BEYOND COMPLIANCE

Teacher Preparedness and Institutional Support for Long-Term Multilingual Learners in California

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The study asks a straightforward question: Are teachers being adequately prepared and supported to meet the needs of students who remain classified as multilingual learners for six years or more?

PROBLEM OF PRACTICE

Long-Term Multilingual Learners (LTMLs) have spent years in U.S. schools but have not yet reached English-language proficiency. Their needs extend beyond language development to academic access, belonging, cultural responsiveness, and social-emotional support. Yet teachers may enter classrooms without sufficient preparation, resources, or institutional structures to address these intersecting needs.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This quantitative study examines California K–12 teachers' perceptions of **(1) their preparedness** to serve LTMLs and **(2) the institutional support** available to help them do so. The goal is to identify gaps between what teachers are expected to provide and the opportunities, training, and systems available to support that work.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do California K–12 teachers perceive their preparedness to meet the linguistic, academic, social-emotional, and cultural needs of LTMLs?
- How do California K–12 teachers perceive the institutional support available to meet the needs of LTMLs?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Opportunity to Learn (OTL): examines whether educators and students have access to the conditions, resources, and opportunities needed for success.

STUDY DESIGN

- Design: Quantitative, cross-sectional survey study
- Population: California K–12 teachers with experience teaching multilingual learners
- Instrument: Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) plus LTML-specific preparedness and support items
- Response format: 6-point Likert scale
- Survey platform: Qualtrics; approximately 10–15 minutes
- Recruitment: professional education networks, districts, organizations, and social media
- Key demographics: county, credential pathway, grade level, subject area, and years of experience

WHY THIS MATTERS

LTML outcomes are often discussed as student performance problems. This study shifts attention toward the systems surrounding teachers and students. By examining preparedness and support together, the research can help distinguish individual teacher confidence from broader institutional conditions that shape practice.

POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION

- Inform teacher preparation and credential programs about LTML-specific preparation needs.
- Identify professional learning and institutional supports teachers perceive as missing or insufficient.
- Support district and state conversations about equitable access, instructional capacity, and accountability for LTMLs.
- Elevate LTMLs as a distinct population whose long-term classification warrants focused research and policy attention.

RESEARCH FOCUS Teacher preparation • Multilingual learners • Educational equity • Institutional support • California K–12 education