From the Ground Up: Providing Support to Emergent Bilinguals to Distinguish Language Difference From Disability

Andrea N. Golloher
David A. Whitenack
Lisa A. Simpson
San Jose State University

Donna Sacco
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) data reveal that students with disabilities who are emergent bilinguals (English language learners) have the lowest levels of proficiency in reading and mathematics among all student groups. We consider issues related to the instruction of emergent bilinguals, including those identified as having specific learning disabilities, using a Response to Intervention (RTI)/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) model. In so doing, we argue that instructional practices consistent with a robust Tier 1 framework are beneficial to emergent bilinguals with and without learning disabilities while differentiating Tier 2 and 3 interventions may improve outcomes for emergent bilingual students at risk for learning disabilities. To optimize the delivery of services to emergent bilinguals with and without learning disabilities, we propose a collaborative triad among general education, special education, and bilingual resource teachers. We consider implications for classroom practice, staffing, professional development, and educator preparation.

Keywords: **Bilingual education, multi-tiered systems of support, response to intervention, Tier 1 instruction, culturally relevant pedagogy**

Despite its social justice roots, the special education system has long struggled with issues of disproportionate representation of students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds (Sullivan, Artiles, & Hernandez-Saca, 2015; Waitoller, Artiles, & Cheney, 2010). While much of this work has examined the over- and under-representation of students from different racial and ethnic groups receiving special education services, a growing

body of evidence suggests that students who are emergent bilinguals[1] (García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008) may also be misidentified for services due to their learning needs. While there is ongoing debate over whether emergent bilinguals are more or less likely to be identified as having specific learning disabilities (SLD) than their monolingual peers (see Morgan et al. [2015] and Skiba, Artiles, Kozleski, Losen, and Harry [2016] for a discussion of this issue), once identified they are more likely to be served in more restrictive placements than their monolingual peers with SLD (Sullivan, 2011; Wilkinson, Ortiz, Robertson, & Kushner, 2006).

Data from the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP; National Center for Education Statistics, 2015) suggests that the current educational landscape is not meeting the needs of emergent bilingual students in general and emergent bilingual students with disabilities in particular. Emergent bilinguals fall substantially behind their peers who are fluent English speakers in both reading and math. For example, while 39% of native English speakers score at or above proficient in reading in the 12th grade, 4% of emergent bilingual students reach this threshold. Similarly, while 25% of native English speakers score at or above proficient in mathematics, only 6% of emergent bilingual students are at this level. This is similar to the outcomes for students who have disabilities that qualify them for an IEP. In this group, 8% of 12th graders are at or above proficient in reading while 4% reach this threshold in mathematics. Meanwhile, emergent bilinguals who have disabilities fare worse than both groups, with the number of these students reaching proficiency in reading and mathematics rounding to zero by the 12th grade. These data suggest that instruction is not meeting the needs of emergent bilingual students despite the effort of researchers to develop strategies to do just that (Office of English Language Acquisition, 2017; Thompson, 2015).

To address this concern, this paper will focus on the development of high-quality Tier 1 instruction as a foundation upon which targeted instruction in Tiers 2 and 3 can be built so that students are not misidentified with SLD. We will begin with a discussion of the disproportionate representation of emergent bilingual students in special education, including the challenges associated with

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1 Emergent bilinguals are often referred to in schools as English learners (ELs) and are designated as English language learners (ELLs) based on their level of language proficiency in English. As have others (CUNY-NYS Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals, 2018; García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008), we use the term emergent bilinguals in reference to this group of students to highlight the asset of their native and/or home language rather than to imply that their learning of English indicates a deficit. Furthermore, the term emergent bilinguals recognizes students' linguistic practices in all of their languages, not just the fact that they are learning English. While the use of the term emergent bilinguals has increased in the scholarship related to this group of students, English learners and English language learners remain the more commonly used terms in schools.

distinguish learning disabilities from typical developmental patterns in second language acquisition. We will then discuss models of identifying students with SLD and a review of response to intervention and multi-tiered systems of support (RTI/MTSS). Next, we will introduce a proposed framework for designing instruction that meets the needs of all learners while integrating instructional methods essential for supporting the language development of emergent bilingual students in Tier 1 of an RTI/MTSS program. Next, we will consider how the processes involved in implementing RTI/MTSS should consider the unique needs of emergent bilingual students. Finally, we will discuss implications of this proposed model and future directions for research and practice.

Disproportionate Representation of Emergent Bilingual Students

As noted above, there has been debate over whether emergent bilingual students are over- or under-identified for special education services (Morgan et al., 2015; Skiba et al., 2016). It should be noted that both over- and under-identification are issues of concern. In the case of over-identification, one may find that students' language learning needs are being misdiagnosed as learning disabilities, resulting in the application of unnecessary or ineffective interventions for the students. Meanwhile, under-identification would suggest that emergent bilingual students with learning disabilities may not be receiving the types of interventions that would address their learning needs. There are indications that the representation of emergent bilingual students in special education services is contextually bound, with variations found across state lines.

As an illustration of the complexity of the issue in determining disproportionate representation of emergent bilingual students in special education, take Umansky, Thompson, and Díaz's (2017) examination of the rate of identification of students for special education across two states using an *ever-English learner* framework. This analysis found that students who had at any point been classified as an English learner were less likely to be referred for special education services across grade levels in both states. At the same time, by the secondary level those students who were currently identified as English learners were overrepresented in special education. Despite the commonality across state lines, the researchers also identified variations across the two states of interest, with emergent bilinguals in one state overrepresented in the SLD category while emergent bilinguals in the other were not.

There are a variety of factors that may influence disproportionate representation of students from specific backgrounds in special education (Sullivan, 2011). When it comes to identifying emergent bilingual students in need of special education services, detangling language difference from learning disability has been an ongoing challenge for educators (Durán, 2008; Samson & Lasaux, 2009; Hoover, Baca, & Klingner, 2016; King Thorius & Sullivan, 2013;

Klingner, Artiles, & Barletta, 2006; Shifrer, Muller, & Callahan, 2009; Sullivan, 2011). The overlap in the characteristics of students with SLD and students who are emergent bilinguals may explain the variability in identification of students who are both emergent bilinguals and have a disability. What is clear is the fact that educators evaluating the progress of a struggling emergent bilingual student are met with the significant challenge of determining whether that student has a difference based on language acquisition or whether the student might have SLD. This is particularly difficult because of the overlap between characteristics of students with learning disabilities and characteristics of language acquisition. Consider the definition of SLD from the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA, 2004), which is:

> a disability in one or more of the basic psychological pro-
> cesses involved in understanding or in using language,
> spoken or written, that might manifest itself in the imper-
> fect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do
> mathematical calculations. (pp. 117-118)

The learning challenges faced by a student with SLD should not be attributable to other learning needs, such as another disability (e.g., intellectual disability) or environmental causes (e.g., poor instruction). Meanwhile, an emergent bilingual student who is moving through the typical stages of language acquisition is developing abilities in the same processes of understanding described in the definition above: using a new language for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This can result in behaviors that are topographically similar to those of a student with SLD. For example, a student with SLD might have difficulty following multi-step directions because of deficits in working memory or attention; a student who is learning a second language, meanwhile, may have difficulty following multi-step directions due to the added effort and concentration of speaking and listening to a second language.

MODELS OF IDENTIFYING SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES

Reflecting the diagnostic criteria for SLDs described in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-V; American Psychiatric Association, 2013), the IQ-achievement discrepancy model described in the Individuals with Disabilities with Education Act (IDEA, 2004) attempts to rule out intelligence as the cause for poor academic achievement (Cottrell & Barrett, 2016; Fletcher, Coulter, Reschly, & Vaughn, 2004). While this model reflects the theoretical conceptualization of SLD, the emphasis on student performance on standardized assessments frequently results in assessors failing to take into account environmental considerations, including whether or not the student has experienced high-quality instruction, when determining eligibility for special

education services (Fletcher et al., 2004).

To address this concern about the influence of environmental factors when establishing eligibility for services for students with SLD, IDEA (2004) allowed schools to use student progress within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), specifically response to intervention (RTI), to rule out poor instruction as the cause for poor academic progress. It would appear that this is a policy most states have moved to implement, although the majority still allow the use of the IQ-achievement discrepancy model as an alternative to the RTI model for determining eligibility (Zirkel & Thomas, 2010). Though the RTI model was thought to reduce disproportionate representation of emerging bilingual students in special education, concerns have arisen with states solely relying on RTI models for identification of SLD. Few Tier 2 or 3 interventions have been researched on emerging bilingual students making any decisions about lack of progress in this model suspect to misinterpretation.

Although the specifics of individual RTI/MTSS programs can differ based on local decision-making, most follow a similar three-tier model for providing support (see Figure 1; CEEDAR Center, 2015). In this model, all students complete universal screenings one to three times a year to identify those students who may be struggling academically. In Tier 1, all students receive high-quality instruction from the general education teacher while the progress of the students who were identified as at-risk using the screening is monitored closely. If students do not respond to high-quality general education instruction, as evidenced by reaching benchmark goals or a satisfactory rate of growth, they begin to receive Tier 2 support, which is frequently provided in the form of small group instruction in addition to the general instruction provided in the classroom. If students meet benchmark and rate of growth goals, these services are removed and their progress is tracked as they continue in Tier 1. If students do not meet these goals, they can begin to receive Tier 3 supports, which are targeted, individualized, and "wrap-around" supports (e.g., involving family and community members in addition to the school team). At this point, IDEA (2004) allows states to determine that a student qualifies for an individualized education program (IEP) for SLD due to lack of academic progress despite exposure to high-quality instruction. Though the RTI/MTSS framework was developed to reduce unnecessarily labeling students as having a learning disability, SLD continues to be the most common eligibility designation for students receiving special education services, with approximately 38% of students with IEPs identified in this category (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).
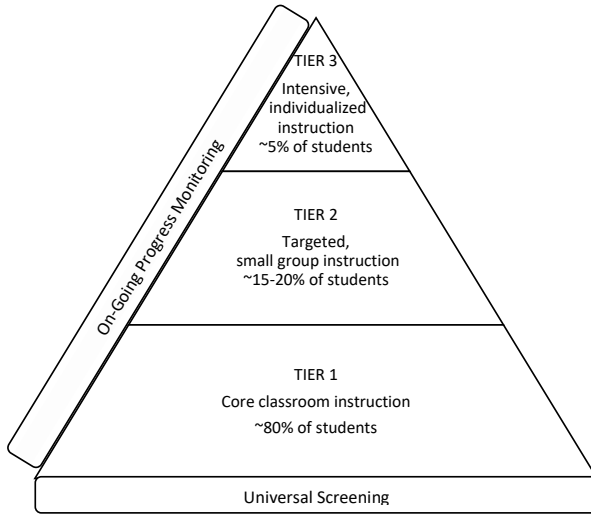
Figure 1. **Generic three-tiered RTI/MTSS pyramid**

RTI/MTSS has the potential to address disproportionate representation of CLD groups receiving special education services. Despite this, the most recent data on the relative risk of students from different racial and ethnic groups suggests that not enough has been done to meet these students' needs (Skiba et al., 2016; Umansky, Thompson, & Díaz, 2017). For this reason, critiques of RTI/MTSS have called into question whether instruction and assessment measures associated with these systems adequately consider the needs of students from CLD backgrounds (López & Mendoza, 2013; Orosco & Klingner, 2010; Ortiz et al., 2011; Scott, Hauerwas, & Brown, 2014).

Tier 1 Framework: Building a Strong Foundation

As a first step in implementing RTI/MTSS to meet the needs of all students, including those who are emergent bilinguals, the interventions that are used should be validated as evidence-based and have a track record of being effective for students who are emergent bilinguals. The Tier 1 framework (see Appendix A; Whitenack & Golloher, 2017) is one attempt to consolidate recommended practices to guide the development of instruction for all students. At the same time, the interveners should understand the stages and processes of second language acquisition (Orosco & Klingner, 2010) and teachers should receive training specific to RTI for emergent bilinguals and have an ESL instructor with whom to collaborate (Klingner & Hoover, 2014).

The Tier 1 framework (Whitenack & Golloher, 2017) incorporates and aligns strategies for universally designing lessons with strategies for integrating

language and literacy development in subject-area instruction in the general education classroom. This framework builds on the authors' recognition that both sets of strategies are essential for addressing the language-learning needs of emergent bilinguals. We have begun using the Tier 1 framework in a K-8 teaching credential program by providing teacher candidates with opportunities to identify, plan, and enact the Tier 1 framework when planning lessons to meet the needs of a wide range of students. As we have presented the framework to larger audiences, we have solicited feedback regarding its usefulness and design, engaging in an iterative development process (Edelson, 2002).

To prepare teacher candidates to teach students with learning disabilities in inclusive classrooms, the Tier 1 framework aligns the practices developed by the TEEL group (Stoddart et al., 2015) with the practices of UDL (National Center on Universal Design for Learning, 2014). Although there was substantial overlap between the recommendations of the TEEL group and the UDL framework, there remained gaps in each framework that potentially overlooked the needs of some students. For example, many of the UDL recommendations support emergent bilinguals' access to the curriculum; however, the UDL framework does not adequately focus on the use of discourse and literacy to support emergent bilinguals' language learning needs. Similarly, the TEEL group developed a framework of instructional practices, supported by a substantial body of research, to integrate subject matter teaching with language and literacy development to enhance learning in both domains for emergent bilingual students (Cummins, 1981; Genesee, 1987; Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Met, 1994). These instructional practices are divided into four areas: *contextualization* of lesson content in students' experiences; *scaffolding* lessons to provide content access and academic language development; eliciting student talk or *discourse*; and providing content-specific *literacy* experiences. While these practices generally benefit students with disabilities, they do not completely capture the recommendations described in the UDL framework, particularly regarding considerations for engagement.

The Tier 1 framework coherently blends the four focus areas of contextualization, scaffolding, discourse, and literacy, and adds growth mindset from UDL as a fifth pedagogical focus. Many of the practices within each of the five focus areas correspond with Checkpoints of the UDL Guidelines, such as the practice of clarifying vocabulary and symbols in the literacy focus area, which aligns with UDL Checkpoint 2.1. The Tier 1 framework additionally identifies two levels of practices: those focusing directly on teacher behaviors (Engage in Dynamic Instruction) and other teacher practices intended to elicit particular student behaviors (Stimulate Active Student Learning) as a means of supporting teacher implementation of these practices (see Appendix A).

We have begun to use the Tier 1 framework across the curriculum in general education teacher preparation and we propose its use to support the development of Tier 2 and 3 instruction that meets the needs of students who are emergent bilinguals. To do this, we recommend the framework be used in K-12 professional development, particularly professional development focused on collaboration among general education teachers, special education teachers, and bilingual resource teachers. We hope the implementation of the Tier 1 framework across programs and institutions could effectively dismantle the programmatic silos in which general education, special education, and bilingual teacher preparation tend to operate in universities and eliminate the barriers between universities and K-12 schools. Using a common framework could facilitate collaboration between programs as they share a common vision for what constitutes high-quality instruction in schools.

Using the Tier 1 Framework to Address the Needs of Emergent Bilinguals in RTI/MTSS

The Tier 1 framework was initially developed as a tool to be used to guide instructional planning for all students in K-12 general education classrooms and to provide feedback to K-12 teachers on their pedagogical decisions related to meeting the needs of students with disabilities or students who were emergent bilinguals. Within an RTI/MTSS program, we can see this tool being used to ensure a cohesiveness in program planning that would facilitate collaboration across general education, special education, bilingual education, and administration. In this section we will describe the considerations for emergent bilingual students with and without SLD in each component of an RTI/MTSS model.

Assessment

As described in Figure 1, the traditional RTI/MTSS models include three tiers of instructional support. The model relies on ongoing data collection and analysis to determine the needs of the students. There are two forms of monitoring used to determine the level of support a student requires in a particular domain: universal screening and progress monitoring. Given the importance of assessment in RTI/MTSS programs, one of the first considerations for emergent bilingual students is the type of assessment to be used and the manner in which assessment data will be interpreted given the typical stages of second language acquisition. For example, it is not uncommon for emergent bilinguals to go through a period of relative silence when they are first exposed to English instruction in schools (Haynes, 2007). This silent period can last up to six months and is not a reason for major concern or intervention; during this time, however, students may experience both universal screening and up to two progress monitoring cycles. Measures that rely on oral language skills (such as

reading fluency and sight-word identification) may show little to no progress. In this case, it is important that at least one member of the data analysis team have sufficient knowledge of language acquisition to help determine whether additional supports are necessary or if continued instruction in Tier 1 is probably sufficient for student learning.

Instruction in Tiers 2 and 3

As described above, if students do not make adequate progress in Tier 1 instruction in a RTI/MTSS program, they should begin to receive Tier 2 interventions in addition to Tier 1 instruction. These Tier 2 interventions should consist of evidence-based practices, per RTI/MTSS guidelines (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). What constitutes evidence-based Tier 2 and 3 practices for emergent bilinguals, however, has not been fully determined (Hoover et al., 2016). Many available curricula claiming to be evidence-based have not included emergent bilinguals in the research sample and/or have not researched the delivery of the curriculum in settings similar to those in which many emergent bilinguals participate (King Thorius & Sullivan, 2013; Klingner & Edwards, 2006). Specific reading curricula are often developed based on knowledge of how children from monolingual backgrounds learn to read. Using this same approach with an emergent bilingual may not result in the same outcomes (King Thorius & Sullivan, 2013). Thus, practitioners must be careful about determining whether a Tier 2 or 3 intervention is evidence-based for emergent bilinguals and whether delivery of the program in fact constitutes high-quality instruction for this group (Hoover et al., 2016). While the Tier 1 framework does not itself describe effective Tier 2 and 3 interventions, considering each of the five domains when developing these supports for students can increase the likelihood that teachers implement evidence-based practices in these tiers.

Failing to address or differentiate Tiers 2 and 3 interventions to meet the needs of emergent bilinguals can lead to a lack of progress and misidentification of a student who is an emergent bilingual as a student with a disability (Mathes, Pollard-Durodola, Cardenas-Hagan, Linan-Thompson, & Vaughn, 2007). While most Tier 2 reading supports focus on providing more intensive direct instruction in the five major areas of reading as defined by the National Reading Panel (2000), many fail to recognize the needs of emergent bilingual students. For example, there is a substantial literature base supporting the notion that phonological and phonemic awareness are important to overall reading ability (National Reading Panel, 2000); and, not surprisingly, phonological awareness is often the focus of Tier 2 interventions for struggling readers. Yet phonetic structures can vary widely from language to language and emergent bilinguals often struggle with distinguishing phonemes that are not a part of their native language (Hoover et al., 2016). In addition, research suggests that phonological awareness taught in context rather than in isolation produces better

outcomes for emergent bilinguals (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2009). Thus, any Tier 2 or 3 intervention focused on phonological awareness must consider the phonemic structure of emergent bilinguals' native language if these students are to make progress in the intervention (Hoover et al., 2016) and should embed such instruction in meaningful contexts rather than as isolated lessons (Cloud et al., 2009). The Tier 1 framework reminds teachers of the importance of contextualization and scaffolding in delivering instruction. For emergent bilingual students, both of these domains require teachers to consider the student's first language and cultural experiences, which continues to be important when providing Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports.

Similarly, fluency is a frequent focus of Tier 2 interventions for struggling readers. Because emergent bilinguals often struggle to decode and comprehend text, fluency develops at a slower rate and many emergent bilinguals have fewer opportunities to read aloud in English than their English-fluent peers, further impeding fluency progress (August & Shanahan, 2006). Tier 2 and Tier 3 fluency interventions should provide more frequent opportunities for emergent bilinguals to hear text being read aloud in English (above and beyond what is typically provided for English-only students), a point that is made in the Tier 1 framework language domain. If all students receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 fluency interventions are provided the same number of opportunities to hear text read aloud and provided the same opportunities to read aloud themselves, emergent bilingual students may appear to make less progress than their monolingual peers and, therefore, be referred for additional support.

One final example is that of Tier 2 interventions aimed at increasing sight-word vocabulary of struggling readers. Sight-word instruction is often delivered out of context – students are thought to have to "memorize" sight words – and Tier 2 interventions may incorporate flash card drills or timed computer tests for these words. For emergent bilinguals, this can be especially challenging and be in conflict with instructional methods that call for the teaching of vocabulary in context of the story, lesson, or activity for emergent bilinguals (Baker et al., 2014), a point again illustrated in the Tier 1 framework domain of contextualization. Failing to differentiate sight-word interventions for the needs of emergent bilinguals may lead to limited progress in the program. These differentiations are important for emergent bilingual students as providing direct and intensive Tier 2 and 3 interventions with emergent bilinguals has been found to result in better outcomes than less intensive English as a Second Language (ESL) literacy instruction for these students (Kamps et al., 2007)

In addition to the five big ideas of reading, Hoover et al. (2016) remind us that reading instruction for language minority students should include two additional big ideas: oral language development and motivation, both of which are emphasized in the Tier 1 framework in the domains of language and growth

mindset, respectively. Emergent bilinguals need increased opportunities to talk and interact with both peers and the teacher to fully develop oral language proficiency (Swain & Lapkin, 1995). Moreover, oral language proficiency is acutely tied to literacy development (Swanson, Rosston, Gerber, & Solari, 2008). General reading programs assume students have adequate oral language development (as most mainstream language majority students do) when learning to read and, thus, would likely not sufficiently consider the oral language development needs for emergent bilinguals to make progress commensurate with their English-only peers. Finally, motivation is critical to making progress in any intervention program. Emergent bilinguals often experience significant challenges trying to make sense of academic content and can easily become overwhelmed and frustrated. Tiers 2 and 3 interventions should incorporate specific components to increase motivation of emerging bilingual students, such as using culturally relevant materials and increasing the relevancy of activities (Hoover et al., 2016; Klingner et al., 2006).

Implications and Additional Considerations

As noted above, King Thorius and Sullivan (2013) found that interventions often had not been validated for use with emergent bilinguals or in the particular school contexts in which they were implemented in their review of the literature. They also highlighted the foundational importance of analyzing the school and classroom context in which particular emergent bilinguals are receiving their education. For example, are they participating in a dual-language immersion program, pull-out English as a Second Language (ESL) program, or some other program model? Is the school situated in a local education authority that has declared itself a sanctuary district or is there a pervasive anti-immigrant sentiment in the local community? Has the district decided to use a problem-solving approach to Tiers 2 and 3 interventions or have they settled on the standard protocol model instead? Contextual factors such as these may play an important role in RTI/MTSS outcomes, ultimately deciding who is and is not labeled as having a learning disability. The field is at a point of discovering and documenting what works for emergent bilingual students, to what degree, and in what situations rather than recommending with certainty what has worked for all.

Implications for Practice

As a baseline for appropriate instruction, we propose the Tier 1 framework as a tool for planning instruction for all students, including students with learning disabilities, emergent bilinguals, and other marginalized students. Our proposal is based on a vision in which all students participate inclusively--together--in learning activities (Florian, 2017).

Deepening collaboration. Given the underdeveloped state of service provision to students with learning difficulties who are emergent bilinguals described above, we suggest the need for close collaboration among triads of classroom teachers, special educators, and bilingual resource teachers in all aspects of a RTI/MTSS program. While Tier 1 instruction is the domain of the general educator, general educators would benefit from knowing they can seek the expertise of a special educator and a bilingual specialist to identify appropriate instructional methods to promote academic progress. Such communication between disciplinary silos could result in appropriate supports being implemented in the general education classroom rather than determining that the student's learning struggles are a result of a disorder within the individual. As a corollary to this recommendation, we should note that ensuring that general educators, special educators, and bilingual specialists have adequate time and space to engage in collaboration suggests a need for administrative support as well.

We propose several ideas for how special educators and bilingual resource teachers could support instruction in the general education classroom. First, as mentioned, the Tier 1 framework was developed on the principles of UDL to support the learning of all students in the general education setting. The major tenet of UDL being that teachers develop lessons which provide all students with multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement. Special educators are typically familiar with tools designed to address these three areas, including the use of technologies in the classroom, in their work with students with disabilities. This makes them a great resource for general educators when implementing UDL and supporting emergent bilinguals. Second, both the special educator and bilingual resource teacher can help the classroom teacher monitor instructional quality, providing ideas and resources to improve general instruction for emergent bilingual students, particularly providing ideas about how to scaffold instruction to support struggling emergent bilingual students and to ensure cultural relevance of materials used in the classroom. Third, recognizing the linguistic needs of emergent bilingual students, bilingual resource teachers can help the classroom teacher understand their instructional needs based on their proficiency levels while taking into consideration typical developmental trajectories in second language development. Meanwhile, special educators may share information about the overlap of characteristics in students who are emergent bilinguals and students who have learning disabilities, helping general educators understand what struggles may be indicative of language acquisition rather than a disability.

Developing and using meaningful assessment data. Special educators also hold expertise in the collection and analysis of progress monitoring data, as this is a significant portion of their job for documenting progress on their students' IEP goals. Special educators may share this expertise with gen-

eral education teachers to ensure appropriate data are collected. General education teachers and special education teachers may collaborate on the collection of curriculum-based measures (CBM) for students in Tier 2 or 3 interventions. While these interventions are under the purview of general education (with the exception of models of RTI/MTSS in which Tier 3 and special education services overlap), special educators may collaborate with general educators in the delivery, data collection, and interpretation of the results of these interventions. Additionally, because special educators employ both direct instruction and dynamic assessment, that is assessments which "blend instruction into assessment" (Grigorenko, 2009, p. 113), they may be able to model these techniques for specific Tier 2 interventions with which they may have experience, for example, *Read Well*® (Sprick, Howard, & Fiddanque, 1998) and *Read Naturally*® (Ihnot, 1991). Additionally, despite the special educators' knowledge of data collection and analysis, it is essential to apply knowledge of second language acquisition in the interpretation of the data, and a bilingual resource teacher may be needed to supplement the knowledge bases of the general and special educators.

If, after having implemented a variety of the strategies in the Tier 1 framework developed in collaboration with special education and bilingual support providers, a teacher notes that an emergent bilingual student continues to struggle academically, both the special educator and bilingual resource teacher would be better prepared to identify appropriate next steps. These support providers could then use the five domains of the Tier 1 framework (contextualization, growth mindset, scaffolding, language, and discourse) to consider additional supports to be provided in Tiers 2 and 3 building upon the Tier 1 foundation given their knowledge of both the needs of students with SLD and the needs of emergent bilingual students.

Implications for Educator Preparation and Professional Development

If general, special, and bilingual educators are going to collaborate in schools, it makes sense to create opportunities for them to collaborate during their professional preparation. To facilitate that collaboration, it is necessary to dismantle both the programmatic silos in which general education, special education, and bilingual teacher preparation tend to operate in universities and the barriers between universities and K-12 schools. Rather than have categories of educators remain segregated throughout their preservice preparation, programs can design university- and field-based opportunities for general, special, and bilingual educators in training to work together, preferably with a counterpart triad of experienced school-based practitioners. To provide a supportive context for that level of collaboration at the school-site level, it would help for principals to be involved. If principals are to effectively facilitate the linkage of services among general, special, and bilingual educators, we recommend providing appropriate

preparatory experiences in administrator credentialing programs as well (Whitenack & Golloher, in press). In short, for schools to meet the academic needs of students with learning disabilities who are emergent bilinguals, educators must be prepared to work together toward that goal.

Conclusion

Given the disproportionate representation of otherwise marginalized students in special education discussed above, it is critical that educators advocate against the possible resegregation of students due to presumed deficits. While we continue to argue for collaboration among general educators, special educators, and bilingual resource teachers, we must emphasize the fact that special education teachers must be prepared to support inclusive educational practices. Special educators, in addition to other educational leaders, must strive to reduce potential harm to students from their being removed from the general education environment. A key component of such harm reduction is advocacy and support for the use of inclusive practices in the general education classroom. The Tier 1 framework (Whitenack & Golloher, 2017) can be used as described to help special education teacher candidates recognize the components of effective inclusive placements so that they are prepared to critically evaluate general education practices in the schools in which they teach and to provide input on the RTI/MTSS program so that it does not overlook Tier 1 instructional needs. They could also use the framework to provide a common grounding when collaborating with general education partners, such as when providing push-in services or when working with a co-teacher. Furthermore, special educators could consider how the framework informs their practice when supporting students who require additional services (i.e., those in Tiers 2 or 3 of MTSS) so that such practices are not counter to the social justice aims of our educational systems (Artiles, Bal, & King Thorius, 2010).

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Authors' Note

Andrea N. Golloher, Department of Special Education, San José State University; David A. Whitenack, Department of Teacher Education, San José State University; Lisa A. Simpson, Department of Special Education, San José State University; Donna Sacco, Department of Special Education and Child Development, University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to: Andrea N. Golloher, Department of Special Education, San José State University, One Washington Square, San Jose, CA 95192-0078; Email: andrea.golloher@sjsu.edu.

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APPENDIX A

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Tier 1 Framework: Integrating Language & Literacy Development in Subject-area Instruction

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CONTEXTUALIZE LEARNING (CONTEXTUALIZATION)

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Engage in Dynamic Instruction

- Activate or supply students' prior knowledge and thinking about the lesson topic (UDL Checkpoint 3.1)
- Connect the lesson topic to local physical, geographic, economic, ecological, political, social, or other conditions (UDL Checkpoint 7.2)
- Link the lesson topic to issues and challenges faced personally, locally, statewide, and/or nationally (UDL Checkpoint 7.2)
- Plan for and maximize transfer and generalization of content by explicitly connecting topics across domains, subjects, etc. (UDL Checkpoint 3.4)

Stimulate Active Student Learning

- Anticipate and elicit students' home, community, or other out-of-school experiences related to the topic being studied
- Engage students in problem- and project-based learning tasks and assignment

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ENCOURAGE SELF-REFLECTION AND MONITORING (GROWTH MINDSET)

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Engage in Dynamic Instruction

- Guide appropriate goal setting through modeling planning, embedding opportunities for strategy development, promoting the use of planning tools, discussing what constitutes excellence, etc. (UDL Checkpoints 6.1, 6.2, 8.1)
- Create an accepting and supportive classroom that minimizes threats and distractions (UDL Checkpoint 7.3)
- Promote expectations and beliefs that optimize motivation, focus on self-regulatory goals, and encourage self-reflection (UDL Checkpoint 9.1)
- Employ differentiated, mastery-oriented feedback. Feedback should identify areas of strength and patterns of errors and provide strategies for success (UDL Checkpoint 5.3, 8.4)

Stimulate Active Student Learning

- Optimize individual choice and autonomy (UDL Checkpoint 7.1)
- Enhance capacity for self-monitoring and self-assessment (UDL Checkpoints 6.4, 9.3)
- Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies (UDL Checkpoint 9.2)

SCAFFOLD LANGUAGE AND CONTENT (**SCAFFOLDING**)

Engage in Dynamic Instruction
- Modify talk (repetition, wait time, enunciation, rate of speech, re-phrasing, L1 use, gesturing) that facilitates student understanding of instruction
- Pay explicit attention to language issues that might be confusing or difficult and promote understanding across languages (UDL Checkpoint 2.4)
- Illustrate concepts and organize information through multiple media, including by providing supports such as sentence frames, word walls, graphic organizers, outlines, and reading guides (UDL Checkpoints 2.5, 5.1, 6.3)
- Highlight patterns, critical features, and big ideas to guide information processing, visualization, and manipulation to maximize transfer and generalization of content (UDL Checkpoint 3.2, 3.3)

Stimulate Active Student Learning
- Embed multiple means for students to interact with a concept through the use of visual representations, physical manipulatives, models and realia, offering alternatives for visual or auditory information (e.g., textual descriptions of pictures, transcriptions of audio content) (UDL checkpoints 1.2, 1.3, 2.3)
- Allow students to differentiate how they interact with the lesson by allowing learners to customize the display of information, varying the allowed methods of response, varying demands and resources to optimize challenge, and optimizing access to tools and assistive technology (UDL Checkpoints 1.1, 1.3, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2)

PROMOTE ACADEMIC DISCOURSE (**DISCOURSE**)

Engage in Dynamic Instruction
- Model discourse patterns such as recounting, hypothesizing, and explaining
- Re-voice or restate student contributions using subject-area-specific discourse patterns
- Provide students with feedback on their use of academic language

Stimulate Active Student Learning
- Ask students to communicate their ideas and thinking about concepts, especially claims, evidence, and reasoning
- Ask students to restate, affirm, critique, and/or respond directly to each other's assertions, claims, evidence, and/or reasoning

- Foster collaboration and communication through the creation of cooperative learning groups and opportunities for peer interactions (UDL Checkpoint 8.3)
- Allow multiple media for communication that allows students to demonstrate competence with the material (UDL Checkpoint 5.1)

Support Literacy Development (LITERACY)

Engage in Dynamic Instruction
- Explain expectations of literacy tasks and provide clear instruction about how to successfully accomplish the tasks
- Clarify vocabulary and symbols (UDL Checkpoint 2.1)
- Clarify syntax and structure, including highlighting structural relations, making connections to previously learned structures, and making relationships between elements explicit (UDL Checkpoint 2.2)
- Use key subject-area-specific terms throughout the lesson

Stimulate Active Student Learning
- Assign tasks that involve subject-area-specific literacy skills (e.g., expository writing, measuring, using instruments and tools, recording observations, making tables and charts, interpreting or drawing diagrams, reading primary-source documents, etc.)
- Give students opportunities to use key words in writing or talk