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How Next-Generation Standards and Assessments Can Foster Success for California's English Learners

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Introduction

California's implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and its governing state role in one of the Race to the Top comprehensive academic assessment consortia, present a major opportunity to dig deeply into the challenges of fair and accurate assessment of the academic performance of its English Learners (ELs).

Moreover, recent state legislation (AB 124) requires the state to revise its English Language Development (ELD) standards to better reflect the language demands found in new English Language Arts standards. This in turn requires moving to a next-generation ELD assessment based on those revised standards. How will California conceptualize the academic uses of language for its English Learners? How will its ELD standards correspond to the common core standards? What will this mean for EL instruction and assessment?

California cannot afford to ignore or postpone questions of how its K-12 educational system will support these students' success. With over 1.4 million current English Learners, another 800,000 former, reclassified English Learners, and over 300,000 initially English-fluent linguistic minority stu-

Executive Summary

California cannot afford to ignore or postpone questions of how to support the academic success of English Learners (ELs) in the state's K-12 education system. Language-minority students already represent more than 40 percent of the state's K-12 public education students, and their share of enrollment is growing. How well California serves these students will help determine the vitality of the state's economy and society in the years ahead.

In this policy brief, Robert Linquanti and Kenji Hakuta argue that next-generation college- and career-ready standards signal a fundamental shift in the expectations for sophisticated language practices required of *all* students. This shift has enormous systemic implications for how we assess ELs' academic performance; what English Language Development (ELD) standards emphasize; how we instruct and assess ELD to better develop ELs' academic uses of language; how teachers instruct and students learn both language and content; and how the state can design more nuanced, responsive accountability policies and systems.

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Executive Summary (Cont.)

California's implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), its revision of State ELD standards, and its governing state role in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) all present opportunities to move forward on the challenges of fairly and accurately assessing the academic performance of English Learners.

Linquanti and Hakuta argue that:

1. The state should address the correspondence between its ELD standards and its content standards *strategically*, to identify and prioritize aspects of the CCSS that maximize the potential for new assessments to attend to and measure language that is most relevant to academic content constructs.
2. The next-generation academic content assessments now being developed by SBAC must move toward gauging the use of academic language of all students and reporting on their performance.
3. Educators need to shift how they provide both ELD and core content instruction so that EL students have greater opportunities to learn language through content, and to learn content using language.

The authors offer concrete recommendations throughout the brief to help educational leaders and policymakers move toward these goals.

As California implements next-generation standards, instruction, assessments, and accountability, our state is uniquely situated – both in its needs and its resources – to help advance these interrelated efforts in directions that are more meaningful, relevant, and effective for its many EL and language-minority students, as well as for its teachers, parents and other stakeholders.

dents in the state (California Department of Education, 2012a), this combined group constitutes over 41% of the state's K-12 public education population.

This brief contends that next-generation college- and career-ready standards signal a fundamental shift in the expectations for sophisticated language use[1] required of *all* students. This shift has enormous systemic implications for how we assess ELs' academic performance; what ELD standards emphasize; how we instruct and assess ELD to better develop ELs' academic uses of language; how teachers instruct and students learn both language and content; and how the state can design more nuanced, responsive accountability policies and systems.

In particular, this brief argues that:

- the state should address the correspondence between its ELD standards and its content standards *strategically* – that it identify and prioritize aspects of the new standards that maximize the potential of attending to and measuring language that is most relevant to academic content constructs;
- next-generation academic content assessments must move toward gauging the use of academic language of *all* students and reporting on their performance; and that
- educators need to shift how they provide both ELD and core content instruction so that EL students have greater opportunities to learn language through content, and to learn content using language.

Before delving into these arguments, we first lay out some fundamental considerations that often go unstated in policy discussions regarding English learners.

Fundamental Considerations Regarding English Learners

Dynamic subgroup membership: Unlike designations for other subgroups of students, which are based on fairly stable student characteristics, English Learner status is by design *temporary*: indeed, ELs are *expected* to leave the category as a result of effective, specialized language instruction and the academic support services to which they are legally entitled.[2] In California, defining EL status is complicated and varies across districts. While initial identification is based solely on language minority background and English language proficiency (ELP),

redesignation processes incorporate both linguistic and academic performance standards and utilize both state and local criteria. This complicated process causes several problems. First, the most linguistically and academically accomplished students exit the EL category over time, while those not making sufficient progress remain and are joined by newly-entering ELs, who are by definition at low ELD levels. This inherent "revolving door" effect systematically skews membership toward lower-performing students and systematically under-represents growth as reported by sub-group statistics, thereby undermining meaningful accountability. (Linquanti, 2011; Wolf et al., 2008; National Research Council, 2011a; Working Group on ELL Policy, 2010). Moreover, while assessment and accountability systems usually treat the EL category as binary (a student is EL or not), ELs are very diverse and exhibit a wide range of language and academic competencies, both in English and their primary language (Capps et al., 2005; Taylor, Stecher, O'Day, Naftel, & Le Floch, 2010). Understanding such diversity is essential to successfully build on EL students' strengths, and to monitor and meet their academic and linguistic needs. Finally, even within California, reclassification criteria and processes vary such that a student who is designated EL in one district would have already exited the EL sub-group if educated in a neighboring district.

Developmental relationship between language and content learning: English language proficiency is foundational to ELs' academic success. An EL's English proficiency level clearly affects her ability to learn academic content in English and to demonstrate academic knowledge and skills on assessment events carried out in English – this is in fact the defining characteristic of an EL in federal law (Section 9101(25)(D) of ESEA). Contrary to popular assumptions, it takes 4-7 years on average for most English Learners to develop the academic English capacities they need to effectively handle grade-level content demands, with the actual time required depending on such factors as their age/grade on entry to U.S. schools, initial English language proficiency, and prior educational experiences (Cook, Linquanti, Chinen & Jung, 2012; Cook & Zhao, 2011; Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000; Thompson, 2012). Moreover, language proficiency becomes increasingly complex as students move through school. The kind of proficiency required for academic work in Grade 2, for example, is very different from that required in Grade 9, as the language demands of academic subject matter increase substantially with grade level. Even reclassified former ELs may need opportunities and support to continue developing their academic language proficiency and content area knowledge and skills as they contend with increasingly complex cognitive and linguistic demands.

ELP and academic assessment: Academic assessments that fail to take account of ELs' English language proficiency may not adequately measure their content area knowledge and skills.[3] If an EL student performs poorly on a content assessment, educators and policymakers need to know whether this performance is due to: 1) insufficient English language proficiency to demonstrate content knowledge; 2) a lack of content knowledge or opportunity to learn content; 3) construct-irrelevant interference (e.g., unnecessarily complex language in the assessment); or 4) other sources of bias or error (e.g., cultural distance or rater misinterpretation).

Policy Implications

What are the policy implications of these considerations? First, since so many academic tasks are mediated by language practices, aspects of language that are most relevant to performing sophisticated content area tasks should be made explicit to teachers and students through the standards, assessments, instructional support materials, and teacher training and professional development. Content-relevant language use must also be fostered across the curriculum, formatively assessed as part of pedagogical practice, and ultimately measured and reported in summative assessments. Indeed, the new standards (see below) make the language demands of the content areas more salient than ever (see Understanding Language (2012), Bunch, Pimentel, and Kibler (2012), Moschkovich (2012), Lee, Quinn and Valdes (2012)).

Second, it is essential to disaggregate ELs' academic performance by their English-language proficiency level, and to examine their English-language proficiency growth over time in the

education system. Setting and examining benchmarks -- both linguistic and academic -- for the progress of current ELs allows us to identify more quickly those EL students not making progress, and to support their acceleration so that they are not placed at risk of becoming long-term English learners. This benchmarking will ensure that these students continue to progress both linguistically and academically.

Third, if our intention is to examine long-term outcomes and trends of EL performance to determine educational program effectiveness, we need to stabilize the EL cohort in order to portray long-term results more accurately. Defining and reporting the total "ever-EL" population, including current ELs and reclassified former ELs, would help ensure that educational systems receive a full accounting of their effectiveness in preparing for college and careers all students who began as English learners (Working Group on ELL Policy, 2011; Hopkins, Thompson, Linquanti, Hakuta, & August [under review]; Saunders & Marcelletti, 2012). This ever-EL group would not replace targeted attention and reporting of progress for current ELs; rather it would add to our current picture of system performance and enable us to craft educational decisions for ELs based on more accurate and long-term information about student learning.

With these fundamental considerations in mind, we now turn to a discussion how California's new Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects, as well as its Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, change the educational landscape with regard to language, content and English learners. We believe that understanding and acting on these changes will ultimately benefit not only ELs in the state, but will also foster more productive policies and practices across school systems and for all the state's students.

The Language Demands of the Next-Generation Academic Standards

As noted above, the new standards bring out the language necessary to attain academic content proficiency far more explicitly than has been the case in prior standards. The Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics, as well as current draft Next-Generation Science Standards, signal a fundamental shift in the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students must develop in order to be college- and career-ready in the 21st century. Nowhere is this shift more obvious than in the sophisticated command of language that students will need in the instructional environment of the new standards. While previous standards were largely silent on the kinds of language demands placed on students in academic subject areas, the new standards make them explicit. Consider this descriptive portrait of students meeting the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards:

> "Students can, without significant scaffolding, *comprehend and evaluate complex texts* across a range of types and disciplines, and they can *construct effective arguments* and *convey intricate or multifaceted information*. Likewise, students are able independently to *discern a speaker's key points, request clarification, and ask relevant questions*. They *build* on others' ideas, *articulate* their own ideas, and *confirm they have been understood*" (Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, p. 7, emphasis added).

The new Mathematics Standards place similar importance on students' ability to use language effectively to perform and communicate their understanding of mathematical practices:

> "Mathematically proficient students understand and use stated assumptions, definitions, and previously established results in *constructing arguments*. They make conjectures and *build a logical progression of statements* to explore the truth of their conjectures…. They *justify their conclusions, communicate them to others, and respond to the arguments of others*" (Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, p. 6, emphasis added).

Although the development of Next-Generation Science Standards is in progress (Achieve, 2012), the final version adopted will undoubtedly make clear that students need to engage in similarly sophisticated uses of language to enact scientific inquiries, explana-

tions, and arguments. Indeed, among the essential science practices delineated in the National Research Council framework guiding the science standards' development are *constructing explanations* and designing solutions; *engaging in argument* from evidence; and obtaining, evaluating, and *communicating information* (National Research Council, 2011b).

In fact, the CCSS specify to an unprecedented degree the kinds of academic uses of language that all students need in order to perform content area tasks and demonstrate subject matter mastery. For example, the K-5 reading standards require students to manifest their knowledge and comprehension through explaining, describing, comparing and contrasting, arguing, giving definitions, giving recounts, summarizing and paraphrasing, and explaining cause-and-effect. Third-graders are expected to "recognize and observe differences between the conventions of spoken and written standard English," while 11th-graders are expected to "propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence." The mathematical practices that undergird CCSS math standards likewise expect students to "construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others," essentially viewing language not just as a vehicle for cognitive representation, but also for discourse within the community of learners.

In addition to explicitly defining K-12 listening, speaking, reading, and writing standards in English Language Arts (ELA), the CCSS in ELA also define literacy standards for history/social studies, science, and technical subjects at the secondary level. There are clear academic literacy and language practices inherent in these standards, including analyzing and summarizing hypotheses and explanations; following directions exactly; inferring relationships among terms, processes and concepts; and comparing and contrasting information.

The implications of these language uses in content learning are *systemic*, and should not be viewed as confined to alignment efforts of state ELD standards with CCSS/ELA, as specified in current state law (AB 124). Across these content areas, all students will now be expected to engage with more complex texts and to carry out more language-rich tasks in discipline-appropriate ways during both learning and assessment situations.

In sum, competence in a subject area necessarily includes competence in the language uses of that subject area. For example, the CCSS imply that students (and their teachers) cannot be truly proficient in mathematics without being able to communicate mathematically, and about mathematics.

Policy Implications

The seismic shifts within the academic standards will require comparable changes in education policies. Teachers, materials, assessments, and systems must shift, because promoting language development is no longer the exclusive province of the ELD or the English Language Arts teacher – it is the responsibility of all teachers. Policies must ensure that teacher preparation, accreditation, and professional development equip teachers to support academic language practices and uses in the content areas, for all students and for ELs in particular.

The present certification requirements governing the California Teacher of English Learners (CTEL) and ESL/ELD endorsements must be carefully examined to ensure their alignment with the language demands of CCSS. All teachers must be willing and prepared to model, teach and provide students rich, daily opportunities to engage with and develop the intensive language practices of their academic disciplines. These practices must extend far beyond specialized vocabulary and sentence-level structures, and should socialize students to the discourse patterns and registers (forms of talk) that learners of science, mathematics, English language arts, etc. use to *interpret* what is spoken and read, *interact* with adults and peers, and *present* their knowledge and thinking to others -- in effect, to *act using language* in these academic settings (Quinn, Valdes, & Lee, in press).

Policies around curriculum materials and state materials adoption criteria must also ensure that appropriate attention is paid to supporting the language demands inherent in the content standards. Finally, policies must foster school and district leadership practices

necessary to support and manage the collaboration between ELD and content teachers that is inherently called for by the standards.

Next-Generation English Language Development Standards: Why (and How) Correspondence to Common Core State Standards Must Be Strategic

Current California law (AB 124) requires that the state ELD standards be aligned to California's adoption of the Common Core ELA standards, a process that is under way (California Department of Education, 2012b).[4] In addition, federal regulation in several places requires "correspondence" between state ELD standards and CCSS, including regulations on state assurances necessary for applications for flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and in the most recent Enhanced Assessment Grant competition for funding to develop next-generation ELD assessments.

"Correspondence" has many interpretations, but we argue that it must, at a minimum, relate the ELD standards to the most high-leverage language uses contained in the CCSS, starting with the key language demands described earlier. The new content standards substantiate a view of language proficiency far beyond vocabulary, control of grammatical forms and native-like fluency. They call for high levels of cognitive engagement, metacognitive and metalinguistic skills, and academic discourse within the disciplines. Just as these competencies cannot be developed using a traditional, transmission-model subject matter pedagogy, neither can they be fostered with a language pedagogy that privileges accuracy and correctness at the expense of meaning-making and communicative performance.

Like all students, English Learners need opportunities and support to use language effectively in academic content areas. In order for these opportunities and support to be possible, next-generation ELD standards cannot be conceived of or presented as tangentially related, "junior ELA" standards. Rather, they must be thoroughly grounded in and strategically correspond to next-generation content standards. As Van Lier and Walqui (2012) make clear in characterizing different pedagogical and linguistic approaches to language learning, the new standards are far more compatible with a view of language that is an embedded part of instructional activity *(language as action)*, rather than as a collection of forms and functions to be taught in isolation.

We also argue that it is critical to address the language demands of all subject areas, and not just limit the focus of ELD standards to ELA, as California law requires. The language of mathematics instruction and science instruction differ in important ways, and this should be equally reflected in California's new ELD standards.[5] We argue that a full correspondence of the content standards to the ELD standards would highlight both the commonalities as well as divergences in the language uses across these disciplines.

Policy Implications

Current ELD standards need to be reconceptualized so that they uncover and delineate the linguistic demands embedded within the new standards, including foundational (sometimes referred to as "social" or "basic conversational") as well as general and discipline-specific academic language uses. This includes specifying key language functions and discourse practices that students must be able to carry out in discipline-appropriate ways, such as obtaining information, demonstrating understanding, constructing explanations, and engaging in arguments. Such target language uses should be expressed in meaningful progressions that help teachers appropriately scaffold and support students in continually building the linguistic capacities needed to develop sophisticated content knowledge, skills and abilities. If done well, these progressions can also guide ELD assessment developers to design appropriate language tasks that operationalize and measure growth of these target language uses. They can also help content assessment developers better understand and modulate the language demands of academic test items and performance tasks. And they can inform the formative assessment resources that the comprehensive assessment consortia are to provide for teachers of English learners (see Bailey & Wolf, 2012).

Next-Generation Assessment Systems for English Learners: Exploring Disciplinary Academic Language Uses for the Benefit of All Students

Much of the discussion about the academic uses of language that are brought to life in the new standards applies as much to native English speakers as it does to ELs. Many students (and indeed teachers) will be challenged to engage in the kinds of intensive language practices that are articulated across the disciplines within the standards.

Students don't typically come to school already able to use the language of mathematics or social studies or science. They need to be apprenticed into learning these language practices at school through strong instruction. While such language uses may be particularly challenging for ELs and non-standard English speakers to learn, the discipline-specific discourses and the higher-level communicative skills embedded in the standards imply new learning even for students entering school as standard English speakers. These challenges, we argue, need to be turned into opportunities to invigorate the language capacities of all students, and especially ELs, who could most benefit from pedagogical support that leverages and augments their linguistic resources.

One way to bring attention to this opportunity is to draw out information from those portions of the new content assessments that most directly elicit complex language uses inextricably related to more complex focal content constructs. The strongest form of this proposition is that such discipline-specific social and academic language competencies delineated (or implied) in next-generation academic content standards can and should be called out, measured and reported for *all students* -- English Learners, reclassified former English Learners, standard English learners, and monolingual standard English speakers -- *as part* of the Race To the Top academic content assessment systems (in California's case, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium or SBAC). This operationalization and measurement of academic language uses could be attempted first on a pilot basis, as part of the performance-based tasks, or as part of SBAC classroom-based formative assessment practices and tools. However it is done, we believe that it must be attempted because the new content standards clearly (and we believe, rightly) emphasize these discipline-specific language practices.

Bailey and Wolf (2012) explore this potential complementary measurement of language use for ELs starting from an ELD standards and assessment perspective. They sketch a scenario where ELD standards and assessments delineate precursor language progressions; for more advanced levels of language proficiency, the new academic achievement assessments "develop and pilot novel options of assessing language related to the CCSS." Doing so, they note, would also require "the combined expertise of ESL and content teachers… to develop and implement local-level performative and formative assessments of language and content knowledge during authentic content instruction, activities and practices" (p.5). This collaboration, they also maintain, would better communicate throughout the system that EL students' English language proficiency is to be developed in conjunction with content learning in content classes.

Attempting to use the academic assessment system to examine discipline-specific language uses would respond to a steadily growing call to measure academic language uses for all students, yet it also raises significant challenges. For example, how do we ensure the language competencies posited in the content standards are truly integral to demonstrating mastery of subject matter content? Can we avoid generating unnecessary linguistic complexity for students in assessing their language use related to academic tasks? Regarding ELs in particular, how might we align the assessment infrastructure to clearly and coherently articulate where the "threshold" is crossed from ESL/ELD precursor language progressions to language constructs found in the content standards (Abedi & Linquanti, 2012; Bailey & Wolf, 2012)? Questions like these need to be answered in order to ensure the validity of inferences about students' language practices drawn from the new academic content assessment system.

Given the complexities described, we envision a staged approach that first focuses on developing teachers' capacities to create language-rich environments that foster students' language uses within academic subject

matter teaching and learning. This capacity building should also leverage the assessment consortia's formative assessment resources (see below), while knowledge is gained and more summative assessment approaches are researched and developed via rapid prototyping over the next two to three years.

The special role of formative assessment

As suggested at several points in this brief, formative assessment practices have enormous potential to strengthen teachers' capacities to developmentally stage or "scaffold" ELs' language and content learning.

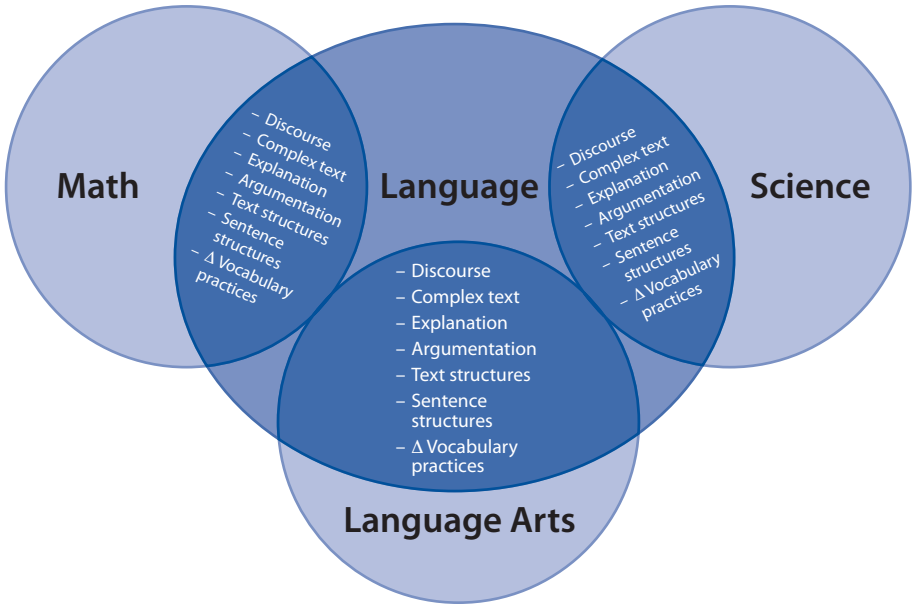
Formative assessment is "a *process* used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes" (Heritage, 2010, p.9). It occurs *within* instruction through informal observations, conversations, and other carefully planned, instructionally embedded methods that allow teachers to gather evidence of student learning, spur student reflection, and offer hints and cues to move students forward in understanding and acquiring skills and knowledge. As Heritage notes (based on Black & Wiliam, 1998), effective formative assessment practice has at least the following three components: (1) teacher adjustment of instruction in response to assessment evidence; (2) feedback students receive about their learning; and (3) student participation in the process through self-assessment.

We contend that formative assessment – *for* and *as* learning – can become the most important element of an effective assessment system for ELs *precisely because it is anchored in direct, in-the-moment communication* between teacher and student (as well as between students, and via student self-reflection) that is richly and authentically concerned with specific content area work. It is precisely these kinds of meaningful interactions that increase productive, discipline-specific language uses in the service of content learning, and also enhance the communication skills for teaching and learning of *both* teachers and students. In fact, viewed from within a teaching and learning paradigm rather than within a measurement paradigm (Heritage, 2010), formative assessment practices constitute a key means of access and engagement for ELs' content learning and language development.

Next-Generation Instruction: What Implications Do the New Standards Have for Instructing English Learners?

The Understanding Language Initiative (2012), which brings together leading authors of the new content standards with experts in second language acquisition and EL education, contends that the overlap between language and content has dramatically increased, particularly as a result of the focus on higher-order language uses in the new standards. In addition, the Initiative argues that this overlap brings with it an urgent need to attend to the particulars of instructional discourse in the disciplines. This interrelationship of language and content is represented in Figure 1 below.

FIGURE 1. Schema of the interrelationship of language and academic content (Understanding Language, 2012).



This overlapping and integrated view of where language development opportunities and responsibilities reside has major implications for the instruction of ELs. At present, second language development is seen largely as the responsibility of the ESL/ELD teacher, while content development is that of the subject area teacher. Given the new standards' explicitness in how language must be used to enact disciplinary knowledge and skills, such a strict division of labor is no longer viable. Content area teachers must understand and leverage the language and literacy practices found in science, mathematics, history/social studies, and the language arts to enhance students' engagement in language-rich classrooms that fuel both their academic and linguistic development. ESL/ELD teachers must cultivate a deeper knowledge of the disciplinary language that EL students need and help their students to grow in using it to carry out disciplinary practices. Far greater collaboration and sharing of expertise are needed among ESL/ELD teachers and content area teachers at the secondary level. As Bailey & Wolf (2012) note, a close collaboration involving the combined expertise of ESL and content teachers is needed "to develop and implement local-level performative and formative assessments of language and content knowledge during authentic content instruction, activities and practices."

At the elementary level, far greater alignment and integration are needed across ESL/ELD and subject matter learning objectives, curriculum, and lesson plans that teachers in self-contained classrooms prepare and deliver. EL students reaching a "threshold" level of English language proficiency must be effectively supported by content area teachers to develop interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive uses of language through carefully structured interactions within a community of learners (Valdes, 2011; Walqui & Heritage, 2012).

Next-Generation Accountability Policies and Systems: Improving System Capacity and Responsiveness

The foregoing discussion provides direction for how California designs next-generation accountability policies and systems for English learners. Even as the reauthorization of ESEA remains stalled, California has the opportunity to innovate and challenge the current system through statutory federal waiver options, and to explore and promote ideas that can influence reauthorization. In particular, the state can build on the kinds of methods and techniques recently highlighted by the national Title III evaluation supplemental report (Cook, Linquanti, Chinen & Jung, 2012) for validating key levels of English language proficiency in relationship to subject matter performance, examining time frames for attaining these linguistic benchmarks, and positing academic progress benchmarks in relation to students' ELD level and time in the state educational system. California can also develop reporting structures that stabilize the EL cohort to show more accurately the long-term impact of educational systems on EL progress and attainment through the end of high school to better portray college- and career-readiness (ELL Policy Working Group, 2010). These steps can bring together with much greater coherence the assessment and accountability frameworks of ESEA's Title III and Title I. The state can also support the development and dissemination of local evaluation and accountability frameworks to examine cohorts of EL students' progress over time and, as a governing state in SBAC, ensure that formative assessment processes and practices are substantially directed towards helping teachers better understand and respond to the linguistic and cognitive resources of English learners at all stages of English language development. Central to all accountability efforts that the state undertakes should be a focus on building teacher and administrator capacity to cultivate students' discipline-specific language uses in content area instruction, and to ensure ELD is situated to strategically support these discipline-specific language uses. Moreover, the state can work to ensure that content and ELD test developers identify meaningful overlaps between content and language expectations to strengthen the linkages -- and predictive validity -- between both assessment systems.

Moving Forward

While we have made recommendations throughout this policy brief, we recap the most salient ones here:

Assessment and Accountability in Content Areas:

- Through its ongoing revision of state assessment and accountability policies and practices, the California Department of Education (CDE), in conjunction with the California state legislature, can more clearly articulate expected linguistic and academic growth expectations and more carefully examine and report on ELs' English language proficiency growth over time in the education system, as well as their academic progress in relation to ELD level and time. The state can also stabilize the EL cohort in reporting long-term outcomes to give a fairer and more accurate portrait of the population's performance over time. In addition, it can define, examine, and report on long-term English learner populations – *not to stigmatize students* that have been least well-served by the system, but rather to focus support for increased capacity of, and to hold accountable, the adults who serve these students.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC):

- As a governing state within SBAC, California should work with like-minded states to advocate for the Consortium to begin planning now to measure and report for *all* students, as part of the content assessments, those sophisticated language uses inextricably related to more language-rich content constructs found throughout the new standards. This can be phased in through the strategic use of professional development and formative assessment practices and tools that strengthen teacher capacity to foster students' language practices within the content areas; it can then be ramped up through developmental research and rapid prototyping of performance tasks in interim/benchmark and summative assessments in two to three years after SBAC's launch. Moreover, SBAC member states can urge academic content assessment developers to use CCSSO's ELP framework and other analytic documents that delineate the language demands found in the new content standards. This will guide them in exploring methods for measuring those language uses most central to academic content constructs.

ELD Standards and Assessments:

- The CDE needs to ensure that next-generation ELD standards are reconceptualized to uncover and delineate the high-leverage social and academic language uses found within and across all of the new content standards, including language arts, math and science. Although current legislation requires the state to align its ELD standards to the new ELA standards, nothing in the legislation prohibits the state from further aligning its ELD standards to the specific language demands of these additional content areas. These standards will drive ELD instruction and curriculum, as well as the next-generation ELD assessment system, including the definition of who is an English learner and what language capacities are key for all teachers to focus on. Expanding the alignment is needed to strengthen the validity, rigor and utility of these ELD standards.

Teacher Preparation:

- Given the fundamental responsibility of all teachers to foster ELs' sophisticated social and academic language uses and discourse under next-generation academic standards, the California Teacher Credentialing Commission (CTCC) should examine current certification requirements governing CTEL and ESL/ELD endorsements to ensure they reflect the enhanced pedagogical practices that content area teachers and ESL/ELD teachers will need to foster students' language uses within and across disciplines.

- Institutions of higher education will also need to ensure that those delivering teacher preparation programs effectively equip aspiring and novice teachers using updated conceptions of second language development and sheltered content instruction, particularly via apprenticeships that foster pedagogical practices for developing language through content, and learning content via language- and discourse-rich classroom practices.

- School districts must also retool their professional development practices and systems to help support new and experienced teachers

in the "productive struggle" toward more effective instruction and formative assessment regarding language and content (Santos, Darling-Hammond, & Cheuk, 2012). They should not do so in isolation. A growing number of cross-district collaboratives and teacher networks facilitated by web technologies are grappling with key challenges of instructional practice raised by next-generation standards. Such collaboration across districts can help staff explore and refine effective professional development strategies.

As it implements next-generation standards, instruction, assessments, and accountability, California is uniquely situated – both in its needs and its resources – to help advance these interrelated efforts in directions that are more meaningful, relevant, and effective for its many EL and language minority students, as well as for its teachers, parents and other stakeholders. How well it does so will determine, to a large extent, the vitality of the state's economy and society in the years ahead.

Endnotes

The authors thank Gary Cook, Patricia Gándara and Jennifer O'Day for their helpful insights and suggestions. All errors remaining are those of the authors.

[1] The demands of language in academic content refer to any language, not just to English. The uses of language for students and teachers are the same whether students are in English-only or bilingual/dual immersion programs.

[2] English learners are language minority students not sufficiently proficient in English to be able to benefit adequately from regular mainstream instruction and demonstrate their knowledge and abilities using English.

[3] Note that issues of measurement are distinct from issues of accountability. From a measurement perspective, knowing an ELL's ELP level (particularly with respect to literacy) is essential to judging the validity of the inferences from the assessment. With respect to educator accountability, however, there may still be a rationale for including such results to determine school or district effectiveness, particularly if ELLs have not been supported to progress in their English-language proficiency over time (see Cook et al., 2012).

[4] Federal law Section 3113(B)(2) refers to student academic standards in Section 1111(B)(1), which encompasses ELA, math and science. We believe that, by this criterion, California's AB 124 does not fully meet the requirements of current Federal law.

[5] Indeed the Council of Chief State School Officers has just developed a framework for the creation and evaluation of ELP standards that correspond to the CCSS and next-generation science standards, and this document contains a separate analysis of the language demands of these content areas (CCSSO, 2012). This framework can help identify the language demands in these content standards.

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