

A Study:

Effectiveness of Ingles Ya! Series In Facilitating English-Language Acquisition for Beginning Level Spanish-Speaking Adults

Rationale for Study

The publisher of *Ingles Ya!* (IY) is looking to establish the effectiveness of their new series in teaching English to beginning level Spanish speakers. This multi-media DVD-based program teaches English via depictions of practical everyday life settings that are instantly recognizable to Spanish speakers. This provides a motivational context for engaging, easy-to-use vocabulary exercises and self-correcting assessments.

A comprehensive effectiveness study would focus on **student learning gains** (scale score increases on achievement tests); **student persistence data** (number of instructional hours completed without dropping out); and **student perceptions** (on how well the curriculum helped them learn English). For the purposes of this study, such data needs to be compared for selected student groups, including those enrolled in regular ESL courses (composed of Spanish-speakers), Distance Learning (DL), and Workplace Literacy programs.

A third party Evaluation Consultant, Mr. Van M. Woolley, has been commissioned to conduct such a study. The overall purpose is to show that the *Ingles Ya!* series has unique advantages in teaching English to beginning level Spanish speakers. Student samples will be drawn from adults enrolled in various programs at selected Adult Education pilot sites. The hypothesis of the study is that *Ingles Ya!* series is a viable curricular option for use in regular ESL Classes, Distance Learning (DL) Programs (or Independent Learning), and/or turn-key lessons to teach English in the Work Place. The study will be ongoing throughout 2009.

Research Design

Purpose:

The purpose of the study is to answer the following questions related to English-language acquisition for “beginning level” Spanish speaking adults.

- To what extent do *Ingles Ya!* materials increase students’ reading scale scores on standardized achievement tests—e.g., CASAS or NRS.
- To what extent do *Ingles Ya!* materials increase student persistence in adult education programs?
- Given that *Ingles Ya!* materials help adults to learn English, how does that improved English impact the adult learner’s everyday life, including family literacy and in the work place?
- From the school administrator and teachers’ perspective, how does the *Ingles Ya!* media function as:
 - The principle curriculum for DL classes?
 - Supplemental instruction for regular ESL classes (composed of Spanish speakers)?
 - Stand alone instruction for teaching English in the workplace?

Method:

The major methods to be used in the study are:

- Questionnaires completed by administrator and teachers that identify data for selected student groups:

- Average learning gains in scale scores from standardized reading tests (e.g., comparisons of pre-test/post-tests scores for CASAS and NRS)
- Average number of continuous instructional hours completed by participating students (without dropping out)
- Structured interviews of adult learners (by teachers) to identify perceived benefits of using *Inglés Ya* curriculum.
- Analysis of achievement, attendance, teacher and students' self-report data to identify comparative outcomes for selected student groups.
- Interviews with administrators, teachers and employers to assess perceived effectiveness of *Inglés Ya!* media in teaching English to beginning level Spanish speakers.

Outcomes:

The desired outcomes of the study are to:

- To establish the *Inglés Ya!* series as effective in teaching English to beginning level Spanish-speaking adults.
- To show that *Inglés Ya!* media increases the persistence of Adult Learners in their efforts to learn English.
- To find out how improved English, brought about from using *Inglés Ya!*, has impacted family life, literacy and job performance of participating students.
- To demonstrate that using *Inglés Ya!* is, in fact, a viable curricular option for teaching English in regular ESL classes (w/Spanish speakers), Distance Learning (DL) and Workplace Literacy programs.

Study Components

The study consists of the following phases.

1. Identification of Sites

Inglés Ya! (IY) staff identified Adult Education schools across California that are willing to participate as pilot sites. These will be sites that offer Distance Learning (DL) programs, regular ESL classes that incorporate supplemental instructional media; and/or ESL classes located in the workplace. To date, the following sites are participating:

- Sacramento Adult School
- Berkeley Adult
- Abram Freidman Occupational Center (LAUSD)
- Burbank Adult School

2. Preparation of Evaluation Materials

The *Inglés Ya!* Advisory Board developed preliminary questionnaire items and forms to be used with program administrators and students. The Evaluation Consultant reviewed and polished these items and forms.

3. Implementation of Evaluation Process

The Evaluation Consultant met with program administrators and obtained agreement on the activities required for the study. Administrators will sign a *Memo of Understanding* (MOU) that specifies the expected activities of participating sites. Each site agreed to:

- Use *Inglés Ya!* media and instructional materials with representative samples of Spanish-speaking Adult learners.
- Meet with Evaluation Consultant at designated times.

- Assess students' academic progress successively every three months.
(Note: This time frame was selected based on the scheduling of pre-tests and post tests for the widely- used CASAS Reading Test. Students take a post-test after completing between 80 and 120 hours of instruction. The average learner should be able to complete seven to ten lessons in three months time. It is expected that it takes approximately one week for average adult learner to complete one *Inglés Ya!* lesson. When the student passes the assessment of that lesson, he/she is awarded 12 instructional hours by the teacher.)
- Make sure that administrators, teachers and students complete questionnaires for each evaluation cycle.
- Submit completed questionnaires (including achievement test gains and persistence data) to Evaluation Consultant for two cycles in 2009 (Achievement test results due to the assessment contractor by July 30 and November 30).

5. Monitoring of Evaluation Progress through telephone calls and email.

The Evaluation Consultant contacts program administrators monthly.

6. Visits to pilot sites for Staff Interviews

The Evaluation Consultant visited the pilot sites in November 2008 to interview staff.

7. Analysis of achievement scores and persistence data for selected student groups.

The Evaluation Consultant will ascertain scale score gains on standardized achievement tests (e.g., CASAS or NRS) and review student persistence data (total number of instructional hours completed). This data will be compared for the following student groups (depending on the programs offered):

Regular Classroom Instruction Only

(Students enrolled in regular ESL classes **not using** supplemental media-based instruction—e.g., *Inglés Ya!*, *Learning English* or *Putting English to Work 1*)

Regular Classroom Instruction using *Inglés Ya!* as instructional supplement

(Students enrolled in regular ESL classes with *Inglés Ya!* used as supplementary instruction)

Distance Learning Instruction with *Inglés Ya!*

(Students enrolled only in Distance Learning classes with *Inglés Ya!* as primary curriculum)

Distance Learning Media-based Instruction with *Learning English!*

(Students enrolled only in DL classes with *Learning English!* as primary curriculum)

Distance Learning Media-based Instruction with *Putting English to Work*

(Students enrolled only in DL classes with *Putting English to Work* as primary curriculum)

Workplace-based ESL Instruction with *Inglés Ya!*

(Students enrolled only in DL classes offered at workplace with *Inglés Ya!* as primary curriculum)

7. Analyze student self report data derived from teacher interviews.

Data from completed student interview record sheets will be analyzed to identify how use of *Inglés Ya!* impacted students' family life, literacy and job performance.

8. Certify Outcomes and Prepare Evaluation Reports for Study.

The Evaluation Consultant will prepare a Preliminary Report in July 2009 and Final Report in December 2009.