

Is Bilingual Education Shaping Later-life Outcomes? Evidence from California

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Motivation

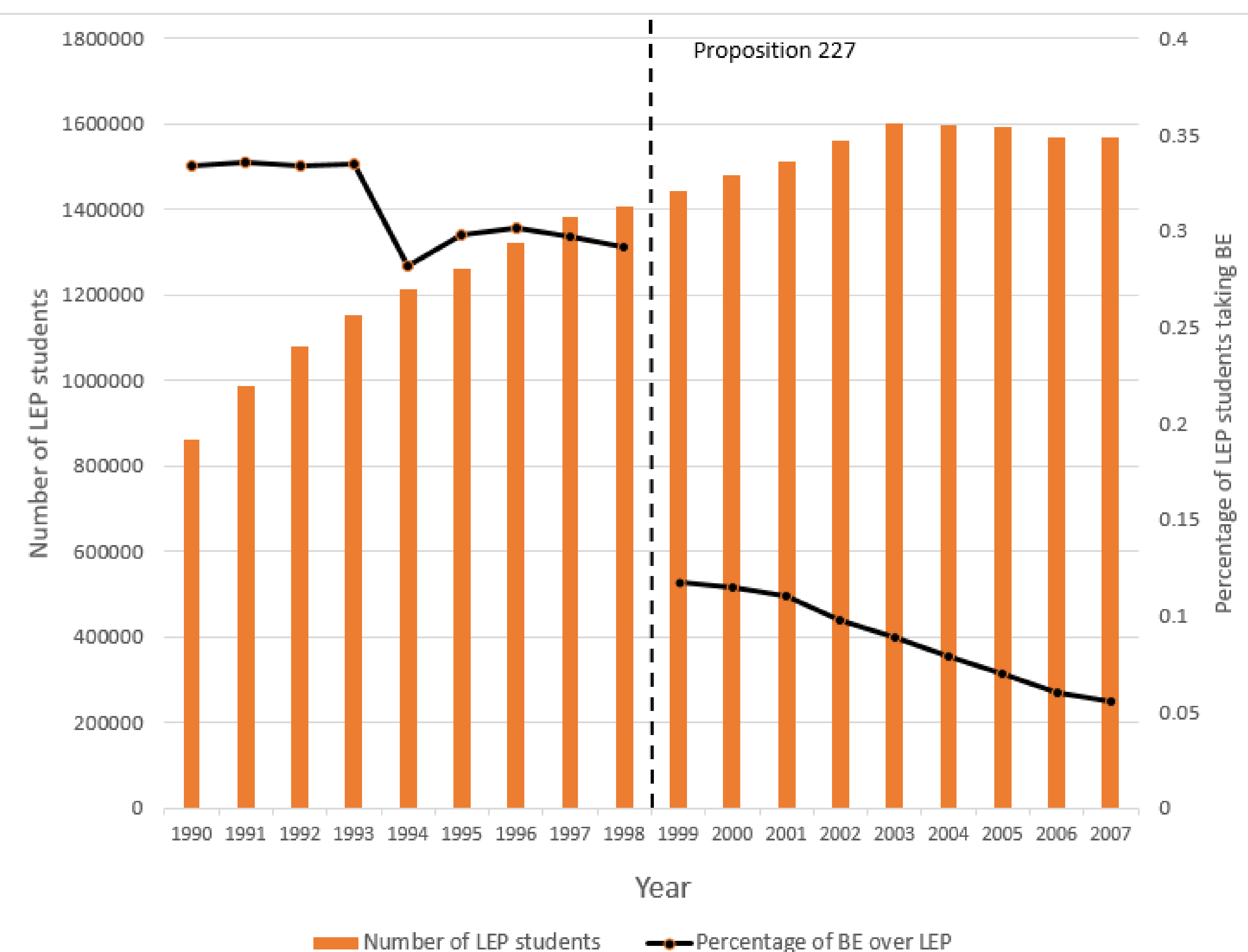
- Besides English-only programs (typically ESL), Bilingual education (BE) programs are another common way used by U.S. public schools to help limited English proficiency (LEP) students
- Key difference between ESL and BE: Students in BE study some academic courses in their native language.
- Policy change in California (Proposition 227 in 1998): banned BE statewide. This ban provides a natural experiment to estimate causal impact of BE programs on later-life outcomes of LEP students.

Findings Summary

- A decrease in marriage and fertility among foreign-born Hispanics after the ban. This affects labor market outcomes (labor force participation, wages, etc.)
- Underlying reasons: a shift in spoken language (from Spanish to English) and cultural norm.

Background

- School districts in California provide special assistance to LEP students. (BE and English-only)
- Proposition 227: banning BE began the 1998-1999 school year in CA.
 - Before: LEP students can choose between BE or English-only programs.
 - After: BE banned state-wide.



Descriptive statistics

- Focus the analysis on Hispanics (about 80% BE programs in California are Spanish-speaking)
- U.S. Census (2005-2015) survey consisting of 18 to 23 years old Hispanics living in California.

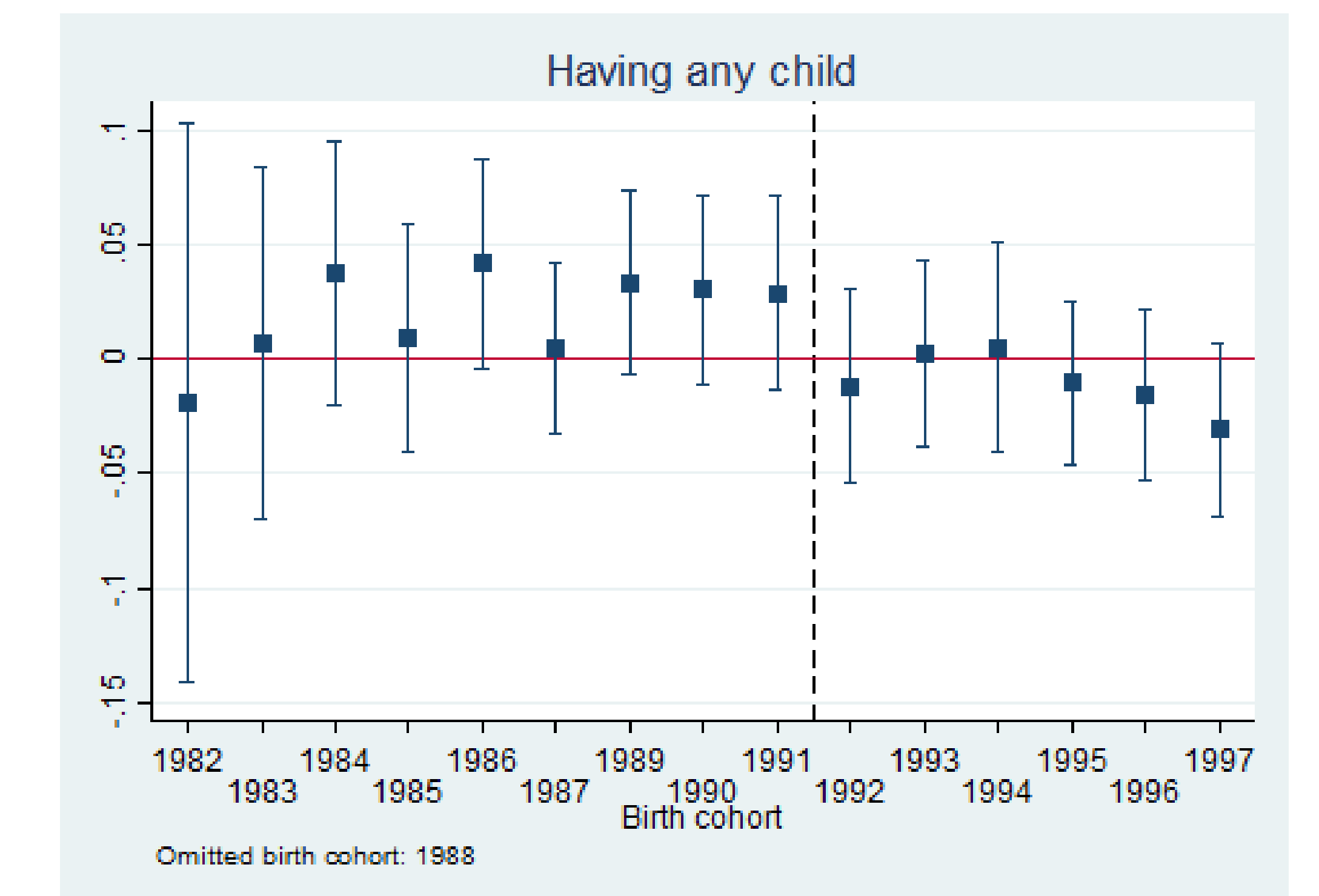
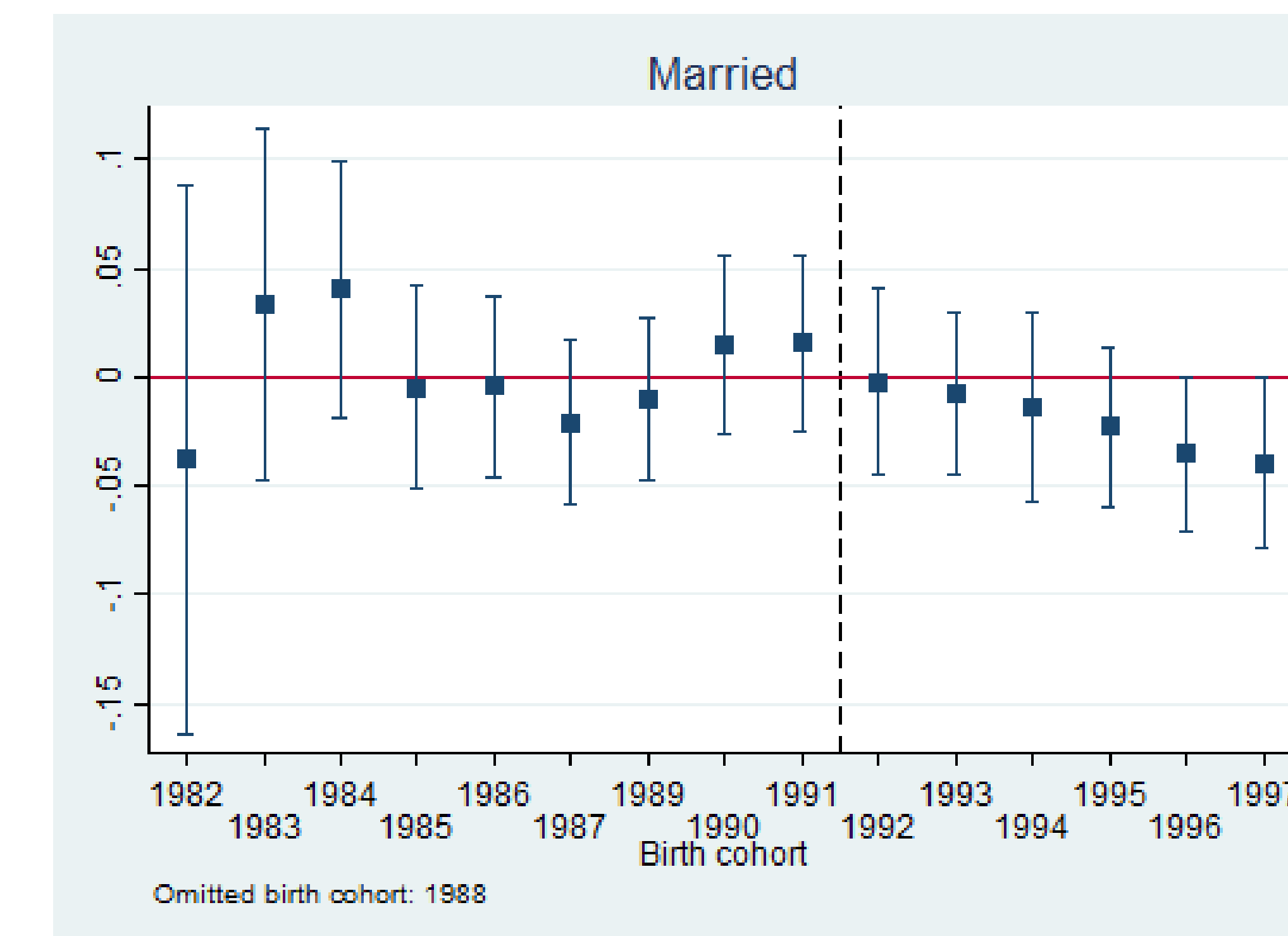
Empirical strategy

Difference-in-differences strategy:

- Compare 2 groups before and after the ban: Students born in and after 1992 going to school without BE option.
- Compare 2 groups of Hispanics: Foreign-born (more likely to be in BE programs) and U.S.-born.

Effect illustrations

Social outcomes



Language outcomes

