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STATISTICAL BRIEF

Language Minorities Account for California's Entire Population Growth in the 1990s

New data released by the US Census Bureau reveal that the language minority population in California increased by 40 percent in the 1990s, while the population who spoke only English actually declined by 1 percent. The language minority population also grew by 40 percent in the US overall. Yet, the language minority population represents a much higher percentage of the overall population in California than in the entire US—39 versus 18 percent. Despite their growing numbers, the majority of the language minority population in California and the US report that they speak English very well.

This brief presents these and other findings from an analysis of the 1980, 1990, and 2000 US Census. The data are based on respondents' reports of whether they speak a language other than English at home and, if they do, how well they speak English. Language use among children is usually reported by their parents. The data do not differentiate between persons whose native language is not English and native English speakers who speak a second language. They also do not reveal how well respondents read and write English, which may be more important for performance in school or at work. Nevertheless, the data provide valuable information on the language background of the US and California populations.

Language Minority Population

Over the past two decades, the language minority population has grown much faster than the overall population in California and in the US. As shown in Table 1, in 1980 11 percent of the US population

Table 1—Percent of Population Who Report Speaking Language Other than English at Home, 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000
Age 5+			
US	11.0	13.8	17.6
California	22.6	31.5	39.5
Age 5-17			
US	9.6	13.9	18.4
California	23.0	35.0	42.6

SOURCE: 1980, 1990, 2000 Census.

age 5 or more reported speaking a language other than English. By 2000, almost 18 percent of the population spoke a language other than English. In both the 1980s and 1990s, the language minority population grew six to eight times as fast as the English-only population. Similar increases occurred among school-aged children, 5 to 17 years of age.

In California the language minority population grew even faster. California has always had a much higher percentage of its population who were language minorities. Among all speakers, ages 5 or more, 23 percent of the state's populations spoke a language other than English in 1980. By 2000, the percentage increased to almost 40 percent. Similar increases occurred among the school-age population. As a result, California is home to an increasing share of the nation's language minority population. In 2000, more than one-quarter of all language minority adults and children resided in California. In both the US and California, about two-thirds of language minorities report speaking Spanish.

English Proficiency

Just because someone speaks a language other than English, it does not mean that they don't speak English. In fact, they may speak English very well. That, indeed, appears to be the case, as shown by the data in Table 2. More than half of all language minorities

Table 2—Percent of Population Who Report Speaking English Less than Very Well, 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000
Age 5+			
US	4.8	6.1	7.7
California	11.4	16.2	18.9
Age 5-17			
US	--	5.3	5.6
California	--	14.9	13.6

SOURCE: 1980, 1990, 2000 Census.

in California and the US report that they speak English very well. Consequently, the size of the language minority population who report that they speak English with some difficulty—sometimes

referred to as English learners—is much smaller than the overall language minority population.

In the entire US, the number of English learners increased from 5 percent of the population in 1980 to almost 8 percent in 2000. The percentage was somewhat smaller among school-aged children, since they are more likely than adults to speak English very well.

In California, the number of English learners increased from 11 percent of the population in 1980 to 19 percent in 2000. Among school-aged children the percentage of English learners was much smaller than among adults and actually declined in the 1990s. The 14 percent figure for school-aged children is substantially smaller than the 25 percent who are reported as English learners by their public schools. This discrepancy results, at least in part, from the fact that students must demonstrate proficiency in English reading and writing and not just spoken English before they are reclassified as proficient in English.

California's growing language diversity represents both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to improve the English proficiency of the state's adult and school-age language minority populations. The opportunity is that an increasing number of Californians can become proficient in a second language, which can promote their individual success in school and at work and can improve California's economic competitiveness in the global economy.

—Russell W. Rumberger

DISSERTATION GRANT REPORT ABSTRACT

On The Move:

The Mobility/Social Capital Dynamic in the Achievement Gap between Mexican-American and non-Latino White Adolescents

ROBERT KETNER REAM, UC SANTA BARBARA

A critical issue facing U.S. schools and one with broad social implication is the persistent disparity in educational achievement between race/ethnic groups. This issue may be particularly pronounced for Mexican-Americans who constitute the vast majority of U.S. Latinos and are reportedly the most educationally at risk of all Latino subgroups. The results of this study suggest that student mobility (the practice of students changing schools for reasons other than promotion) and residential mobility help to perpetuate the achievement gap between Mexican-American and non-Latino White American students in secondary schools. More specifically, this study employs multiple research methods to probe links between mobility, social capital (i.e., relationships among individuals and between individuals and social structures) and the achievement gap, demonstrating that the mobility/social capital dynamic is an important mechanism by which mobility is particularly detrimental to Mexican-American adolescents. Findings from this study offer four reasons for this assertion.

First, Mexican-Americans are more mobile than their non-Latino White counterparts, are over-represented among the highly mobile, and appear to be disadvantaged in terms of social capital accumulation. Second, mobility negatively impacts 12th grade math achievement, school engagement and school completion, and it also detracts from social capital accumulation. Third, within-group effect-size comparisons from the survey data coupled with the interview analysis suggest that the magnitude of the negative impact of each non-promotional school change on math achievement and social

capital accumulation may be greater among Mexican-origin youth, leaving them particularly susceptible to its negative implications. Finally, while social capital across domains is convertible into 12th grade math achievement among non-Latino Whites, public social networks represented by school and community social capital do not evidence convertibility at a statistically significant level among Mexican-origin adolescents.

To combat the achievement gap, researchers face the important task of providing an empirical evaluation of those factors that really do contribute to educational inequality. This study suggests that the mobility/social capital dynamic is one such factor and its mitigation at least a partial solution to the problem.

UC LMRI LAUNCHES RESEARCH INITIATIVE TO DEVELOP A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF CALIFORNIA'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

During the past year, the UC LMRI Faculty Steering Committee allocated \$100,000 to a research initiative to develop a longitudinal database of California English Language Learners (ELLs). The database could be used for three important purposes: (1) to monitor the academic progress of California's ELLs as they move through elementary and secondary school, (2) to undertake research on the factors that promote or impede that progress, and (3) to help assess the impact of the many reform efforts in the state on ELLs, including Proposition 227 and UC outreach.

The purpose of the research initiative is to support the initial development of the database by (1) developing and evaluating instruments to assess literacy of students and the literacy practices of teachers and families; (2) developing web-based data collection and data management tools; (3) studying the feasibility of linking the development of the database with other data collection efforts in the State.

The first product from this initiative is a feasibility study to develop a broad-based California Education Longitudinal Study to study the educational progress of all students in the state. The study was supported by UC LMRI, UC Outreach, and UC ACCORD.

RESEARCH REPORT ABSTRACT

Developing a California Education Longitudinal Study

PHILLIP KAUFMAN, MPR ASSOCIATES,
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

In the past few years California has implemented a series of school reforms in an effort to improve the educational performance of California's students and schools. However, without reliable and accurate data on students, teachers, and schools, the impact of these reforms will be difficult to detect. For example, with current data one cannot determine if students receiving three years of class size reduction gain more than students receiving only one or two years. One cannot determine if students retained in grade improve their performance in later years; that is, do students who are retained later "catch up" to their peers? Without better data, it will be difficult to determine in any direct manner if UC outreach programs are reaching their intended audiences. The University will be able to continue to monitor the characteristics of entrants, but will be unable to tie any changes in those characteristics to policy initiatives. Thus, without investing adequate resources to collecting accurate and comparable data, these kinds of questions will go unanswered and the State will not know if the almost \$40 billion investment in schools has led to the educational outcomes that these reforms promise.

This paper, and the conference convened to discuss it, explored the feasibility of collecting longitudinal survey data on students within California schools as a way of supplementing the information California currently collects on its students. Hopefully, this conference and this paper will be the start of a process that will lead to the institution of what we in this paper tentatively call the California Education Longitudinal Study (CELS).

I argue in this paper that collecting longitudinal data on students in California's elementary and secondary schools is not only feasible, but also advisable. I contend that tracking individual students throughout their educational careers, rather than relying on single snapshots of all students provided by administrative records, provides a more direct and understandable way of assessing the effectiveness of California's schools.

Using the NELS:88 data, I show examples of contextual data that can be collected and turned into information useful to educational policymakers and practitioners. Key variables include both cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of schooling, as well as educational attainment, college completion, and labor market success.

I also outline several key issues that will need to be addressed before a design for CELS can be established. These include:

- Linkages with other state and national data collection activities (e.g., CSIS);
- Data system design;
- The possible burden of data collection on students, parents, teachers, and administrators;
- The cost of CELS;
- Confidentiality; and
- Data management, including the use of the Internet

In the end, I maintain that these issues can be resolved to the State's and the public's satisfaction. I also contend that the benefits of having better and richer data on California's students outweigh the costs that will be associated with CELS.

The complete report will be available soon on the UC LMRI website (<http://lmri.ucsb.edu>).

UC LMRI AWARDS SMALL RESEARCH GRANT

The UC LMRI Faculty Steering Committee awarded one \$15,000 Small Research Grant from the October 1, 2001 Call for Proposals. A total of three small grant proposals and two dissertation grant proposals were received.

SMALL RESEARCH GRANT ABSTRACT

The Role of Parent and Student Perceptions in the Educational Achievement of Language Minority Students

ROSS D. PARKE, UC RIVERSIDE

The goal of the project is to gain a better understanding of the antecedents of educational attainment in language minority students. We propose to collect data on one hundred 8th grade Mexican-American students and their parents who are participating in an ongoing longitudinal study of economic stress. Variables to be examined include parental and student educational goals and values and possible discrepancies between parent and child scores. Second, we will examine the role of student perceptions of their school's acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity, with special attention to attitudes toward language minority students. Measures of ethnic identity, acculturation, and acculturative stress will be

treated as modifiers. School based records of grades, test scores, attendance, and drop outs will be available.

The proposed project will illuminate some of the processes accounting for variability in the educational outcomes of Mexican-American students and provide guidelines for social policy and preventative intervention efforts on behalf of language minority populations.

UC LMRI People In The News

UCLMRI Faculty Steering Committee members, **Robin Scarcella** (UC Irvine) and **Kris Gutiérrez** (UCLA), participated in a Symposium on the National Reading Panel Report and Teacher Preparation on October 27, 2001 at Manhattan Beach. The symposium was sponsored by the University of California, California State University, the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the Governor's Secretary of Education, and the CSU Institute for Education Reform.

Dr. Scarcella made a presentation, "Key Issues in Teaching English Language Learners," on July 19 to the Curriculum Commission, a subcommittee of the State Board of Education. She and former UC LMRI Director, **Richard Durán**, UC Santa Barbara, have been appointed to a testing committee for the California English Language Development Test (CELDT).

UCLMRI Faculty Steering Committee member, **Paula Levin** (UC San Diego), is serving as a member of the UC Faculty Planning Committee for the creation of the California Institute for Educational Leadership (CIEL), an effort on the part of UC to address issues of educational leadership within the State.

The Board on Children, Youth and Families of the Institute of Medicine, and the National Research Council (NRC) has appointed UC LMRI Director, **Russell Rumberger**, to the Committee for Increasing High School Students' Engagement and Motivation to Learn, chaired by Deborah Stipek of Stanford University. The committee will review available bodies of research from the fields of education, behavioral, and social sciences that are related to the academic engagement and motivation of urban students.

UC LMRI Annual Conference May 3-4, 2002 Berkeley, CA

"Rethinking the Teaching Profession for English Learners"

Featuring Keynote Speakers:

Lily Wong Fillmore, UC Berkeley
and Guadalupe Valdés, Stanford University

Call for Papers Deadline: February 15, 2002

Visit our web site for further details:
<http://lmri.ucsb.edu>

UC LMRI FACULTY STEERING COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

After serving on the UC LMRI since its inception in 1984, **Lily Wong Fillmore**, Professor of Education at UC Berkeley, has stepped down from the Faculty Steering Committee. Professor **Carolyn Huie Hofstetter**, Assistant Professor of Education at UC Berkeley, has been appointed to fill the remaining two years of Professor Fillmore's term.

BIOGRAPHY

Carolyn Huie Hofstetter is Assistant Professor of Education Policy, Organization, Measurement, and Evaluation at UC Berkeley. She received her Ph.D. in Education from UCLA in 1998 with an emphasis in social research focuses on and research special emphasis on assessments for learners and adult From 1994-98, she associate with the research methods. Her evaluation, assessment methodologies, with the validity of English language education students. worked as a research Center for the Study of Evaluation/National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CSE/CRESST). She was an assistant editor for the AERA journal, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis (EEPA). Her most recent publications include: "Evaluation Utilization Revisited," in International Handbook of Educational Evaluation (with M. Alkin, in press), and "Impact of Accommodation Strategies on English Language Learners' Test Performance," in Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice (with J. Abedi, et al., 2001).



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