Improving Decision-Making for Educators of English Learners:
Using Online Learning Modules to Promote Accessibility & Accommodations Use in Instruction & Assessment

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Introduction

English Learners (ELs):
- ELs are doing double work: Developing proficiency in English and acquiring grade-level content
- They may need individualized accessibility supports, e.g., bilingual dictionary, to access instruction and accommodations in grade-level content.
- When supports are used appropriately, assessments demonstrate stronger reliability and validity evidence.
- Understanding available supports and aligning them to assessment accommodations can be challenging for teachers.

Effective Professional Development (PD):
- Emphasizes specific content
- Encourages active participation
- Models effective practice (e.g., lesson plans, case studies)
- Offers feedback
- Provides adequate time to learn, practice, and embed effective practices.

Setting & Sample

**Intervention.** Participating West Virginia educators will progress through a series of self-paced, online learning modules. Online learning activities encourage active participation by applying key considerations and information to realistic learning scenarios.

**Setting.** Intervention will take place in West Virginia, a largely rural state with a low density of ELs. Educators have relatively little experience working with ELs yet the rates in the state are increasing substantially. Top native languages in West Virginia include: Spanish, Arabic, Mandarin, Vietnamese, & Cantonese.

**Sample**
- **Teachers:** General educators in West Virginia who currently teach ELs in grades 3-10. Teachers who meet criteria will be randomly assigned to an intervention or comparison group.
- **Students:** Consent English Learners in grades 3-10 whose teachers participate in online modules.

The goal of this project is to support educators’ ability to select, implement, & evaluate instructional supports and assessment accommodations for ELs, including ELs with disabilities.

Research Questions

- Does participation in Improving Instruction modules yield:
  1. Changes to educators’ knowledge, skills, & decision making?
  2. Higher levels of positive EL student perceptions of accessibility?
  3. Gains in content and English proficiency outcomes?

Development, Content, & Process

**Design & Development Process: ADDIE**
- **Analysis**: Needs, requirements; tasks, audiences
- **Design**: Learning objectives; delivery format; activities, objectives, checkpoints
- **Development**: Prototype course materials, building, pretesting, field testing
- **Implementation**: Training, implementation; distribution; adoption; observation
- **Evaluation**: Awareness; knowledge; behavior; results

**Key Features of Online Modules:**
- Brief
- Interactive
- Individualized
- Support teachers in their current practice
- Include supplementary resources

Online Modules:
1) Thinking about student needs
2) Making & implementing instructional support decisions
3) Making & implementing assessment accommodations decisions
4) Pulling it all together.

Planned Analyses

**Measures**
- **Educator Assessment:** (n = 130) 25-item assessment will measure teachers' knowledge, skills, & behaviors.
- **Student Experiences Survey:** (n = 150) Student assessment of language proficiency, perceived value and implementation of accessibility supports in instruction and assessment.
- **Student Learning:** (n = 150) Year-end English Proficiency and content (English Language Arts & math) assessment scores.

**Design**
- After accounting for other potential confounds, changes in scores between intervention & comparison participants will be analyzed.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Post Modules</th>
<th>End of Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Outcomes</td>
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Note: Baseline student scores will be collected Spring 2018.

Practice & Policy

**Findings will:**
- Inform refinements for potential broader, multi-state rollout.
- Provide key information on effectively promoting accessibility and accommodation decision-making for educators of ELs via professional development, system-building, & policy making.

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