ESL programs can facilitate economic and social mobility for non-native speakers

- Every year, thousands of new students enroll in ESL coursework at California’s community colleges
  - Some simply want to improve their English
  - Others are pursuing career credentials or a college degree

- Given statewide reforms to “credit ESL,” we need to know more about ESL programs and outcomes for degree-seeking students

- Research purpose: fill the gap of knowledge of ESL in the California context with data-driven insights
Reforms to ESL programs are well under way

- Assembly Bill (AB) 705 requires colleges to reform credit ESL programs so that they do not deter or delay educational progress
  - Colleges must maximize the probability that a student in credit ESL will enter and complete transfer-level English within three years
  - Utilize assessment and placement policies that are in line with maximizing probability
  - Achieve full implementation by Fall 2020

- Students affected:
  - Those with goals to seek a degree or transfer
  - Those who are enrolled in courses that will lead to transfer-level English
One-third of ESL students are degree-seeking

General ESL population

- 53% Non-sequence
- 47% Sequence

34% Sequence, degree-seeking
13% Sequence, not degree-seeking
Degree-seeking students are demographically diverse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Asian (47%)</th>
<th>Latino (23%)</th>
<th>White (19%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanent resident (38%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student visa (25%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>US citizen (23%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign HS diploma (41%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>US HS diploma (33%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other/Unknown (15%)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
There are important educational differences across racial/ethnic groups
Many colleges are moving away from traditional sequences

Traditional
- Introduction to College and English Skills
- Intermediate Reading
- Intermediate Writing
- High Intermediate Reading
- High Intermediate Writing
- Advanced Reading
- Advanced Writing
- Freshman English Composition and Reading

Integrated
- Introduction to College and English Skills
- Intermediate Reading and Writing
- High Intermediate Reading and Writing
- Advanced Reading and Writing
- Integrated College Reading and Writing (UC:CSU, DA)
- Freshman English Composition and Reading
Some ESL sequences are lengthy…

Levels below transfer-level English

- 9+: 6%
- 8: 8%
- 7: 14%
- 6: 25%
- 5: 17%
- 4: 16%
- 3: 11%
- 2: 2%
- 1: 2%

Percent levels below transfer-level English.
...but most students start only a few levels below transfer-level English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels below transfer-level English</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9+</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Colleges
Degree-seeking students
...but most students start only a few levels below transfer-level English, especially US HS grads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels below college-level English</th>
<th>Colleges</th>
<th>Degree-Seeking Students (US HS Grads)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9+</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
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<td>2%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students who start ESL sequences at higher levels are more likely to complete transfer-level English.
Three key ESL features increase the likelihood of students completing transfer-level English

- **Transferable ESL courses**
  - Help students make tangible progress toward degree/transfer goals
  - Emphasize the rigor of ESL as college-level foreign language work

- **Integrated ESL courses**
  - More likely to receive “just-in-time” support with necessary skills (e.g. grammar)
  - Designed with transfer-level English course objectives in mind
  - Alignment of reading and writing assignments

- **ESL sequence leading directly to transfer-level English**
  - Provides language support throughout the path to transfer-level English
Several ESL reforms seem especially promising
  • Shorter ESL sequences
  • Transferable ESL courses
  • Integrated approaches to teaching English skills
  • Direct pathways from ESL to transfer-level English

Seamless connections between non-credit and credit ESL

Monitoring assessment and placement policies will ensure accuracy, effectiveness, and equity

All ESL students should be encouraged to pursue a degree or transfer
English as a Second Language in California’s Community Colleges

November 22, 2019

Olga Rodriguez, Sarah Bohn, Laura Hill, Bonnie Brooks

Supported with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the College Futures Foundation, and the Sutton Family Fund
Thank you!

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.
The goal of the ESL analysis is to better understand how to maximize the probability that degree and/or transfer-seeking students will complete transfer-level English composition or ESL equivalent, if on the ESL pathway within three years, or within one year, if on the mainstream English pathway.

The population of interest are not just those students who entered the credit ESL path but also those students who might have entered the credit ESL path, but instead entered the mainstream English path.

AB 705 applies specifically to ESL students who are degree/transfer-seeking in credit ESL courses.
ELL/ESL Throughput Data File Description

• Statewide data file from MIS
• 92 cohorts of students tracked forward for up to three years (throughput cohorts)
  – 555,625 noncredit students
  – 328,403 credit students
• Focal sample time period 2004 through 2018
• Further disaggregated by student type and/or degree/transfer-seeking status
The Importance of Ed Goal
AB 705 only applies to ESL students who are degree/transfer-seeking. Throughput is highest for degree/transfer seeking credit ESL students – indicating that Ed Goal is aligned with their intended outcomes. Colleges can use Ed Goal (or similar data) to identify those ESL students to which AB 705 applies (i.e., degree and transfer seeking students).
ESL Student Types
Degree/Transfer-Seeking ESL Student Types That Are Affected by AB 705

1. English Language Learner (ELL) U.S. High School Graduates
2. International Students (IS)
3. Non-U.S. High School Graduates, Non-International Students

37% of ESL students fall into one of these three student types

For more on AB 705 go to: https://assessment.cccco.edu/ab-705-implementation
Relative Sizes of All First-Time English Language Arts Pathways in 2017-18

Non-ELL Students: Mainstream English, 252,096

Students with Non-Degree/Transfer Goals: Noncredit ESL Students, 42,331

ELL US HS Graduates: Mainstream English, 16,468

Other Degree/Transfer focused ESL Students, 1,665

Other Degree/Transfer focused ESL Students, 9,158

ELL US HS Graduates: Other Degree/Transfer focused ESL Students, 1,665

International Students, 3,965

ELL...
Relative Sizes of First-Time English Language Arts Pathways in 2017-18 for ELL/ESL Students

- Students with Non-Degree/Transfer Goals: Noncredit ESL Students, 42,331
- ELL US HS Graduates: Mainstream English, 16,468
- Other Degree/Transfer focused ESL Students: Credit ESL students, 5,573
- Students with Non-Degree/Transfer Goals: Credit ESL students, 9,158
- Other Degree/Transfer focused ESL Students: Noncredit ESL Students, 3,033
- ELL US HS Graduates: Credit ESL students, 1,607
- International Students: Credit ESL students, 1,566
- ELL US HS Graduates: Noncredit ESL Students, 1,165
About 87% of ELL U.S. High School graduates enter mainstream English at the community college.
U.S. High School Graduates
U.S. High School Graduates’ Transfer-level 3-year English Throughput by Years in U.S. High School, ELL Designation, and Community College English Language Arts Pathway (excludes US Citizens)

- ELL in HS, ESL in CC
- Not ELL designated in HS, ESL in CC
- ELL in HS, English in College
- 1 yr. post-AB 705 TLC throughput (projected)

*One-year post-AB 705 is weighted by HS GPA
International Students
International Student TLE Throughput Rates are Higher the Higher they Enroll in the Sequence

- ESL path = 28,584
- English path = 16,958
Majority of International Students on English Path Start at Transfer Level

5% of international students start at the 5+ levels below ESL path.
0.5% of international students start at the 4 levels below ESL path.
28% of international students start at the 3 levels below ESL path.
3% of international students start at the 3 levels below English path.
27% of international students start at the 2 levels below ESL path.
19% of international students start at the 2 levels below English path.
25% of international students start at the 1 level below ESL path.
25% of international students start at the 1 level below English path.
1% of international students start at the Transfer level.

ESL path = 28,584
English path = 16,958
Throughput Higher on English Path Across All International Student Language Groups

ESL path = 28,584
English path = 16,958
Other Degree/Transfer-seeking ESL Students
Non-U.S. High School Graduates, Non-International
Non-U.S. High School Graduates, Non-International Students

• Do some colleges have higher throughput rates for ESL students who do not have U.S. high school diplomas and who are not international students?
• If so, what is driving the difference in throughput rates?
College’s Average ESL Starting Level and Throughput Rate are Highly Correlated. The higher a student starts in the sequence – the higher the throughput in 3 years.

N = 47 colleges with 30+ students of this type
Credit ESL students with no diploma
Non-U.S. High School Graduates, Non-International Students

• To what extent are demographic differences among the groups of degree/transfer-seeking non-U.S. high school graduates and non-international ESL students related to the observed differences among colleges in throughput rates?
Controlling for ethnicity, age and citizenship – the higher a student is placed, the higher their throughput

N = 47 colleges with 30+ students of this type – no U.S. HS diploma
Adj. R² = 0.68
Independent Variable = Starting ESL level
Controls = age, ethnicity, language group, citizenship status
What conclusions can we draw about ESL?

• Educational Goal
  - A student's self-declared educational goal is a good reflection of their intended goal and is reflected in their outcomes.

• U.S. High School Graduates
  - 87% of English Language Learners who graduate high school enroll in mainstream English at the community college.
  - U.S. high school graduates who take the English path realize much higher transfer-level English completion rates than those who take the ESL path, even after controlling for differences in high school GPA and years of participation in a U.S. high school.

• International Students:
  - Majority of international students start in ESL (63%).
  - Throughput is higher on the English path across all international student groups
  - Both paths maximize completion from two levels below and above, however, the higher a student starts in the pathway, the higher their throughput.

• Non-U.S. High School Graduates, Non-International Students
  - Throughput rates for this group vary widely across colleges, however, across all colleges, the higher a student is placed, the higher their throughput.
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