

**Harper College  
Census Analysis of Multilingual and  
Foreign-Born District Residents**

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## Introduction

As part of its program review process, the English as a Second Language Department (ESL) of Harper College was interested in gaining perspective on multilingualism and the foreign-born population of the College district, specifically the number of non-English speaking households in the district.

The most comprehensive and accurate data is contained within the United States Census, even though the Census was last tallied in 2000. The following tables outline the basic premise regarding non-English speaking households and other demographic breakdowns relating to multilingualism and the foreign-born district population.

This report is organized into three parts including an Introduction, Results and Discussion, and a Summary that reflects on key comparisons within the demographic and geographical groups.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1: Household Language by Linguistic Isolation**

Source: United States Census, 2000						
Language	Harper District		Chicago MSA <sup>a</sup>		Illinois	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>English</b>	<b>131,851</b>	<b>73.0</b>	<b>2,465,110</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>3,689,910</b>	<b>80.3</b>
<b>Spanish</b>	<b>13,425</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>412,160</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>440,280</b>	<b>9.6</b>
Linguistically Isolated	4,218	31.4	111,859	27.1	115,569	26.2
Not Linguistically Isolated	9,207	68.6	300,301	72.9	324,711	73.8
<b>Other Indo-European Languages</b>	<b>23,634</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>300,947</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>324,324</b>	<b>7.1</b>
Linguistically Isolated	4,834	20.5	66,960	22.2	68,443	21.1
Not Linguistically Isolated	18,800	79.5	233,987	77.8	255,881	78.9
<b>Asian and Pacific Island Languages</b>	<b>10,155</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>92,997</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>104,352</b>	<b>2.3</b>
Linguistically Isolated	3,063	30.2	24,737	26.6	27,811	26.7
Not Linguistically Isolated	7,092	69.8	68,260	73.4	76,541	73.3
<b>Other Languages</b>	<b>1,498</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>31,771</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>33,874</b>	<b>0.7</b>
Linguistically Isolated	233	15.6	4,698	14.8	4,907	14.5
Not Linguistically Isolated	1,265	84.4	27,073	85.2	28,967	85.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>180,561</b>		<b>3,302,985</b>		<b>4,592,740</b>	

<sup>a</sup> Please note that “Chicago MSA” is known as the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes Kenosha County in Wisconsin and the Northwest Indiana region.

The category of “Other Indo-European Languages” is defined as most languages of Europe and India, which include: Germanic languages (German, Yiddish, Dutch, etc.), Scandinavian languages (Swedish, Norwegian, etc.), Romance languages (French, Italian, Portuguese, etc.), Slavic languages (Russian, Polish, Serb/Croat, etc.), and Indic languages (Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, etc.) as well as Celtic, Greek, Baltic and Iranian languages.

The category of “Other Languages” includes Uralic languages (e.g., Hungarian), Semitic languages (e.g., Arabic and Hebrew), Native American languages, African languages, and Central and South American indigenous languages.

A “linguistically isolated” household is defined as one where no member at least 14 years old speaks only English, or speaks a non-English language and speaks English “very well”. To clarify, these households comprise of all members at least 14 years old with at least some difficulty speaking English.

In the Harper district, there are a smaller proportion of households that speak English compared to the Chicago area or Illinois; there are also comparatively fewer Spanish-speaking households in the district. In contrast, a higher proportion of households in the district speak Asian and Indo-European languages. Spanish and Asian language-speaking households tend to be more linguistically isolated within Harper’s district, while Indo-European language-speaking households tend to be less linguistically isolated within our district than in Chicagoland or Illinois.

**Table 2: Year of Entry for Foreign-Born Population by Citizenship Status**

Source: United States Census, 2000						
Year of Entry	Harper District		Chicago MSA <sup>a</sup>		Illinois	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>1990 to March 2000</b>	<b>48,184</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>653,061</b>	<b>44.5</b>	<b>687,564</b>	<b>45.0</b>
Naturalized Citizen	5,498	11.4	84,245	12.9	87,272	12.7
Not a Citizen	42,686	88.6	568,816	87.1	600,292	87.3
<b>1980 to 1990</b>	<b>20,422</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>351,728</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>364,092</b>	<b>23.8</b>
Naturalized Citizen	10,313	50.5	156,328	44.4	162,155	44.5
Not a Citizen	10,109	49.5	195,400	55.6	201,937	55.5
<b>Before 1980</b>	<b>27,535</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>462,151</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>477,402</b>	<b>31.2</b>
Naturalized Citizen	22,129	80.4	343,355	74.3	354,094	74.2
Not a Citizen	5,406	19.6	118,796	25.7	123,308	25.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>96,141</b>		<b>1,466,940</b>		<b>1,529,058</b>	

<sup>a</sup> Please note that “Chicago MSA” is known as the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes Kenosha County in Wisconsin and the Northwest Indiana region.

Compared to the Chicago area or Illinois, a higher proportion of foreign-born residents in Harper’s district immigrated recently (i.e., year of entry 1990-2000). Among foreign-born residents that entered from 1990 to 2000, a smaller proportion of residents within the Harper district are naturalized citizens. Among foreign-born residents that entered before 1990, a higher proportion of residents within our district are naturalized citizens than in Chicagoland or Illinois.

**Table 3: Population Language by Age and English-Speaking Ability**

Source: United States Census, 2000						
	Harper District		Chicago MSA <sup>a</sup>		Illinois	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
5-17 Years	82,248	18.8	1,781,491	21.0	2,367,441	20.5
18-64 Years	301,637	69.0	5,703,611	67.2	7,681,135	66.5
65+ Years	53,021	12.1	996,831	11.8	1,498,929	13.0
<b>5-17 Years</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Speak English only</b>	<b>61,340</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>1,341,228</b>	<b>75.3</b>	<b>1,906,780</b>	<b>80.5</b>
<b>Speak Spanish</b>	<b>9,120</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>310,077</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>321,898</b>	<b>13.6</b>
Speak English well/very well	6,645	72.9	257,719	83.1	266,665	82.8
Speak English not well/not at all	2,475	27.1	52,358	16.9	55,233	17.2
<b>Speak Other Indo-European Lang.</b>	<b>7,708</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>84,087</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>89,345</b>	<b>3.8</b>
Speak English well/very well	7,326	95.0	78,877	93.8	83,518	93.5
Speak English not well/not at all	382	5.0	5,210	6.2	5,827	6.5
<b>Speak Asian/Pacific Island Lang.</b>	<b>3,558</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>31,676</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>34,439</b>	<b>1.5</b>
Speak English well/very well	2,913	81.9	28,409	89.7	30,978	90.0
Speak English not well/not at all	645	18.1	3,267	10.3	3,461	10.0
<b>Speak Other Languages</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>14,423</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>14,979</b>	<b>0.6</b>
Speak English well/very well	517	99.0	13,505	93.6	14,005	93.5
Speak English not well/not at all	5	1.0	918	6.4	974	6.5
<b>18-64 Years</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Speak English only</b>	<b>215,651</b>	<b>71.5</b>	<b>4,210,794</b>	<b>73.8</b>	<b>6,110,984</b>	<b>79.6</b>
<b>Speak Spanish</b>	<b>29,202</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>853,023</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>884,768</b>	<b>11.5</b>
Speak English well/very well	16,127	55.2	552,236	64.7	574,009	64.9
Speak English not well/not at all	13,075	44.8	300,787	35.3	310,759	35.1
<b>Speak Other Indo-European Lang.</b>	<b>35,428</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>410,103</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>432,856</b>	<b>5.6</b>
Speak English well/very well	31,268	88.3	341,432	83.3	362,267	83.7
Speak English not well/not at all	4,160	11.7	68,671	16.7	70,589	16.3
<b>Speak Asian/Pacific Island Lang.</b>	<b>18,957</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>175,656</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>195,060</b>	<b>2.5</b>
Speak English well/very well	15,256	80.5	147,191	83.8	163,595	83.9
Speak English not well/not at all	3,701	19.5	28,465	16.2	31,465	16.1
<b>Speak Other Languages</b>	<b>2,399</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>54,035</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>57,467</b>	<b>0.7</b>
Speak English well/very well	2,264	94.4	48,927	90.5	51,982	90.5
Speak English not well/not at all	135	5.6	5,108	9.5	5,485	9.5

<sup>a</sup> Please note that "Chicago MSA" is known as the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes Kenosha County in Wisconsin and the Northwest Indiana region.

**Table 3: Continued**

Source: United States Census, 2000						
<b>65+ Years</b>	<b>Harper District</b>		<b>Chicago MSA<sup>a</sup></b>		<b>Illinois</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Speak English only</b>	<b>43,830</b>	<b>82.7</b>	<b>813,868</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>1,309,022</b>	<b>87.3</b>
<b>Speak Spanish</b>	<b>1,127</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>46,737</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>47,010</b>	<b>3.1</b>
Speak English well/very well	706	62.6	26,340	56.4	26,658	56.7
Speak English not well/not at all	421	37.4	20,397	43.6	20,352	43.3
<b>Speak Other Indo-European Lang.</b>	<b>6,761</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>112,505</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>118,036</b>	<b>7.9</b>
Speak English well/very well	4,956	73.3	85,500	76.0	90,835	77.0
Speak English not well/not at all	1,805	26.7	27,005	24.0	27,201	23.0
<b>Speak Asian/Pacific Island Lang.</b>	<b>1,057</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>18,281</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>19,301</b>	<b>1.3</b>
Speak English well/very well	554	52.4	9,683	53.0	10,310	53.4
Speak English not well/not at all	503	47.6	8,598	47.0	8,991	46.6
<b>Speak Other Languages</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>5,440</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>5,560</b>	<b>0.4</b>
Speak English well/very well	205	83.3	3,986	73.3	4,050	72.8
Speak English not well/not at all	41	16.7	1,454	26.7	1,510	27.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>436,906</b>		<b>8,481,933</b>		<b>11,547,505</b>	

<sup>a</sup> Please note that “Chicago MSA” is known as the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes Kenosha County in Wisconsin and the Northwest Indiana region.

In terms of age, the district skews older with fewer residents between five and seventeen years old in the district compared to the Chicago area and Illinois. Within nearly all age groups, a smaller proportion of residents in the Harper district spoke only English; the exception is observed with residents at least 65 years old, where a higher proportion spoke only English compared to the Chicago area. Among all age groups, there were a smaller proportion of residents that spoke Spanish than within the Chicago area or Illinois. By comparison, a higher proportion of residents among all groups spoke Indo-European and Asian languages within the district.

A smaller proportion of Spanish-speaking residents under 65 years old within Harper’s district are able to speak English well than in the Chicago area or Illinois, while more Spanish-speaking residents over 65 within the district are able to speak English well. The opposite holds true for speakers of Indo-European languages; a higher proportion of these residents under 65 years old within Harper’s district are able to speak English well, while a smaller proportion of Indo-European language-speaking residents over 65 within the district are able to speak English well. Among Asian language speakers within all age groups, a smaller proportion of residents within Harper’s district are able to speak English well compared to Chicagoland or Illinois.

## Summary

The 2000 United States Census provided comprehensive and accurate data relating to multilingualism and the foreign-born population within the Harper College district. The Census data available focused on non-English speaking households, linguistic isolation, year of entry, citizenship status, and English-speaking ability; all of which were organized in demographic and geographical groupings. Key findings from the available Census data include:

- a smaller proportion of English and Spanish speaking households are in the Harper district (73% and 7%, respectively) than in the Chicago area (75% and 13%, respectively) or Illinois (80% and 10%, respectively);
- a higher proportion of households that speak Indo-European and Asian languages are in Harper's district (13% and 6%, respectively) than in Chicagoland (9% and 3%, respectively) or Illinois (7% and 2%, respectively);
- a higher proportion of households that speak Spanish and Asian languages are linguistically isolated in Harper's district (31% and 30%, respectively) than in Chicagoland (27% for each) or Illinois (26% and 27%, respectively).
- a higher proportion of foreign-born residents that entered the country between 1990-2000 live in the Harper district (50%) than in the Chicago area or Illinois (45% for each);
- a lower proportion of foreign-born residents that entered the country before 1990 live in Harper's district (50%) than in Chicagoland (56%) or Illinois (55%);
- the rate that foreign-born residents become naturalized citizens increases the earlier they entered the country, and this rate is more precipitous for district residents than residents in the Chicago area or in Illinois;
- in all age groups, lower proportions of residents speak Spanish in Harper's district than in the Chicago area or in Illinois, while higher proportion of residents speak Indo-European and Asian languages in the district than Chicagoland or Illinois, across all age groups.