

Glendale Community College

ESL Common Exit Exam and Essay

Introduction

This report provides information for the ESL Common Exit Exam and the ESL Common Exit Essay. Overall, the Credit ESL Department and the Research & Planning Unit have been extremely satisfied with both test instruments. The following analyses provide evidence that the instruments are being used effectively and are serving as a strong predictors of student success. Content validity and reliability are both established. In addition, test bias is addressed.

Validity

Content-Related Validity

Content-related validity studies are designed to provide evidence of the appropriateness of an assessment instrument for determining course placement based on the degree of overlap between knowledge and skills measured by the test instrument and the specific knowledge/skills required as prerequisites for the course.

The ESL Common Final was developed by the Credit ESL faculty to match the entry skills of the grammar courses. It consists of five sections and an essay. The sections include the following: Verbs, Punctuation Error Correction, Sentence Completion and Connectors. Additionally, the essay prompts were developed by both the Credit ESL and English faculty. Initially, the prompts were used to elicit end-of-term essays for students in ESL and English courses.

A study was conducted during the Spring 2016 semester to address content-related validity. Two full-time Credit ESL faculty members participated in the study. The main content validity question

addressed in the study was: What is the extent of the match between the stated course exit skills and the test's measured objectives and skills?

The ESL faculty members were asked to match the course exit skills to the test objectives using a five point Likert type scale. A comparison of matches across the different faculty members indicated there was 95% agreement among the two raters. Thus, indicating a sufficient match between the stated course exit skills and the test's measured objective.

Reliability Evidence

Interrater Reliability

When performance assessments are used such as a direct writing assessment (i.e., essay exam), there is a need for inter-rater scoring consistency, that is, when two or more qualified readers rate the same student essays, do the readers provide the same or similar evaluations of the same papers?

Interrater reliability was based on 100 ESL exit exam essays taken at the end of the Fall 2015 semester. Each essay was graded by two ESL instructors; a total of six ESL instructors participated in the scoring during this period. On a 6-point scale (scored 1 to 6, based on the five levels of the ESL grammar curriculum), 90% of the scores agreed within one point. There was complete agreement on 65% of the essays, and disagreement by one point on 25% of the essays. Only 10 essays (10% of the total) elicited scores disagreeing by two points, and no essays elicited disagreement of two or more points. Disagreements are resolved by a third reader, who makes the final scoring decision. Table 1 shows the Inter Rater Agreement Table for the ESL Exit Essay.

Table 1. Inter Rater Agreement Table

Rater	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	7	2	1	0	0	0
2	3	10	3	2	1	0
3	0	2	12	2	0	1
4	0	2	2	13	1	1
5	0	1	1	4	12	3
6	0	0	0	1	3	11

Test Bias Evidence

Investigations for test bias was done for students during the Spring 2016 semester. In the survey, the following question was asked:

“Does the section/prompt seem to be confusing or in some way offensive to an individual from your culture? If so, how might it be worded differently so that this individual will not be at a disadvantage when responding to this prompt?”

Student Bias Study

Test Bias Panel Study. A test bias survey was conducted during the Spring 2016 semester. The survey found no evidence of test bias. A selected group of nine full-time Glendale College students representing various ethnicities, age groups, and genders read the ESL Common Exit Exam and the essay prompts and were asked to indicate any words they found offensive. From the results of the survey and focus groups conducted afterward, it was found that none of the essay prompts or the Common Exit Exam contained words or phrases the students found offensive. Table 1 shows the results for the Bias Study for Students.

Table 1. Bias Study for Students.

	Panel Member								
Demographics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
GENDER									
Male	X		X	X		X		X	
Female		X			X		X		X
AGE									
<20 years old	X	X		X		X		X	X
21-30 years old			X		X				
>30 years old							X		
ETHNICITY									
Asian	X						X		
African-American		X							
Caucasian			X	X	X				
Hispanic						X		X	
Filipino									X
Evidence of Bias For Gender	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Evidence of Bias For Age	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Evidence of Bias For Ethnicity	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

