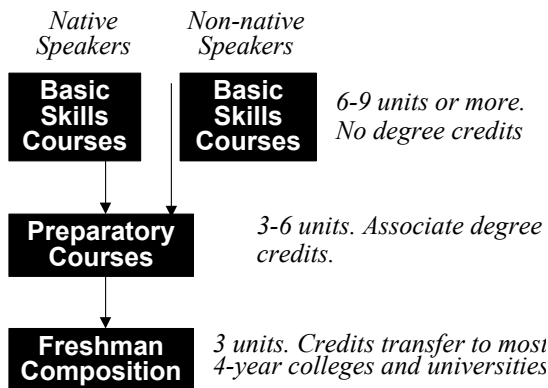
- Strengthening the preparatory program for Freshman English Composition by adding courses in basics skills for the native speakers.
- Separating the preparatory programs for native and non-native speakers, in addition to strengthening the basic skills program for native speakers.

* Brett Thomas, Preparing for the Coming Wave of Generation 1.5 Students, *CATESOL News*, vol. 33, no. 3, p. 15 (Dec 2001).

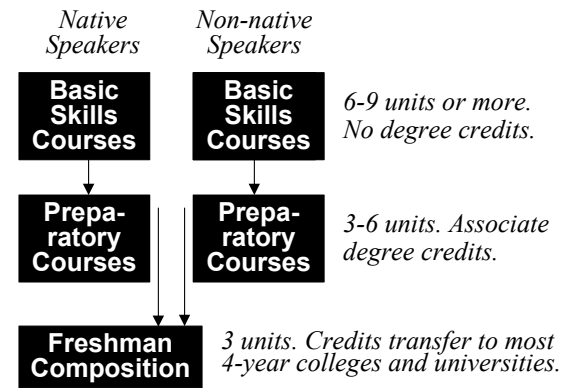
- Providing separate preparatory and Freshman Composition classes for native and non-native speakers, in addition to strengthening the basic skills program for native speakers.

These three alternative strategies are conceptually illustrated in Figure 11 below, where they are labeled as Model 1, Model 2 and Model 3, respectively. Note that all the three models recognize the basic problem of “limited English proficiency” of these generation 1.5 learners and therefore emphasize stronger curricular inputs at the basic skills as well as preparatory levels. The difference is that Model 1 combines native and non-native speakers in a single setting at the preparatory level, whereas Model 2 separates them at this level as well and Model 3 separates them even in the Freshman Composition class.

Model 1: Expanding the preparatory program



Model 2: Separating the preparatory programs for native and non-native speakers



Model 3: Separate preparatory programs and composition classes for the native and non-native speakers

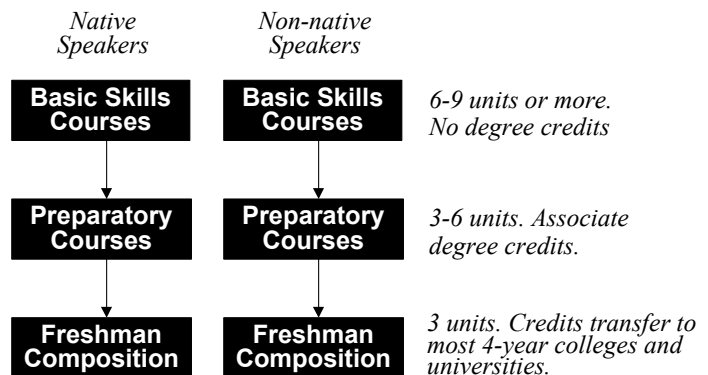


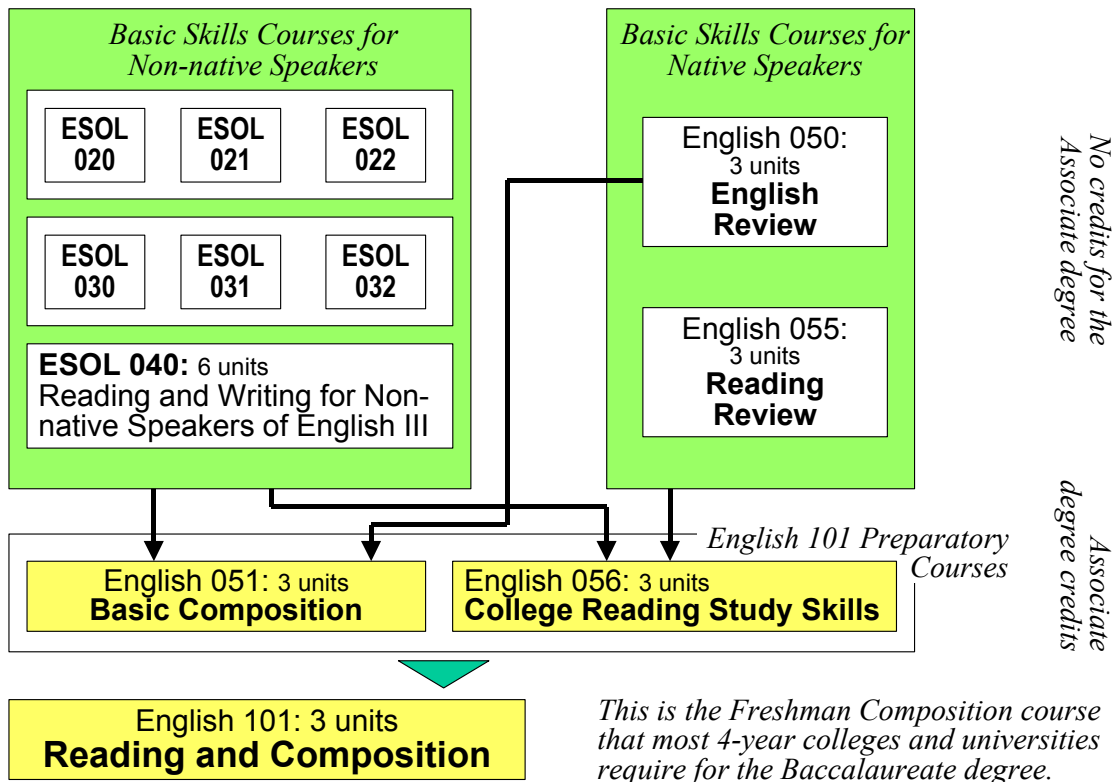
Figure 11:

The community colleges in California have generally adopted three alternative strategies to tackle the generation 1.5 related problems of “limited English proficiency”.

Earlier, our English and ESL programs catered to the ESL students on one hand and, on the other hand, the native speakers who either needed to acquire all the literacy skills or needed to overcome their compositional deficiencies. In most of our community colleges, we now need to add a fourth group, the non-native speakers of generation 1.5 whose near-native proficiency in the oral skills often masks significant deficiencies in the use of formal or written language. Many community colleges and most of the 4-year colleges and universities also have the foreign students who have already mastered the literacy skills in their native languages.

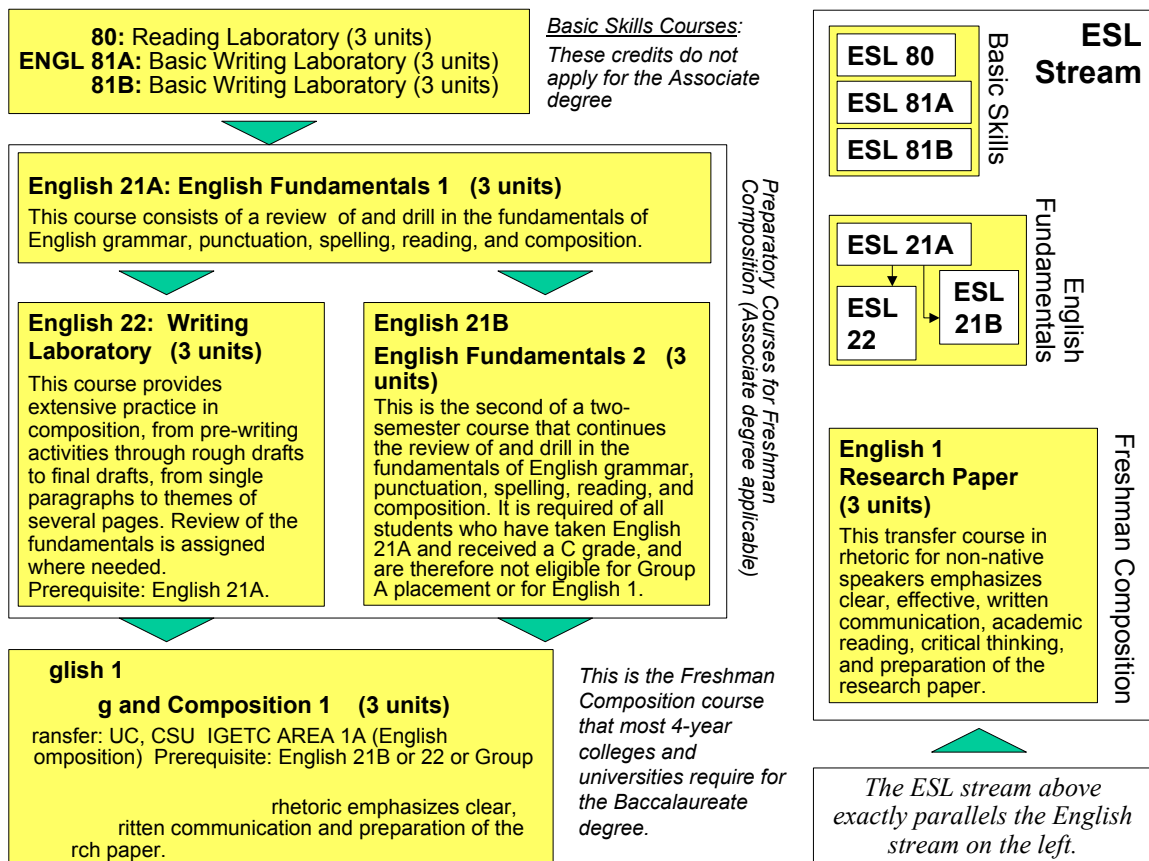
English sequence at the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD), shown in Figure 12, is typical of Model 1. The native and non-native speakers here first acquire the basic skills, separately, and then join to take 6 units of preparatory courses, before advancing to the Freshman Composition class.

Figure 12: English sequence at the San Diego Community College District comprises two 3-unit preparatory courses for Freshman Composition for those lacking the district’s appropriate assessment skill levels for reading and writing.



Contrast this with the parallel streams of English and ESL courses at Santa Monica College (Figure 13), not only at the basic skills and preparatory levels but continuing to the level of Freshman Composition as well. This is an example of Model 3 described above.

Figure 13: Parallel English (left) and ESL (right) streams at the Santa Monica College.



College credits for the ESL courses:

This example of parallel English and ESL streams at the Santa Monica College illustrates a growing trend in the 4-year and community colleges. Until recently, students received no degree-applicable credits for taking the ESL classes. At the Santa Monica College, and increasingly at many community and 4-year colleges and universities, students in these courses do earn foreign language transfer

credits*. There are two reasons for this. One, this helps the increasing number of non-native speakers plan their educational and financial logistics better. The other is the assumption that unawareness of their need to learn grammar and writing is not the only reason why the “at risk” students of generation 1.5 seem so reluctant to take ESL classes. They are unlikely to seek the courses that they need not, in terms of the degree-applicability of the units such courses carry, and nudging them to non-degree applicable course units by way of prerequisites is no longer a workable proposition. Therefore, the trend in many of the California community colleges has been to grant college credits for the ESL courses. Indeed, as of Fall 2000, as many as two-thirds of them offered such courses, according to the statistics compiled by Katheryn Garlow*, a former CATESOL (California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) President. Table 6 compares her statistics with the corresponding data for SBVC.

Table 6: Many community colleges in California now offer Associate degree-applicable ESL courses and many of them also transfer to the 4-year colleges and universities.

(source: Katheryn Garlow’s data, referenced in the footnote below)

	Statewide	SBVC
Total number of ESL courses offered	1839	11
Number of courses applicable to Associate degree	569 (31%)	0
Number of courses that earn CSU transfer units	514 (28%)	0
Number of courses that earn UC transfer units	61 (3%)	0

* As a matter of fact, ESL program’s Home Page on Santa Monica College’s web site specifically notes that students completing the ESL 21A and ESL 21B earn transfer credits (for a foreign language). This is an advantage that the equivalent English courses (English 21A and English 21B) do not offer (<http://www.smc.edu/esl/diff.html>).

* Katheryn Garlow, “How Much Credit Do We Give ESL Courses?”, *CATESOL NEWS*, vol. 33, no. 2, p. 1, 4-5 (August 2001).

5. Modifying the existing English/ESL sequence at SBVC

The English and ESL program at SBVC clearly has some catching up to do in order to prepare the generation 1.5 students for Freshman Composition. A large proportion of our students belongs to this group and its numbers are rising. The demographic setting of San Bernardino, which makes English the second and not the first language for many of our students, is only a part of the reason for this. An equally important reason is that recent high school graduates comprise a significantly larger proportion of students coming to the SBVC than is usual with the sister community colleges. Compared to the community colleges elsewhere in California, therefore, this makes enhancing the preparedness of generation 1.5 students for Freshman Composition class an urgent and challenging task for the SBVC English/ESL program.

Increasing as their numbers are, it would be grossly unfair to blame the problem of freshman under-preparedness entirely on Generation 1.5 students, however. True, as for English, much of this problem at the level of University of California rests on the students who speak English as a second language. At UC Riverside, for instance, almost 5% of the Fall 1999 freshman class and 4% of the Fall 2000 freshman class failed to pass the Subject A requirement. Students entering the UC must pass this exist exam — which is designed to ensure that they have the reading and writing skills needed to do undergraduate-level work — by the end of their first year or leave the campus. Many of these students are ESL speakers whose situation is succinctly described in the following extract from a recent article by Matthew Tresaugue* in ‘The Press Enterprise’:

“One of those students was Andrea Negrete, a chemistry freshman from Saddleback High School in Santa Ana. She couldn’t speak English four years ago when she came to the United States from Peru. To learn the language, she read captions while watching television shows.

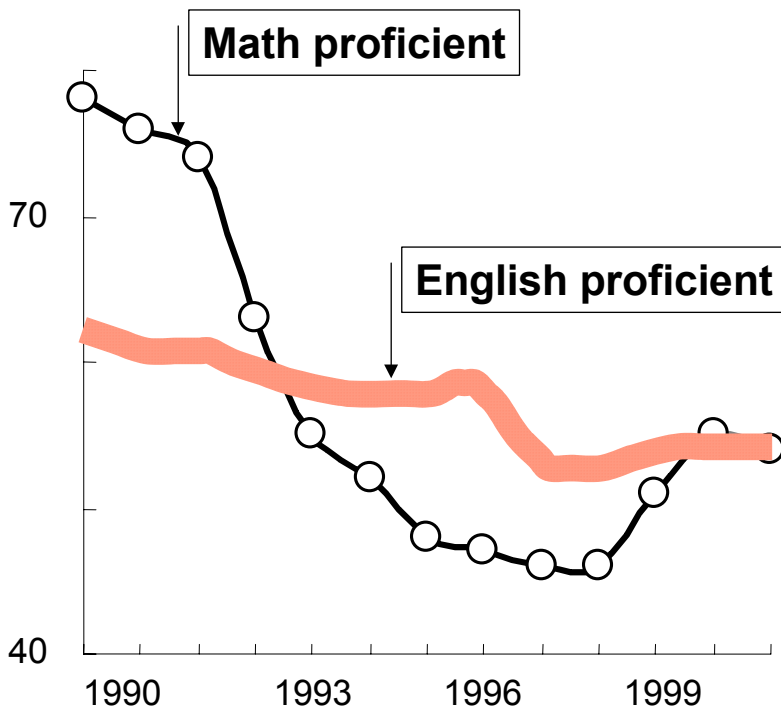
The Subject A test stumped her, so she enrolled in the summer program. She learned to write introductions and conclusions. Although she failed the test in a second attempt, she was encouraged because she understood better how to organize an essay.”

To the extent that under-preparedness for undergraduate course-work is an ESL problem, our seeking to help ESL students prepare better is clearly the desired solution. This is not to say that Freshman Composition poses no problems to the

* Matthew Tresaugue: ‘English policy is issue at UCR’, The Press Enterprise (November 14, 2001).

native speakers. For instance, at the California State University system, nearly 7% of fall 2000 freshman class had to be ousted due to the failure to master basic English and Math. Figure 14, taken from a recent article by Rebecca Trounson in the Los Angeles Times*, summarizes the system-wide declining trend in Math and English proficiency levels at CSU since 1989. The University authorities there now believe that, at the level of English skills, a significant proportion of these students is unable to read analytically. The fact remains that the Math proficiency level has declined far more rapidly than English proficiency level, however, and there is no evidence that the ESL students tend to be particularly deficient in basic Math skills. Obviously, if poor reading ability is indeed what is holding many of these students back, then many of them are likely to be native speakers who too need remedial instruction. Be that as it may, the implication this has for our English program at the SBVC is simply this — we need to also address the remedial segment of our English program for the native speakers.

Figure 14



The percentage of first-time CSU freshmen with college-level proficiency in Math and English has been persistently declining.

Source:
Los Angeles Times
(January 31, 2002)

* Rebecca Trounson: 'Cal State ouster rate rises slightly', Los Angeles Times (January 31, 2002).

These arguments suggest that, in terms of their preparation for the Freshman Composition class, the SBVC students can be broadly identified into the following two groups:

- The ESL students who have acquired native to near-native proficiency in the language skills, and can compete with the native speakers in most college courses, except for the weaknesses in syntax, idiomatic usage, and grammar that limit their paragraph and essay writing skills.
- Many of our native speakers, and many non-native generation 1.5 students who have acquired the native fluency in oral skills need extensive training and practice in grammar, punctuation and usage.

This grouping clearly warrants changes in both, our ESL course offerings as also our English course offerings, and leads to the following two proposals for immediate action:

Proposal 1:

Starting a new 4-unit course ESL 015 (ESL Preparation for College Writing).

Rationale: ESL 015 is a new 4-unit course that will prepare our generation 1.5 students for the 3-unit Freshman Composition course, ENGL 101. This will parallel our existing 4-unit course ENGL 015 (Preparation for College Writing) which will now be expected to target the native speakers. As with ENGL-015, the ESL-015 units (4) will apply for the Associate degree.

Benefits: This will

1. address the problems that our generation 1.5 students face in preparing for the Freshman Composition (ENGL-101) class; and
2. align our ESL program with the emerging community college-wide trend of giving college credits for the ESL courses.

UC transferability is possible because of the foreign language requirement at UC, a requirement that ESL students taking our ESL-015 would be able to satisfy.

Also, as ESL-015 is an ESL course, its units (4) will transfer to UC as the foreign language credits, much like those of Santa Monica College's ESL-21A and ESL-21B courses, whereas those of ENGL-015 do not. Apart from making the course additionally attractive to the units-seeking students, this is likely to bring in the UC Riverside students who are unable to complete the UC Subject A requirement in their first year there. Note that, in Fall 1999, almost a third of the 25,000-plus in-state freshmen students at UC campuses, system-wide, needed to complete this requirement.

Description: This introductory writing course is designed to prepare, for the Freshman Composition course (ENGL 101), the non-native speakers of English who are proficient in English and are able to compete with native speakers in most college courses except those that may require essay exams. The course gives students extensive practice in rhetorical modes of expression and argument. It emphasizes analytical and expository writing at the essay level, as also critical reading, and gives students practice in writing essay examinations. The course stresses both organization and in-depth essay development. Students work to eliminate weaknesses in syntax, idiomatic usage, and grammar. Library research techniques are also introduced.

Pre-requisite: ESL 941
(Patterns of Contemporary English IV: 4 units)

Course outline: Given in
Appendix-I.

Proposal 2:

Increasing the units for ENGL 914 (Basic Writing: 3 units) to 4 units.

Rationale: ENGL 914, a basic skills course for students who are not eligible for ENGL 015, parallels for native speakers what ESL 941 (Patterns of Contemporary English IV) does for the non-native speakers. We have recently raised the units for ESL 941 from 3 to 4, recognizing the extent of under-preparedness of many of our students, but missed doing the same for ENGL 914. The proposed action will rectify that oversight.

*This will align
the Preparatory
English and ESL
segments of our
program*

Benefits: This will satisfy our need to strengthen the basic skills program for native speakers.

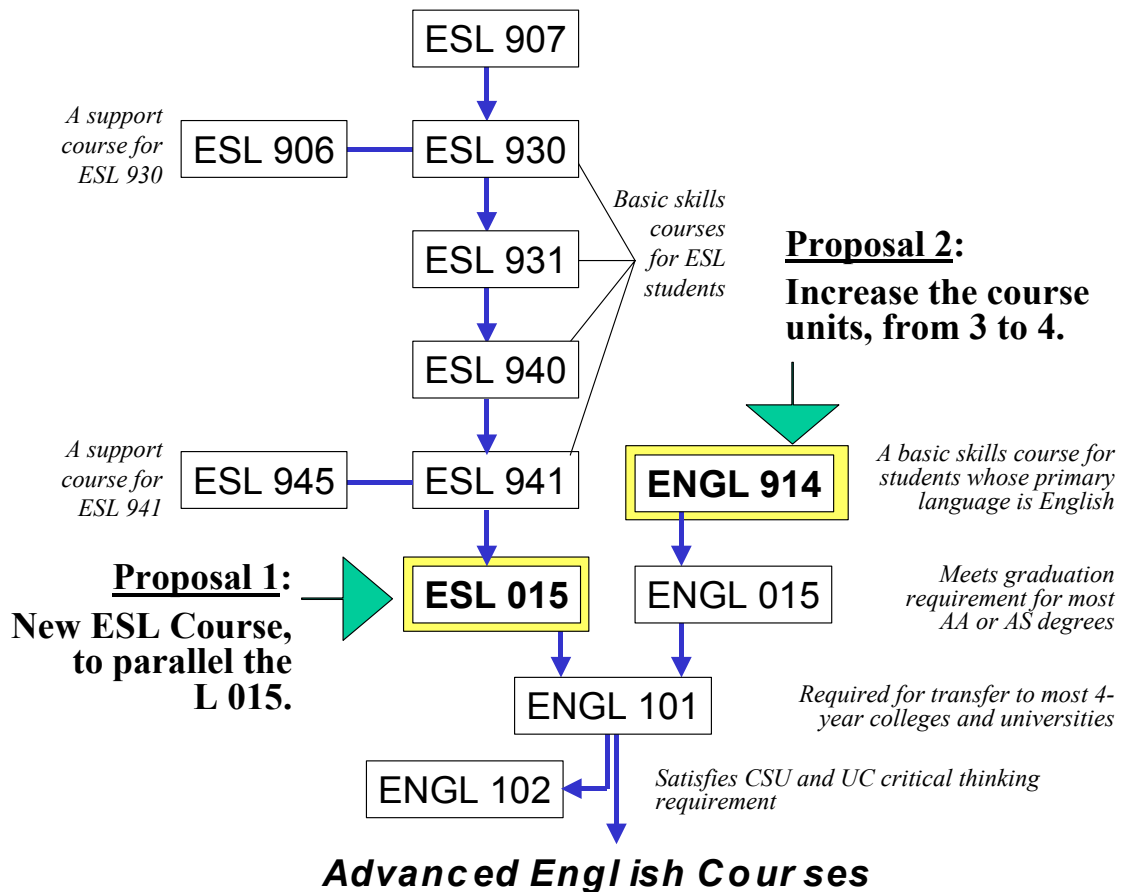
Description: This basic skills course is designed for the students who are not eligible for ENGL 015. It focuses on effective sentences and paragraphs, and includes an extensive review of grammar, punctuation, and usage.

Pre-requisite: None, although some students might benefit by taking ENGL 911 (Basic Grammar and Usage Review: 1 unit) while many others may wish to improve their reading skills by taking the course READ 970 (Reading Skills III: 4 units)

Course outline: Given in
Appendix-II.

Figure 15 shows the modified version of our sequences of preparatory English and ESL courses that will result when the two actions proposed above have been implemented.

Figure 15: The sequence of basic and preparatory English and ESL courses at SBVC after incorporating the proposed changes.



The above proposal of seeking a one-semester 4-unit preparatory course may seem somewhat modest, particularly as the corresponding courses at the Santa Monica College cover a total of 6 units over two semesters. Not all colleges follow the Santa Monica practice of demanding 6 units to prepare for Freshman Composition, however, and our own experience with the 4-unit course ENGL 015

has been quite satisfactory with regard to more than one-half of the students, most of them native speakers. Glendale Community College too has a 4-unit course (ESL 151) similar to the course ESL 015 being proposed here.

Introducing the proposed course, ESL 015, still leaves unresolved the problems that our “limited proficiency” native speakers have in optimally benefiting from the ENGL 015 course. For these students, we presently have a course called ENGL 914 (Basic Writing). The problem lies in the inadequate number of instructional hours, 3 semester-units, which we now allow for this course. This is the only full-fledged basic skills course that we offer at the SBVC for native speakers and the comparable course at other community colleges generally provide for twice as much time. Even at SBVC, comparable ESL courses (e.g., ESL 941) are for 4 units. Hence the second proposal here, of strengthening ENGL 914, by raising it from 3 units to 4 units.

6. Concluding Remarks:

This one-semester sabbatical leave has thus given me the much-needed opportunity to reevaluate my theoretical insights on applied psycholinguistics and ESL pedagogy and reformulate their practical implications, particularly in terms of my own instructional experience and responsibilities at the SBVC. Specifically, as has been explained in the preceding pages, I have been able to use this opportunity to accomplish the following tasks:

- a. Modeling the ESL reading process such that it can help identify the factors that affect the learning of English by our ESL students (this model is shown in Figure 2 and will be published in Professor Lynne Diaz-Rico’s forthcoming book on ESL Pedagogy).
- b. Integrating my survey data on language learning behavior of the SBVC ESL students (Table 4) with the available cross-national cultural insights (Figure 3) and their pedagogic implications for ESL classes (Table 2).
- c. I have been able to evaluate the implications of the above in terms of sociolinguistic characteristics of SBVC students and the demographic as well as pedagogic trends in California. The result has been the formulation of the two proposals, described in the preceding section, viz.,
 - I. starting a new 4-unit course ESL 015 (ESL Preparation for College Writing) that will help prepare the generation 1.5 students for Freshman

Composition (ENGL 101) and parallel the existing course ENGL 015 (Preparation for College Writing) that will now be able to focus on the native speakers; and

- II. strengthening the basic skills course for native speakers, ENGL 914, by raising its units from 3 to 4, in the same way as we have already done for ESL 941 which, at the present time and until the proposed course ESL 015 is introduced, remains the terminal course in our ESL sequence.

The details of these two proposals are attached to this report as Appendix-I and Appendix-II.

7. Acknowledgements:

This study would not have been possible without the College's granting me the one-semester sabbatical leave for Fall 2001. I therefore thank the College for this generosity. I also thank Professor Lynne Diaz-Rico for helpful discussions and for allowing me to actively participate in her discussion sessions and thank the students of her Fall 2001 EESL-607 class for making me feel such a welcome visitor.

Little did I realize, at the time I proceeded on this sabbatical leave, that Professor Abelrado Villarreal, my colleague in the ESL program here for the past decade, would no longer be with us. I therefore wish to place on record here my deep appreciation of his valued help and encouragement.

I also wish to thank Professor Robert Rippy for all his help and support.

Finally, I thank all my numerous past, present and prospective students at the SBVC. Without them, these insights would neither have been acquired nor carry any meaning.

Appendix – I

Proposal 1

**Starting a new 4-unit course ESL 015 (ESL
Preparation for College Writing) at SBVC**

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

ESL 015: ESL Preparation for College Writing

Units: 4

Lectures: 4 hours per week

This introductory writing course is designed to prepare, for the Freshman Composition course (ENGL 101), the non-native speakers of English who are proficient in English and are able to compete with native speakers in most college courses except those that may require essay exams. The course gives students extensive practice in rhetorical modes of expression and argument. It emphasizes analytical and expository writing at the essay level, as well as critical reading, and gives students practice in writing essay examinations. The course stresses both organization and in-depth essay development. Students work to eliminate weaknesses in syntax, idiomatic usage, and grammar. Library research techniques are also introduced.

Prerequisite: ESL 941 with a grade C or better or eligibility for either ESL 015 or ENGL 015 as determined through the SBVC assessment process.

II. NUMBER OF TIMES THE COURSE MAY BE TAKEN: One

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:

Upon completion of this course, a student will be able to

- A. Identify the major parts of a sentence.
- B. Compose simple, compound and complex sentences that use a variety of subordinate elements.
- C. Compose sentences using parallelism.
- D. Employ prewriting strategies to generate ideas for writing.
- E. Construct an effective thesis statement for a short multi-paragraph essay.
- F. Write a short expository essay that supports the thesis with sufficient specific support.
- G. Write a short expository essay that is unified and coherent.
- H. Write complete sentences relatively free of major grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors.
- I. Select words that are reasonably precise and appropriate for the writing task.
- J. Read for main ideas and supporting evidence.
- K. Infer meaning from a text.

IV. CONTENT*:

- A. Reading and discussion of essays and short stories, to emphasize development of students' abilities to analyze, criticize, and propose ideas, including the following:
 - 1. Understanding the relationship of reading selections to rhetorical modes listed in B.1 below
 - 2. Analyzing themes, meanings, and ideas (including exercises)

* This part of the course description is the same as the comparable course ESL 151 (Reading and Composition V) at the Glendale Community College.

3. Evaluating culture and customs illustrated in readings
 4. Examining language (colloquialisms, slang, and idioms)
 5. Acquiring vocabulary
- B. Composition, to stress development of reasoning ability which enables students to originate logical expository essays that reach conclusions based on inferences drawn from reading, discussion, and lecture, and that demonstrate knowledge of rhetoric and diction as follows:
1. Rhetoric
 - a. Thesis statement
 - b. Development :
 - i. Adequacy
 - ii. Parallelism
 - c. Unity
 - d. Coherence
 - e. Conclusion
 - f. Point of view
 - g. Style/tone
 - h. Logic
 - i. Types of essay development:
 - i. Classification
 - ii. Example
 - iii. Description (including introduction to figurative language)
 - iv. Narration
 - v. Comparison/contrast
 - vi. Argument
 - vii. Essay based on research with outline and citations
 - j. Essay examination
 - k. Research techniques
 2. Diction
 - a. Denotation
 - b. Connotation
 - c. Idiomatic usage
 - d. Syntax
- C. Individual instruction in grammar and mechanics as needed (evidenced by deficiencies shown in composition)
1. Grammar, e.g.,
 - a. Sentence structure (eliminating fragments, comma splices, and run-on sentences)
 - b. Agreement (subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent)
 - c. Propositions and articles
 - d. Adjectives and verbs
 2. Mechanics; e.g.
 - a. Punctuation
 - b. Capitalization
 - c. Paragraphing
 - d. Italics and underlining
- V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:
- A. Lecture/discussion: New concepts will be introduced in lecture. Reading assignments will be discussed and students will be discouraged from writing

the subjective, first-person narratives that are commonly stressed in the less advanced ESL courses.

- B. Classroom writing workshops emphasizing objective, critical writing based on topics extracted from the reading assignments.
- C. Modeling: Teacher can model sentence patterns, topic sentences, method of paragraph development etc.

VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Grammar and sentence structure assignments may include editing sample paragraphs for end stop errors.
- B. Assignments are of sufficient length and complexity to require students to independently select and order their ideas and to express them clearly.
- C. Library research assignment culminates in a short essay in which the student supports a thesis based on what has been learned from research.

VII. EVALUATION:

- A. Evaluations than assist can be written on students' papers or may be given in a private conference to assist them with their paragraphs and multi-paragraph essays.
- B. The final exam is a departmental exam. Students are asked to write a single essay on a question about a short reading provided to them at the time of the exam. Each essay is graded holistically in a departmental grading session by at least two instructors. Evaluation by two anonymous readers within the department determines if the student has achieved the goal of writing an in-class, multi-paragraph essay.
- C. A portfolio of work comprising in-class and out-of-class writing, including the short essay from library research mentioned in VI.C above, may be used in addition to the final exam for the final evaluation. The portfolio will demonstrate the student's over-all achievement in regard to out-of-class written work, in-class writing, summaries, journals, and any other written assignment.

VIII. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- A. English Skills with Readings. John Langan (Prentice Hall, Current Edition).
- B. Windows on Writing: Practice in Context. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen Mandell (St. Martins Press, Current Edition)
- C. Encountering Cultures: Reading and Writing in a Changing World. Richard Holeyton (Prentice Hall, 1995)
- D. Bridge to College Success : Intensive Academic Preparation for Advanced Students. Heather Robertson (Thompson Internl, 1991)
- E. Making the Right Discovery: Discoveries in Academic Writing. Barbara Harris Leonhard (Harcourt Brace, 1999)
- F. Getting There: Tasks for Academic Writing. Jessica Williams (Harcourt College Publishers, 2000)

IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: None

Appendix – II

Proposal 2

**Increasing the units for ENGL 914
(Basic Writing: 3 units) to 4 units**

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

English 914: Basic Writing

A basic skills writing course for students who are not eligible for English 015. The course focuses on writing effective sentences and paragraphs and includes an extensive review of grammar, punctuation and usage.

Not applicable for the Associate Degree.

Prerequisite: None

Units: 4

Lectures: 4 hours per week.

This is the only change (from the current 3 units) proposed here. It will bring this course on par with ESL 941, our comparable course for the nonnative speakers.

II. NUMBER OF TIMES THE COURSE MAY BE TAKEN: One

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:

Upon completion of this course, a student will be able to

- A. Identify basic parts of speech.
- B. Identify basic parts of sentences.
- C. Identify simple, compound and complex sentences.
- D. Identify various phrases and dependent clauses.
- E. Write complete sentences.
- F. Compose complex sentences using a variety of subordinate elements.
- G. Construct a topic sentence that effectively focuses on a paragraph.
- H. Write a paragraph that supports a topic sentence with sufficient detail.
- I. Write descriptive, narrative and expository paragraphs.
- J. Organize paragraphs in a logical, coherent manner.
- K. Write sentences that are relatively free of major grammatical errors.
- L. Write short essays that respond to a text, usually by relating it to their own experience.
- M. Select words that are relatively precise and appropriate to the writing task.

IV. COURSE CONTENT:

- A. Parts of speech
- B. Parts of sentences
- C. Types of sentences
- D. Phrases
- E. Dependent clauses
- F. Common errors in grammar and sentence construction:
 - 1. Sentence fragments
 - 2. Run-on sentences and comma splices
 - 3. Errors in subject-verb agreement
 - 4. Errors in pronoun reference and agreement
 - 5. Errors in pronoun case
 - 6. Errors in placement of modifiers

G. Diction

1. Using the correct part of speech
2. Distinguishing between commonly confused words

H. The paragraph

1. The topic sentence:
 - a. Narrowing the topic
 - b. Use of a controlling idea
2. Supporting the topic sentence with evidence:
 - a. Facts versus opinion
 - b. Need for concrete detail
3. Paragraph unity and coherence:
 - a. Methods of organization
 - b. Transitional elements

V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. Lecture: Most of the grammar review will be introduced in lecture.
- B. Example and practice: Basic sentence patterns and the use of subordinate elements can be modeled by the instructor and practiced by the student.
- C. Collaborative work groups: Students can work together to practice types of sentences, use of subordinate elements etc.
- D. Peer review: Students will read and comment on each other's papers.

VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. After reading an essay about how a person influenced the life of the author, students will be asked to write a paragraph in which they describe how a person has influenced their lives. Special attention will be paid to the development of a good topic sentence and the inclusion of concrete support for that topic sentence.
- B. Students will be asked to analyze the structure of complex sentences and to imitate that structure in a list of sentences they create.

VII. EVALUATION:

- A. Frequent quizzes and occasional exams over information presented in grammar and usage review.
- B. Assignments on paragraph and multi-paragraph papers that include a prewriting assignment and at least two drafts.

VIII. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- A. English Fundamentals. Emery et al (Allyn and Bacon, current edition).
- B. Improve Your Sentences. Salak (Glencoe Press, Current edition).
- C. The Developing Writer. McKoski and Hahn (Harper Collins, current edition).

IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: None
