

1-14-2022

Evaluating Approaches to Improve written English Language Learners in Civil Engineering

David James

Associate Vice Provost for Academic Programs, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, dave.james@unlv.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/btp_expo



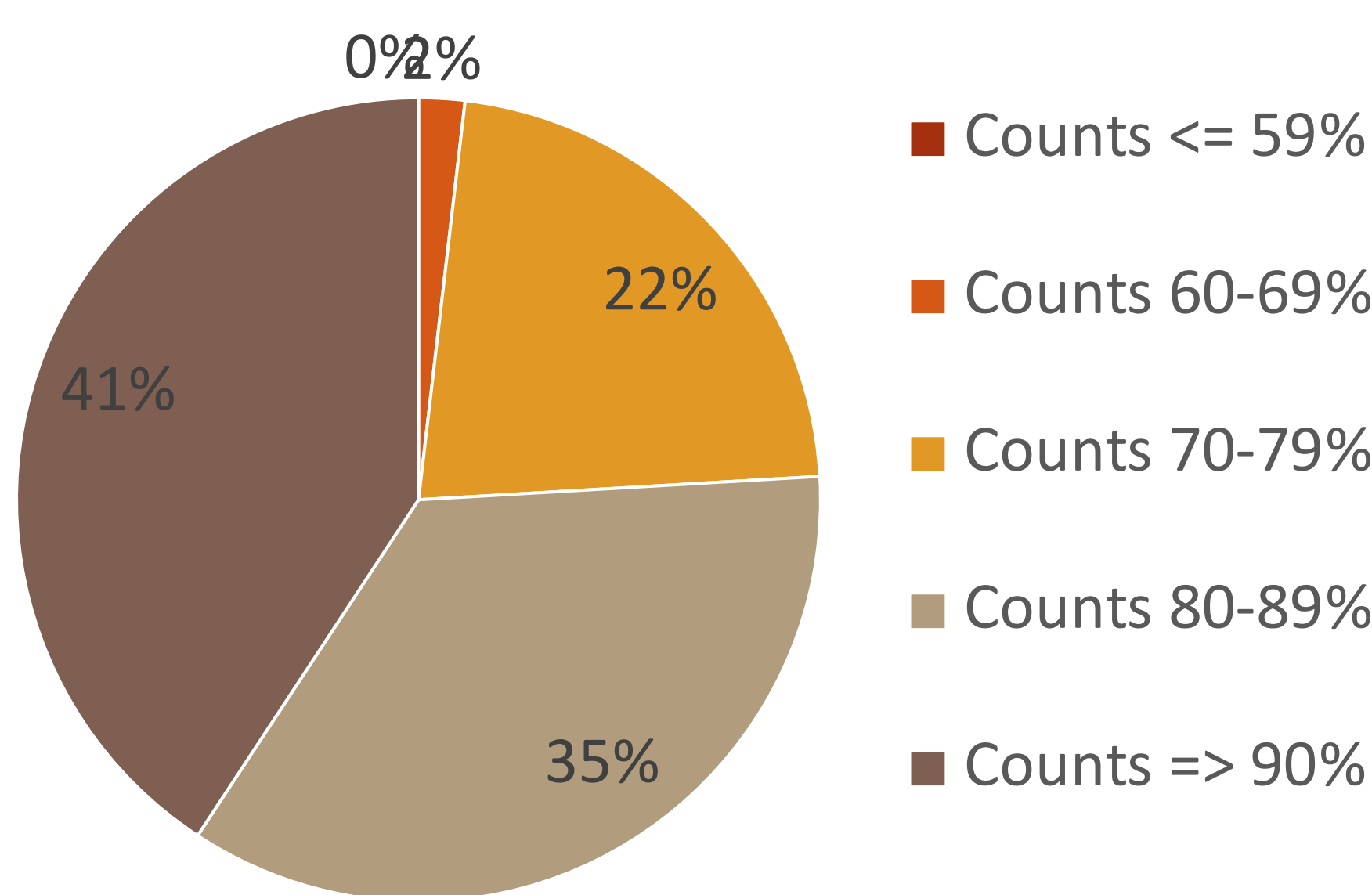
Part of the [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

James, David, "Evaluating Approaches to Improve written English Language Learners in Civil Engineering" (2022). *UNLV Best Teaching Practices Expo*. 174.
https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/btp_expo/174

This Poster is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Poster in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Poster has been accepted for inclusion in UNLV Best Teaching Practices Expo by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@unlv.edu.

Rationale and Problem Statement		FINAL REPORT RUBRIC														
Rationale: Civil Engineering employers consistently identify a written communications weakness in BS civil engineering graduates Problem statement: Identify sources of writing inadequacy and Devise interventions to improve written communications Level of Change: Classroom		Level of performance à	Excellent – Synthesis level – If you want an “A” - aim for the GRAY – employer, reviewer or client is happy!	Competent – synthesizing but missing a few things – this would be a “do over” somewhere in the internal or external review	Not yet Competent at Synthesizing – you’d be reprimanded!	(Poor) Inadequate – incapable of synthesizing – you’d be fired!										
		Grade value à Component point value ABET Student learning criterion addressed in italics: (point value) Stage of percent completion for first submission underlined	Grade A or A- 90-100% of max points	Grade B+, B, B- 80-89% of max points	Grade C+ or C 70-79% of max points	F, Fail 0% - 69% of max points										
		Report grammar and composition ABET 3 (25 pts) Reports evaluated at the l 10% 20%, 30%, 40%, 60%, 80% design levels	Report is clearly written to exceed the ENG 102 standard. The underlying logic is clearly articulated and easy to follow. Words are chosen that accurately express the intended meaning and support reader comprehension.	Report Meets ENG 102 “pass” standard, but in some areas the logic or flow of ideas is difficult to follow. Words are well-chosen with some minor exceptions.	Report not written to ENG 102 “pass” standard. Reader has to make considerable effort to understand the underlying logic and flow of ideas because of how the report is constructed, including: Grammatical and spelling errors make it difficult for the reader to interpret the text in places. Several (5 to 10) cases of poorly constructed or overly long or too short paragraphs. Several paragraphs cover more than one topic. Common use of casual/conversational language.	Report far below ENG 102 pass standard. Many run-on sentences or sentence fragments.										
			Casual or conversational language is absent. Diagrams or analyses enhance and clarify presentation of ideas. All sentences are grammatically correct and free from spelling errors. All paragraphs are well-constructed on a coherent topic. All paragraphs are the correct length: none too long (> 1 page) or too short (1-3 sentences).	Occasional (1-5 cases) use of casual or conversational language. Most of the sentences are grammatically correct. Only a few spelling errors are present, but they do not hinder the reader’s overall comprehension. No more than 4 paragraphs are poorly organized or too long or too short. 1-4 paragraphs cover more than one topic.		Frequent use of casual or conversational language. Many paragraphs overly long (> 1 page with multiple topics) or too short (1-2 sentences).										
Results																
CEE 498 Grammar & composition report score distribution, n = 54 Fall 2021  <table><tr><td>■</td><td>Counts <= 59%</td></tr><tr><td>■</td><td>Counts 60-69%</td></tr><tr><td>■</td><td>Counts 70-79%</td></tr><tr><td>■</td><td>Counts 80-89%</td></tr><tr><td>■</td><td>Counts >= 90%</td></tr></table>							■	Counts <= 59%	■	Counts 60-69%	■	Counts 70-79%	■	Counts 80-89%	■	Counts >= 90%
■	Counts <= 59%															
■	Counts 60-69%															
■	Counts 70-79%															
■	Counts 80-89%															
■	Counts >= 90%															
Commonly observed writing errors																
Conversational or casual English resembling written dialog instead of formally correct English Incorrect vocabulary for technical terms especially in complex sections describing design features or calculations Incorrect/Inconsistent verb tense confusing completed work (past tense) with proposed work (future tense) Confusing singular and plural nouns, for example using plural ‘criteria’ for singular ‘criterion’ Omitting use of Table or Figure numbers to describe data displays, or Tables and Figures included without captions Missing, inconsistently formatted citations in the narrative and in the References section																
Interventions for next time																
• Continue to provide rubric in advance • Provide examples of good writing from past reports earlier in class and assign students to critically read and evaluate those examples using the rubric																
Acknowledgments																
• 2020-21 CRRT Fellows workshop, Kristine Jan Cruz Espinoza, Haroon Stephen, Jin Ouk Choi																
Evaluation Process																
Student teams received feedback per the rubric after each design level submission. Feedback returned to students before next % report due date																