

Unlocking the Promise of Multitiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for Linguistically Diverse Students

Guest Editors: Jorge E. Gonzalez, Syliva Linan Thompson, and Lillian Duran

Multitiered systems of support (MTSS) refers to a tiered intervention approach to the early identification and support for students with challenges in learning and behavior. MTSS provides a welcome shift in practice and policy that previously relied on mostly arbitrary discrepancy criteria to determine eligibility for special services. MTSS typically begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom (Tier 1). Students who need a little extra assistance in meeting academic benchmarks are provided with that assistance in Tier 2. Students who continue to struggle are provided with increasing intensity to accelerate their learning rate (Tier 3). Progress is closely monitored to assess learning rate and level of performance. Subsequently, educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on student response to instruction. MTSS has great potential utility for determining responsiveness to instruction and specifying service delivery for students who have unmet needs, especially linguistically diverse students often described as English language learners (ELL), dual language learners (DLL), English learners (EL), or emergent bilinguals among other descriptors (Glover & DiPerna, 2007). In theory, MTSS may assist in preventing under- and overidentification of linguistically diverse students in special education.

Despite its promise, challenges in implementing MTSS with culturally and linguistically diverse students, particularly Spanish-speaking Latinx students, have raised numerous questions and concerns regarding successful implementation of MTSS. The challenges are in part due to the fragmented nature of evidence-based intervention research on Latinx students (Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Prater, & Cirino, 2006) as well as lack of familiarity with second language acquisition among educators (Sanford, Esparza-Brown, & Turner, 2012). The purpose of this special topic is to explore advances, challenges, and opportunities in implementation of MTSS with linguistically diverse students—especially Latinx students. Questions of interest in this special issue might include the role of social/cultural context, challenges in preparing quality teaching personnel to work with linguistically diverse students, research on core service delivery components with linguistically diverse students, the compatibility of assessment tools and data-based decision making criteria, evidence-based intervention appropriate for linguistically diverse students, and implementation integrity, among others.

- Research exploring the role of sociocultural context in assessment and intervention with linguistically diverse students
- Research that informs English proficiency classification of linguistically diverse students and appropriate tiered instruction
- Research investigating the validity of MTSS screening tools for use with linguistically diverse students
- Research on effective tiered instruction for linguistically diverse students with learning challenges, particularly in reading
- Studies on evidence-based interventions with linguistically diverse students and MTSS
- Research that focuses on distinguishing reading problems from reading disabilities among linguistically diverse students in MTSS
- The role of second language proficiency and assessment for MTSS
- Effective English instruction for linguistically diverse students in MTSS

Empirical, both qualitative and quantitative studies, meta-analyses, systematic reviews, and theoretical or conceptual papers are all welcome for submission. Each submission will be processed through peer review to determine whether the manuscript is suitable for publication in SPR. The deadline for the receipt of submissions is October 1–21, 2020.

Email SPR Editor-Elect Shane Jimerson – Jimerson@ucsb.edu

Submit online tandfonline.com/USPR

