

CHAPTER FOUR: IMPROVING COMMUNICATION SKILLS AT UCI

In spite of an extensive breadth (general education) requirement in writing at UCI, one that includes two quarters of lower-division work and one of upper-division work (a unique feature of the writing requirements among the University of California's several campuses),¹ there is a widespread feeling that too many of our students graduate without strong skills in writing. There is a comparable feeling too that the *oral* communication skills of many of our students are not what they should be.

There are plenty of data that suggest the particular challenges to developing our students' communication skills at UCI: among UCs we are at the very bottom in terms of the absolute numbers of freshman who enter without having satisfied the Subject A requirement in English Composition. The mean SAT Verbal scores of our undergraduates are typically the second-lowest among all UC campuses. We are usually second from the bottom in terms of the *percentage* of students who have satisfied Subject A (only about half of our freshmen enter having satisfied Subject A). Moreover, as of fall 1999, approximately 59 percent of entering students did not have English as their first language, and about 13 percent were identified as having sufficient ESL difficulties that they were required to take course work in ESL before tackling Subject A. There are also numbers of students who have no first language in which they feel confident (about half of ESL-identified students report difficulty with reading and writing their first languages).

Over the past few years, extensive external reviews of the writing breadth requirements at UCI have been conducted under the auspices of the Academic Senate's Council on Educational Policy (CEP), which among many other charges has responsibility for regular reviews of all academic programs.² Based upon the findings of the external reviewers and responses from various academic units, we have identified three main areas of inquiry for the purposes of this self-study.

- Does the campus have a clear idea of what the communication skills of our graduating students ought to be and what would be the appropriate means to assess them?
- To the extent that we believe (or find) that our graduating students' skills are deficient, what would be the appropriate next steps for the campus to take to improve them?
- Given the constraints of a large, ambitious research university, how can we create a campus culture that fosters our students' communication skills—spoken as well as written—at every level (graduate as well as undergraduate)?

DEFINING AND ASSESSING COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF UCI'S GRADUATES

The *UCI General Catalogue* affirms the importance of writing: “Because of the importance of writing in every academic discipline, the University is committed to developing the writing skills of its students at all levels and in all areas. The Writing Requirement expresses this commitment, but the concern for and

attention to clear, accurate writing is expected in all courses.” Regrettably, and in spite of the recently completed reviews of the implementation of upper- and lower-division writing breadth requirements at UCI, there is actually no clear consensus as to what constitutes *good* writing. Indeed, the discussions that took place during and after the reviews of writing initially proved divisive.

Among the recommendations made by the reviewers of upper-division writing (the first of the two writing reviews to be conducted) was the following: “To ensure more than anecdotal and fragmentary data about student writing ability and writing improvement, UCI should institute a carefully researched writing assessment plan for the university as a whole.”³ CEP took up this lead with a strong recommendation of its own in its response addressed to the Executive Vice Chancellor for the “development of systematic means of assessing the writing ability of UCI’s students and to track its improvement through their UCI experience.” And their recommendation in turn has led to a long series of discussions that have culminated in a proposal, endorsed by CEP, to explore a “Gateway” writing examination administered to students at the end of their lower-division writing course work, the passing of which would be a prerequisite to their completing their upper-division requirement in writing.⁴

It was in the course of the conversations that led to this proposal that the extent of the divisions that surround writing became evident, and even though implementation of the Gateway Exam now seems a remote possibility, the controversy it generated provides an instructive case history of the kinds of anxieties that attention to writing and especially the assessment of writing gives rise to.

Of course writing has, since the days that people began to be self-conscious about the *quality* of communication, long been a topic that attracts controversy. Very few people who are not professional mathematicians or scientists worry about the elegance of a formula or a computation, but we are all quick to be charmed or offended at the way people express themselves in writing and in speech. Many of us would nevertheless have hoped that at a large research university there would be general agreement that so-called “Standard English” is the rightful norm when it comes to our communications.

Most people at UCI believe that the chief reason for a writing requirement is to develop skill in “clear, accurate writing” (to quote the *Catalogue* again), and they generally understand Standard English to be the appropriate vehicle for such writing. Others note that “Standard” English is itself merely one dialect among many, inherently no better suited to clarity and accuracy than any other dialect, and that attention to its (arbitrary) conventions distracts from the more important features of good communication—cogent, logical, and persuasive *thought*. Opinions vary widely, even among the communications experts. Some people believe, for example, that students with ESL difficulties ought never to be penalized for “errors” unless these absolutely prevent a reader or listener from understanding the thought expressed. A few local experts believe that native speakers especially ought not to be penalized for errors.⁵ And these people often believe too even that it is harmful to point such errors out. Others believe that “corrective feedback” is essential to meeting the needs of ESL students and native speakers and that “correction” is indeed what students themselves generally prefer.

To simplify a bit, we might say that the greatest of the divides at UCI regarding the central role of “writing courses” separates those on the one hand for whom correctness counts most and on the other those for whom the teaching of writing is really the teaching of critical thinking.

The range of opinion about good writing became apparent only as the campus tried to develop an appropriate means of assessing the communication skills of our undergraduates, especially at the midpoint of fulfilling their writing requirements, and especially as the Gateway Exam began to be imagined as an obstacle to students beginning their upper-division writing course work. Undoubtedly we were naïve to think that an assessment plan of any sort could be instituted smoothly, but we did not anticipate that a topic that has proven extremely divisive relative to K-12 education would prove no less so at UCI.

The reasons for this, however, are not particularly obscure. Indeed, they include several of the same reasons that the assessment of public K-12 education has been controversial. There is fear among the teachers of writing that assessment of students’ communication skills amounts to a direct evaluation of the teacher’s own competence. There is fear among students who believe that their communication skills are for one reason or another not up to whatever standard might be agreed upon and that they will be unfairly held back. There is fear among administrators that, as costly as the assessment plan itself might be (and many fear it would prove quite expensive), the cost of holding some students back for additional instruction will be prohibitively expensive.

But perhaps the greatest obstacle to the Gateway Exam was resistance on the part both of the panel of external reviewers who looked into the lower-division writing requirement (the second of the two consecutive reviews) and some of our local experts in the assessment of writing.

The external reviewers expressed “grave doubts” about the proposed exam, even though it was developed in response to recommendations of the first set of reviewers (and in spite of the fact that there was one member who overlapped both reviews). While recognizing its worthwhile goals, reviewers expressed the fear “that such a test, given the economics of preparing, administering, and scoring it and given the relatively unsophisticated attitudes about writing that prevail in some areas on campus, will revert to a test of students’ mastery of basic conventions.” (Of course, this is at the core of what some faculty would be happy to have, along with the ability to write with clarity and cogency.) Alternatively, reviewers were skeptical that such a test would succeed even at that narrow objective. “As experienced professionals familiar with writing programs across the country,” they wrote, “we challenge the Writing Board and campus leaders to find institutions ... that successfully use such a test before it [sic] implements one at UCI. We believe that experience has led campuses to avoid such well-meaning efforts because their disadvantages far exceed advantages.”

Our local experts in the assessment of writing echoed both concerns and argued further that to do assessment well would involve a much more elaborate (and expensive) instrument than was imagined for the Gateway Exam. They pointed out that no matter how hard one tries to create an objective examination, such assessments inherently have political dimensions, and therefore they share the

reviewers' worries that such an exam will effectively discriminate against ESL students.

The combined resistance to the Gateway Exam from reviewers, some local experts in communications, and administrators concerned about its costliness, have, as we have noted, effectively put the proposal on a back burner. But the discussions that have surrounded it have not only been instructive in themselves, but have led in turn to some other interesting possibilities, discussed below.

IMPROVING STUDENTS' COMMUNICATION SKILLS

As already noted, even the successful implementation of the Gateway Exam would at best tell us only about the skills of our undergraduates in the middle of their careers; it would still leave us guessing as to the skills of our *graduating* students and so would tell us only half the story of how much students' writing improves while they are at UCI.⁶

Partially to meet this objection and partially because it seems less likely to encounter the kinds of objections that the Gateway Exam has encountered, the idea of an upper-division Communications Portfolio has begun to be explored by many of the same people involved in the design of the more controversial Gateway Exam. The portfolio would be designed to ensure that every student at the upper division would complete a certain amount of writing and speaking of *several* kinds—not just timed in-class writing or term papers, that is, but reports, presentation of research, collaborative and peer-edited assignments, formal oral presentations, and the like. The particular configuration of the portfolio and the types of communication required could be determined by the individual academic

units, so that students' portfolios would be appropriate to their majors. The portfolio would not necessarily involve any additional course work, but completion of course work within upper-division writing courses and some courses in the major would be geared to completing various components of the requirement. Individual faculty would check off items on each student's portfolio list of required kinds of work as appropriate and as they are successfully completed. One benefit of this plan would be to heighten the faculty's consciousness of the importance of writing outside the formal breadth requirement; it would help to enhance the "culture" of writing as discussed later. The portfolio would not be restricted to writing, moreover, but would likely include not only oral presentations, but other kinds of communication, such as the creation of Web pages or multimedia.

But while we are more optimistic about the prospects for some version of an upper-division Communications Portfolio than for the Gateway Exam, it seems clear too that the discussion about writing surrounding the recently completed reviews has exposed significant disagreements. The desirability of more discussion about even very fundamental issues regarding writing has been recognized. One plan that the campus intended to implement in 1998-99 was to hold a campuswide "Writing Forum" to be jointly sponsored by the School of Humanities, the Division of Undergraduate Education and possibly the Writing Board.⁷ This would have been a one- or two-day conference on Writing that would have brought together various instructors of writing, administrators of the several writing courses that fulfill the breadth requirement, academic support staff, ESL teachers, Teaching Assistants, and several faculty in English and Comparative Literature whose research careers involve Rhetoric and Composition—as well, it was hoped, as people less professionally close to the

teaching of writing who nevertheless are concerned about the issue.⁸ Planning was barely under way when a work stoppage by Teaching Assistants deflected attention from the project.

In response to the external reviews, the Executive Vice Chancellor charged the Dean of Undergraduate Education to begin discussions to culminate in recommendations about additional resources that might be assigned to improving instruction in Writing. Then-Interim Dean Meredith Lee (now the current dean) in fall 1999 convened a Writing Workgroup consisting of the Chair of the Council on Educational Policy, associate deans from the sciences and humanities, the Assistant Dean of Humanities, the Chair of English and Comparative Literature and the Director of Academic Budget. This group has met regularly and has received updates from various units with particular involvement in the teaching of Writing: the Humanities Core Course,⁹ Writing 39A-B-C,¹⁰ English as a Second Language,¹¹ and the Learning and Academic Resources Center (LARC).¹² In the meantime, the Department of English and Comparative Literature had appointed an ad hoc committee to develop recommendations in response to the recommendations of the external reviews, and this document was forwarded to the Writing Workgroup. The Workgroup recommended to the Executive Vice Chancellor the creation of a new senior position (Campus Writing Coordinator) with both faculty and administrative duties and a degree of campuswide authority not enjoyed by the current Director of Composition, who holds a full-time appointment within English and Comparative Literature.¹³

Because under UC's policy of shared governance it is the Academic Senate that has sole authority over curriculum and degree requirements, and because UCI is divided into 11 relatively autonomous academic units, it can be extremely

difficult to coordinate the substantial amount of teaching in composition undertaken within English and Comparative Literature (about half our students go through the Writing 39A-B-C sequence) with writing as taught in the Humanities Core Course (taken by about one-quarter of our students—the remaining one-quarter fulfilling lower-division writing at community colleges [in the case of transfer students] or through successful Advanced Placement results), the many upper-division writing courses offered in the various academic units, ESL (housed in Humanities but independent of the Composition Program), and academic support services (chiefly administered by the Division of Undergraduate Education). Although the Writing Board is the body most clearly authorized to oversee instruction in writing at UCI, it has, in the view of both external review committees, functioned neither very effectively nor visibly. And, as a purely practical matter, it is such administrators and faculty as the Director of the Humanities Core Course, the Director of Composition, the Director of ESL, the Chair of English and Comparative Literature, the Chairs of the Council on Educational Policy and the Writing Board who have to be in agreement if there is to be effective coordination among all the various components of that instruction. But while many of them have met occasionally in groups of two or three, they have never come together at one time and place.¹⁴

CREATING A CAMPUS CULTURE TO FOSTER COMMUNICATION

It is a complaint often expressed by those charged with the teaching of writing that the very existence of an extensive writing requirement tends to make faculty in other courses feel it is perfectly fine for them not to *teach* writing nor even to *require* much if any writing, much less oral presentations.¹⁵ This problem is of course exacerbated at large public research universities whose student-faculty

ratios mark one of the most dramatic differences between their undergraduate programs and those at private universities and liberal arts colleges. It is exacerbated too by the kinds of statistics cited at the beginning of this discussion. The teaching of writing is, under the best of circumstances, a difficult and extremely labor-intensive activity. But students whose Verbal SAT scores are relatively low, students for whom English is not their first language, students from linguistically impoverished environments and who may be said in effect to have *no* “first” language¹⁶—all these groups are especially challenging to teach. It would be unreasonable to expect that even a more substantial allocation of resources than the one or two FTE likely to emerge from recent campus reviews and discussions will have a very noticeable impact on the quality of UCI students’ writing in the short run (“be realistic about what can be accomplished in formal course work in writing, given UCI’s student population,” the reviewers of lower-division writing advise¹⁷). Therefore fostering a *culture* of good writing and speaking throughout UCI—at both the undergraduate and graduate levels—ought to be a high priority for the campus, while we nevertheless recognize that its realization will likely prove elusive.

The influential 1998 report of the Boyer Commission on *Educating Undergraduates in the Research University* has at the heart of its “Ten Ways to Change Undergraduate Education” a recommendation to “Link Communication Skills and Course Work.” As the authors note, “Undergraduate Education must enable students to acquire strong communication skills, and thereby create graduates who are proficient in both written and oral communication.”¹⁸ The Commission further recommends that communication skills should be integrated into every course and that they “must be similarly emphasized in the education of graduate students” (p. 25). UCI heartily endorses these recommendations and

believes that implementing them would, beyond the immediately practical benefit of making better communicators of all our students, also have the secondary benefit of increasing contact between students and a faculty whose attention is by design divided between teaching and research. The key challenge is, of course, how to create and sustain such a writing culture.

As one step, in 1999 the campus was awarded a grant by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to incorporate problem-based learning (PBL) into the general education (breadth) curriculum at UCI. The proposal's stated goals for UCI students are:

- To obtain a deeper understanding of course concepts and connections between academic disciplines
- To develop and practice life-long learning skills such as the identification and use of learning resources and cooperative learning
- To improve their *communication* skills [emphasis added]
- To promote positive attitudes towards general education courses and their subject matter

While our proposal to institute a faculty institute in PBL (the first of these commenced winter 2000) has initially focused on improving the pedagogical skills of tenure-track faculty who teach lower-division breadth courses and on introducing what we believe will be a set of useful and engaging pedagogical approaches into these courses, we expect these innovations will not only help shift emphasis in the general education classroom from the teacher-based transfer of knowledge to a student-based process of discovery more analogous to the process

of research with which faculty are so comfortable, but also have a substantial benefit for students' communications skills. Not only is there explicit attention to communication in the training that faculty and TAs undergo in the PBL institutes, but problem-based learning by its very nature calls for interactions between faculty and student and student and student that are communication-rich.

Another idea that has been circulated is the development of a Speech Center, possibly within the Learning and Academic Resources Center (LARC), which offers many of the academic support services on campus, typically through peer tutoring and through workshops and one-on-one sessions with professional counselors trained in a variety of disciplines (writing, ESL, chemistry, biology, math). Among the LARC director's budget requests for 1999-2000 was an FTE for an oral communications counselor, who would be available both to undergraduates and graduate students. (This position has been funded but not yet filled; LARC has begun limited offerings in oral communications this year.) The inability to make clear as well as cogent oral presentations can seriously hamper otherwise very competent students when they go out into the workplace. Problems in speaking are not uncommon among our graduate students, many of whom are not native speakers of English, and these problems can have wide impact when graduate students who are poor speakers become TAs.¹⁹ The Instructional Resources Center (also administered by Undergraduate Education) offers training to TAs (and indeed to all instructors), and this includes help with speech and other aspects of classroom "performance," but the Instructional Resources Center does not have the capacity to deal with the special needs of non-native instructors. The ESL Program has in its curriculum a speaking course designed primarily for international TAs. The Dean of Undergraduate Education has asked ESL to assure its availability for 2000-01.

We might note in this connection that there is evidence of growing interest in “speaking across the curriculum” as a desirable parallel to the long-standing concern with “writing across the curriculum” (see, for example, Allison Schneider’s article “Taking Aim at Student Incoherence” in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 26, 1999, section The Faculty, p. A16). Thus far, the movement is most apparent at smaller liberal arts colleges (Mount Holyoke, Smith), though speech centers have recently opened at larger public universities as well (the University of Utah and North Carolina State).

Every spring another program in the Division of Undergraduate Education, the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), mounts a day-long Undergraduate Research Symposium at which undergraduates from each academic unit present the fruits of their labors (in 1999, the work of 231 undergraduates was featured and 152 faculty mentors participated). This highly successful program offers, among other venues for the presentation of research (such as poster presentations), panels at which students make oral presentations. The day is capped by an awards ceremony. Up to now, these awards have been very largely content-based, but we are exploring the idea of making some additional awards based upon excellence in presentation, whether written, oral, or in other media.

The 1999 and 2000 call for proposals issued from the Dean of Undergraduate Education for instructional improvement funds targeted oral and written communication skills and applications of problem-based learning.

CONCLUSION: A SIGN OF HOPE

These are, in conclusion, examples of the kinds of activities that, when broadly implemented, can stimulate and deepen the “culture of communication” at UCI. We are eager to find better ways to fulfill the *Catalogue*’s exhortation that “the concern for and attention to clear, accurate writing is expected in all courses.” And we are eager too to include speech among the communications skills we think are vital for our students to be comfortable with. But as the authors of the Boyer Commission report and countless others have noted for many years, at ambitious research universities the forces driving faculty and graduate students tend to make teaching secondary to research, and at *public* research universities the valuing of research over teaching is even more apparent, because the public subsidy of the costs of undergraduate education, generous though it often is, simply cannot match the kinds of resources that tuition generates at private colleges and universities. The difficulties are compounded when well over half the student population do not have English as their first language.

One obvious area of reform involves the policies and criteria pertaining to faculty advancement. “Change Faculty Reward Systems,” urges the Boyer Commission: “Research universities must commit themselves to the highest standards in teaching as well as research and create faculty reward structures that validate that commitment” (Recommendation IX, p. 31). A report just released under the auspices of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities under the chairmanship of Charles B. Reed, Chancellor of the California State University system, argues that while there has been a significant increase in the attention to teaching in promoting professors, “the trend toward increasing the value of teaching and service in tenure decisions has not progressed far enough.”²⁰

Because of the highly labor-intensive nature of instruction in writing, it is likely that a faculty reward structure more favorable to teaching would lead to significant enhancements in the area of writing. We believe that many faculty are genuinely concerned about their students' writing and would like to pay far more attention to it, but simply cannot, given the very large numbers of students who need help and the demands being made upon the faculty's time not just in research, but in administrative and other service tasks as well. And then too there is the significant fact that being able to write well hardly guarantees that one can teach others how to write well.

There may be—from an unlikely quarter—a ray of hope in one recent finding in a study of more than 600 leaders in academia, government and business. The study discovered that while there is a strong consensus “that students need to learn thinking and communication skills, business leaders tend to disagree with educators about the effectiveness of higher education in teaching students what they all agree students need to know....”²¹ Given a growing tendency for universities to enter into partnerships with business and an attendant willingness to listen closely to what skills business leaders are telling them they need to provide to their graduates, it may be that pressure on this front will assist in a battle for increased attention to communication skills that has hitherto been championed chiefly by humanists.

Notes

¹ The fact that UCI has an upper-division writing requirement means that all junior-level transfer students must complete at least a quarter of coursework in writing at UCI.

² A description of the external-review process is available in the UCI WASC Reaccreditation Workroom.

³ Recommendation 13 of the lower-division writing review report, 1998.

⁴ The recommendation that there be a Gateway Exam at approximately the point at which students move from the lower to the upper division itself marked a retreat from the more ambitious goal of mounting a program of assessment that would track students throughout their undergraduate careers. The most-discussed models of the Gateway Exam included the following as likely elements: a timed essay written to a prompt about a short text (including the interpretation of graphical data) and then evaluated by a trained panel following a normed rubric. Additional aspects might include rewarding good work or sanctioning poor work, the latter to include being held back from upper-division writing or having a transcript notation indicate failure or repeated failure.

⁵ This view has been expressed only by some of the Writing 39A-B-C course directors—a very small group, but an influential one insofar as about half of UCI students satisfy lower-division writing via this sequence. For this reason, the 39 curriculum, by and large not commented upon in the recent writing reviews, perhaps deserves some further attention when we look also at the question raised by reviewers whether Humanities Core Course is devoting adequate time to composition.

⁶ In order to measure *improvement*, as opposed to *competence*, two data points are of course necessary. A proposal made shortly after the first of the two writing reviews was completed would have measured students' improvement by administering, at some point later in their undergraduate careers, a second Subject A examination to those who previously had taken the exam. In spite of the obvious logic and efficiency of this model, it was met with stiff resistance from local writing experts who believe that the Subject A test is itself intrinsically flawed.

⁷ The Writing Board is appointed by the Academic Senate Committee on Committees. It advises CEP but also serves as liaison with the academic units and the Office of Academic Affairs. It is not exactly a subcommittee of CEP (because it has only two members who overlap with the membership of CEP—the Dean of Undergraduate Education and one CEP representative—and because it has some quasi-independent responsibilities). Its charge reads as follows:

The UCI Writing Board shall advise the Council on Educational Policy on campuswide policies concerning instruction of writing, on implementation and enforcement of existing policies governing writing requirements, and shall serve as liaison with academic units and Academic Affairs on matters concerning the implementation and enforcement of such policies. The Board is empowered to gather information concerning the teaching of writing in courses on campus, students' writing performance, faculty perceptions of student writing problems and achievements, and student perceptions of writing instruction. The Board shall conduct a survey of academic units on campus to determine the courses in which there are significant writing assignments and the nature of the writing assignments. All writing requirement courses shall be reviewed at the end of three years. The Writing Director shall act as coordinator of all writing courses, and shall serve as liaison with the academic units, the UCI Writing Board, and the Council on Educational Policy. The Writing Director shall provide the Council on Educational Policy with information concerning the various writing courses offered, whether or not such writing courses meet the breadth requirement, and students' writing performance.

⁸ Since TAs bear the major responsibility for the teaching of undergraduate writing, their participation in a “Writing Forum” is critical. In addition to discussing their role in general, issues of composition training and specialized ESL composition training should also be addressed.

⁹ Over 1000 students satisfy their lower-division writing requirement in this course each year, roughly a third of freshmen.

¹⁰ This sequence satisfies lower-division writing for the approximately 2,700 students not enrolled in Humanities Core.

¹¹ ESL currently enrolls approximately 200 students who are required to complete a sequence of courses (anywhere from one to three) before embarking upon the lower-division writing requirement.

¹² LARC is UCI’s chief provider of academic support services. It offers group and individual sessions in writing (among other disciplines and skills), sometimes keyed to specific courses (“adjuncts”) and sometimes to more generic topics (“workshops”).

¹³ Both external review committees called for substantial additional FTE in the area of writing. The benefits of a Campus Writing Coordinator position will be at once to enhance the prestige of the teaching of writing, to give the campus as a whole a greater role in communication through the Dean of Undergraduate Education, and to provide an expert focal leader to encourage consensual policy and action on writing in key courses. The Dean of Undergraduate Education and the Dean of Graduate Education are the only campuswide academic deans at UCI.

¹⁴ In response to the recent reviews of writing, the 39A-B-C course coordinators, the Director of ESL, and the Director of LARC and LARC writing counselors met as a group for the first time in winter quarter 1999.

¹⁵ And yet faculty frequently complain that students do not know the discourse of their major. There is sometimes a strongly held belief that basic composition should prepare students for multiple discourses.

¹⁶ The Director of ESL reports that roughly half of students identified as “ESL” at UCI are not very comfortable in either reading or writing their nominal first languages. And below is a writing sample from another kind of student who lacks a strong first language, writing to the Director of ESL to protest the decision to be placed in an ESL class (quoted with permission):

I really not need humanity 20 writing class because since time I come to United State all my friend speak english. Until now everyone understand me and I dont' need study english. I don't know vietnam language. I speak only english. I have no communication problem with my friend in dorm. My english teacher in high school key person to teach me. My teacher explain to me that how important the book was for the student and persuaded me read many book. I get A in English through out high school and I never take ESL. I gree that some student need class but you has not made a correct decision put me in english class. Please do not make me lose the face. I have confident in english.

We should perhaps stress that by “language-impooverished” we emphatically do *not* mean students whose native language happens not to be standard English (indeed, almost nobody grows up speaking Standard English if by that term we mean the formal language employed in academic discourse), but those who grow up in environments in which there is relatively little talking and less reading.

¹⁷ p. 3.

¹⁸ (1998) *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities*. New York: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Recommendation V., p. 24.

¹⁹ Of course speech experts are typically *not* experts in ESL.

²⁰ American Association of State Colleges and Universities (1999). *Facing Change: Building the Faculty of the Future*. Washington, DC, p. 23.

²¹ Immelwahr, John (1999). *Taking Responsibility: Leaders' Expectations of Higher Education*. New York: Public Agenda, for The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, p. 16.