WHAT YOUR COLLEAGUES ARE SAYING . . .

"This book is for any secondary content teacher, ELD specialist, or administrator seeking to create a lasting impact and improve the likelihood for long-term success for experienced multilingual students."

—Crystal Reid
English Language Development Program Specialist
Littleton Public Schools
Littleton, CO

"Every learner has a right to see themselves as capable, independent learners. This text certainly provides teachers with practical strategies, scaffolds, and structures to create perfect conditions for experienced multilinguals' long-term success."

—Renee Nealon
Teacher
McDowell Elementary at Petaluma City Schools
Petaluma, CA

"The explanation of the uphill battle experienced multilinguals face, even compared to single language/native English speakers, brings into sharp focus how much more critical our role is in students' success. Each subsequent chapter gives teachers an exhaustive toolkit in the strategy described to do just that."

—Deanna McClung
NBCT Biology Teacher, HS PLTW Coordinator
Elkhorn Area High School
Elkhorn, WI

"*Long-Term Success for Experienced Multilinguals* is a treasure of strategies designed to address inequities in ESL education, yet as a bonus, these strategies are ideal for struggling students as well. These strategies can be combined in numerous ways for a variety of lesson plans that can easily be changed as the students' skill levels increase so that all students can be successful."

—Toni Ramey
Biology and Chemistry Special Education Teacher
Gwinnet County Public Schools
Atlanta, GA

"Tan Huynh and Beth Skelton have created a resource that will increase academic success for experienced multilinguals. The book is timely and desperately needed in the field of education. It reflects the reality of language services for multilinguals as well as the professional learning needs of general education teachers. The 'From the Field' features are incredibly realistic and should assist teachers in moving away from a negative mindset toward multilinguals."

—Alice Collins
ELD Consultant
Denver, CO

"I think that this may be the only practical guide written to truly help the teacher of experienced multilinguals and provide resources that support and help experienced multilinguals progress and flourish. The authors guide teachers through planning, through collaborating, through revising lessons, and through resources."

—Patricia Payne
ESL Teacher
Evanston Township High School
Evanston, IL

"The book *Long-Term Success for Experienced Multilinguals* will make a great addition to schools' professional development libraries. Considering the growth in student population that now fall under the category of LTEL [long-term English learner], the book makes a great case for changing to an asset-based name and definition, while explaining clearly how to implement a new framework for instruction and assessment planning. The ideas presented in the framework are clear and structured in an easy way to follow and implement."

—Altagracia H. Delgado
Executive Director of Multilingual Services
Aldine ISD
Houston, TX

"From the first few sentences, readers can see that the authors know our students and their needs. They understand characteristics of today's students, their strengths, and what they truly struggle with. The vignettes could be my students, my schools, and my teachers. The authors understand how schools are structured and provide realistic next steps for teachers to put recent impactful language development research into effective practice."

—Jessica Martinez
Director of Multilingual Education
Eagle County School District
Eagle, CO

"This is a book I would recommend to my colleagues, administration, and anyone in the field ready to make that shift or strengthen their approach to a more asset-based mindset when working with multilingual populations."

—Michelle Kotwica
ESL/ML Instructional Coach
SD83
Melrose Park, IL

"The book is full of so many valuable resources and plans for how to improve teaching and learning. I wish all teachers I work with would read it and implement the strategies."

—Erika Chapman
ESL Teacher/Coordinator
CAISL
Lisbon, Portugal

"This book clearly addresses supporting former ELLs [English language learners] who are still not proficient and successful in academics due to a less than mature understanding of English. More importantly, this book systematically teaches a teacher how to explicitly support these students. The authors state their desired outcome is to help teachers support what used to be called long-term English users that they want renamed to be experienced multilinguals, and this book practically and usefully does this."

—Karen Kozy-Landress
Speech/Language Pathologist
Brevard Public Schools
Merritt Island, FL

LONG-TERM SUCCESS FOR **EXPERIENCED MULTILINGUALS**

LONG-TERM SUCCESS FOR **EXPERIENCED MULTILINGUALS**

TAN HUYNH • BETH SKELTON

Illustrations by Jen Giffen

Foreword by Jim Cummins

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CONTENTS

For additional resources related to *Long-Term Success for Experienced Multilinguals*, visit the companion website at **resources.corwin.com/Long-termSuccessforExperiencedMLs**

FOREWORD

Jim Cummins
University of Toronto

Over the past 50 years, many books have been written that review the research and recommend instructional strategies for students who are learning English as an additional language, typically labeled "English language learners." More recently, a handful of books and articles have addressed the challenges of supporting students who have been labeled "long-term English learners." This label refers to the fact that some multilingual learners of English progress through elementary school without attaining the (largely arbitrary) levels of English proficiency deemed necessary for them to understand instruction and thrive academically in a "mainstream" classroom.

As Tan Huynh and Beth Skelton point out, these labels are deficit-oriented because they define students exclusively by what they are perceived as lacking, namely, proficiency in English, and ignore the multilingual abilities and rich life experiences that students bring to the classroom. Despite the best efforts of educators, many of these students become trapped in a cocoon of questionable administrative regulations enforced by standardized tests that prevent them from engaging academically to their full potential. Inevitably some teachers are likely to perceive these students as less capable academically (and intellectually), and some students themselves may internalize these perceptions. The administrative and regulatory structures that have generated the construct of "long-term English learners" have resulted in low graduation rates, curtailment of students' life opportunities, and perpetuation of an education system that contributes to social inequality.

How can we extricate ourselves from this self-inflicted administrative quagmire? *Long-Term Success for Experienced Multilinguals* provides the most comprehensive, insightful, and lucid answers to this question that I have read (and I have been reading books and articles on teaching English for much of the past 50 years!). The authors adopt

a radically different, and much more evidence-based, approach to supporting multilingual students than many of the approaches that have been implemented in jurisdictions across the United States and elsewhere.

They signal their orientation initially with the term *experienced multilinguals*, which highlights the linguistic, cultural, and experiential assets that students bring to their schools and communities. Throughout the book, they model the instructional approaches they recommend by scaffolding the content through crystal-clear language, transparent organization, engaging visuals, tables that summarize and synthesize information and lesson plans, personal accounts of their own practice, insightful observations and experiences of successful teachers, and narratives that express students' experiences, frustrations, academic breakthroughs, and identity challenges. Unlike many academic volumes (including some that I have written), engagement with this book is painless, invigorating, and inspirational. Furthermore, clarity of communication is achieved without any dilution in the accuracy of the research and theory that form the foundation of the instructional directions proposed by the authors. In a fundamental way, this volume illustrates the observation of 1960s communication theorist (or media "guru") Marshall McLuhan (1964) that "the medium is the message."

How should educators use this book? It would be ideal if policymakers at state and district levels were inspired by the book to revisit administrative regulations and guidelines that have been instrumental in creating the category of "long-term English learners" (experienced multilinguals). This would involve re-evaluating the assumption, operating at both elementary and secondary levels, that students in the process of learning English are not capable of succeeding academically in "mainstream" classes. This assumption holds true only in the situation where teachers in these classes are not prepared (in both senses of the term) to teach a student body that is characterized by all kinds of diversity (linguistic, cultural, socioeconomic, religious, racialized, etc.). Certainly, additional support from specialist language teachers can play a significant role in helping schools respond to linguistic diversity, but classroom teachers must also have the knowledge base and be familiar with instructional strategies that have proven effective in enabling students from linguistically diverse, low-income, and socially marginalized backgrounds to succeed academically.

Much as we might appreciate rapid action from policymakers to dismantle the disabling educational structures that produce so-called

long-term English learners, we probably should not hold our breath that rapid action is imminent. However, even in the context of problematic policy mandates, educators within schools have the power to implement powerful evidence-based and inclusive instructional strategies that respond to the opportunity gaps experienced by linguistically diverse, low-income, and marginalized group students. The instructional framework I proposed (Cummins, 2021), which overlaps significantly with the framework elaborated in this book, specified six major instructional directions to address these opportunity gaps:

- Scaffold comprehension and production of language across the curriculum.
- Engage students' multilingual repertories.
- Reinforce academic language across the curriculum.
- Maximize print access and literacy engagement.
- Connect instruction to students' lives.
- Affirm student identities in association with academic engagement.

The development and implementation of evidence-based whole-school policies that pursue these instructional directions, and those elaborated in much more detail by Tan Huynh and Beth Skelton in this book, can produce dramatic improvements in students' academic performance (e.g., Isola & Cummins, 2020). I can think of no better starting point for schools that aspire to maximize the academic and intellectual potential of all their students than to read this book collectively and to develop school-specific policies and instructional directions that, over the medium term, may dispense with the perceived need for exclusionary labels such as "long-term English learners."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

If this book is the fruit of our labor, then we must acknowledge the many gardeners who lovingly nurtured it alongside us. We would like to thank Dr. Diane Staehr Fenner, who planted the first seed by enthusiastically introducing us to our loving Corwin team. We had a specific dream and vision for our book. When we met with Dan Alpert, our gifted editor, he could see the harvest we wanted to produce. Dan encouraged us from the initial meeting and even suggested we write the final chapter for school leaders to inspire schoolwide implementation of the framework. This was not originally in our plan, but it is essential for creating a culture of success for experienced multilinguals. Our supportive and talented editors, Megan Bedell and Mia Rodriguez, provided timely, specific, and helpful feedback throughout the writing process. We did not feel like they were a publisher but caring co-authors guiding us on the way. We also want to recognize Dr. Maneka Brooks for gifting us the term *experienced multilinguals* to capture the assets-based approach of this book. Lastly, we want to thank our illustrator, Jen Giffen, for patiently bringing to life the message through her careful and thoughtful drawings.

From Tan:

I would like to thank Tim Hodgeden who I have learned so much from. Much of what I have shared with you has been inspired through my collaboration and mentorship with Tim when we co-taught social studies. Our two years of collaboration continues to shape my practice and guide this book. Lastly, I would like to thank Beth for co-writing this book. I leaned on your many strengths, and your wealth of experiences elevated this book. I could not have asked for a better traveling buddy on this journey through the valley and hills. You cheered us all the way to the top, and when we arrived, we became family.

From Beth:

To my colleagues, Mia Allen, Mimi Allen, Erika Chapman, Alice Collins, Kira Cunningham, Sarah Davis, Amber Gonzalez-Cortes, Jen Hanson, Dr. Piedad Kaye, Michelle Kotwica, Jessica Martinez, Patty Payne,

Crystal Reid, and Ana Weiser, thank you! You and so many others are leading the work to make secondary education more equitable for experienced multilinguals. Thank you for encouraging me, reading drafts of the book, and sharing your insights and ideas with us. To my former middle and high school experienced multilingual students, thank you for sharing your many assets with me. You have enriched my life and inspired me with your stories, your cultures, your humor, and your grit. This book was written with you in mind. To my supportive husband, Peter, thank you for keeping me well-fed and the house clean while I worked on this project. To my brilliant daughter, Mari, thank you for reading and commenting on every chapter through your lens as an educator, linguist, and writer. To Tan, thank you for inviting me to co-write this book with you. You have enriched my life and my practice. It's been a joy.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Tan Huynh (he/him) (tankhuynh.com) is a career international school teacher, consultant, and author specializing in secondary multilinguals and teacher collaboration. Coming to America as a refugee at the age of five, Tan vividly remembers the difficulties of acquiring a new language and integrating in American society while nurturing his Asian roots. This experience is the main engine that drives his work today. At school, he spends most of his time collaborating with teachers and in content-area classes to make content accessible. The rest of the time is spent teaching English language and literacy skills. Outside of school, Tan often presents internationally to schools and districts to support their work with multilingual students. Tan also hosts a blog, online courses, and a podcast about teaching multilinguals. With whatever time is left, Tan likes to work out, play badminton, and get lost in nature with his dog child. You can collaborate with Tan at Tan@tankhuynh.com and @TanKHuynh on Twitter.

Beth Skelton (she/her) (www.bethskelton.com) is an independent consultant focused on creating equitable educational experiences for multilingual learners. She has been working in the field for over three decades teaching elementary, middle, high school, and adult language learners in urban, suburban, rural, and international settings. As a university exchange student to Germany, Beth

experienced first-hand the challenges that experienced multilinguals face when studying new content in their non-heritage language. She could communicate with peers but still needed additional scaffolds to successfully write formal papers, read academic texts, and comprehend dense lectures. This influential experience still informs her work with students, teachers, schools, and districts around the world. Through workshops, coaching, and consulting, she advocates for all multilingual learners, especially those who have years of experience. Beth also enjoys hiking, skiing, yoga, playing marimba, gardening, and spending time with her family. You can connect with Beth by email at ellbeth@bethskelton.com or on Twitter at @easkelton.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Jen Giffen is a Canadian teacher, librarian, and EdTech consultant. She has a master's degree in education from the University of Toronto and a specialist in education technology. She is a Google Innovator, sketchnoter, podcaster, and dad-joke aficionado. Jen seeks to ensure learning is authentic and relevant, especially for struggling students.

Tan: To my sister, who lovingly holds our family together.

Beth: To my truly special daughter, Mari.
You are a gift that keeps on giving.

INTRODUCTION

A note from Tan: *My connection to experienced multilinguals started in my sixth-grade English language arts class. I remember my lovely English teacher asking students to read a short story from our district-issued textbook. My classmates each read an entire column of text and I eagerly volunteered to read as well. As I started to read aloud, I sounded like a beginning piano player trying to find the right keys and the correct combination, yet there was no music. I struggled to pronounce the words, read with intonation, and even decode some of the words. As I heard myself stumble over the words, I started turning red around my ears. I felt the judging eyes of my classmates, and when I reached the end of the first paragraph, my teacher rescued me from the drowning embarrassment and said, "OK. Thanks for reading, Tan. Who would like to read the rest of the column?"*

I wasn't a recent arrival to America. Actually, I had been in American public schools for the past five years and even repeated kindergarten. My only formal schooling was in America. Yet, I still read below grade level. That was the first time I realized that I wasn't as academically capable as others. Like many experienced multilinguals we teach, I powered through, overcompensating by using my fluent social language skills to mask my underdeveloped academic English.

That experience is why I have teamed up with the incomparable Beth Skelton to write this book. Everything that I do now—from posting blogs, writing books, hosting a podcast, and consulting internationally—is to support teachers who teach multilinguals like me. I did not give up on school despite reading and writing significantly below grade level all the way through graduation, but many experienced multilinguals do end their education before graduation and many are not able to pass college entrance exams. I do not know what that sixth-grade teacher felt as she heard me painfully read aloud; she might have wanted to help me but did not know the best approach. I hope that this book offers a framework so that teachers feel confident in instructing their experienced multilinguals. With this book, I hope experienced multilinguals feel more capable at school and their competence blossoms into confidence. This is only possible through the dedication of teachers, like yourself, who invested time in reading this book to add to your already polished craft.

A note from Beth: *I consider myself an experienced multilingual in my second language, German. I began learning this language in high school and studied it in college. By my junior year of college, I had gained enough German proficiency to qualify for a year of study at a German university. When I arrived at the university, I felt confident chatting with Germans in the dorms and cafeteria, but when I went to my first class, a health psychology course, I felt like the professor was speaking in a different language. I struggled to understand the highly technical vocabulary and long, convoluted sentences used in the lecture. I became quickly fatigued while reading articles for homework, and I had difficulty writing the required reports. I regularly made embarrassing mistakes when discussing class content, like calling an escalator a wheelchair. I just did not have the academic German skills I needed to express myself or comprehend college-level content. I began to question my intelligence and lost confidence in my ability to succeed. However, with the encouragement and support from patient German friends and classmates, who revised my papers and helped me understand the readings, I eventually passed my courses.*

This experience gives me great respect for experienced multilinguals, who have to work exceptionally hard just to make sense of content classes and complete required work. I know they too can succeed in their academic courses, when educators provide supportive scaffolds. Now in my workshops, coaching, and consulting, I share ideas for supporting these multilingual learners across the curriculum. I am honored to have partnered with Tan Huynh to co-write this book for secondary teachers who serve experienced multilinguals. In this book, we share a framework and scaffolds that would have helped me succeed and feel more confident from the very first day in each of my classes.

CHAPTERS OVERVIEW

CHAPTER 1: AN AFFIRMING SHIFT

This first chapter will address the term currently used to describe this subgroup of students (*long-term English learners* [LTELs]) and the rationale for addressing them as *experienced multilinguals* instead. With this new term, we make a shift from a deficit mindset regarding these students and focus instead on their linguistic, cultural, and experiential assets. The chapter provides an overview of how the strategies in the book can provide experienced multilinguals the support and challenge they need to reach higher levels of academic English proficiency.

The chapter also offers two portraits of experienced multilinguals who are part of this diverse subgroup of multilingual learners. Tan and Beth encourage educators to teach experienced multilinguals grade-level content while developing their academic skills and literacy.

CHAPTER 2: INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR EXPERIENCED MULTILINGUALS

This chapter provides the framework for planning instruction and assessments with a focus on academic English development through content classes. It explains the need for content teachers to teach academic language and the importance of teaching students learning strategies explicitly. Because many experienced multilinguals no longer receive direct English language development services in their schools, the only way they can continue to develop academic English is through their core content and elective courses.

CHAPTER 3: ENGINEERING SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Chapter 3 introduces the first stage of the instructional framework. We provide guidance on how to create the conditions that enable experienced multilinguals to be successful on final unit assessments. This chapter focuses on strategies for engineering the end-of-unit exams and project-based assessments.

CHAPTER 4: WRITING INTEGRATED OBJECTIVES

Writing integrated objectives for lessons with a focus on academic language development is the main concept in Chapter 4. We explain the why and how of integrated objectives across the curriculum. We share clear examples of these objectives from different content areas and the impact they have on learning outcomes. The "Try It Out" sections throughout the chapter break down the process of writing an integrated objective.

CHAPTER 5: ESTABLISHING COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT

This chapter introduces five essential ways content teachers can scaffold content instruction to make it comprehensible for experienced multilinguals. Each section of this chapter provides concrete examples from different content classrooms of each of the five types of scaffolds.

CHAPTER 6: STRUCTURING ACADEMIC OUTPUT

The penultimate chapter addresses ways teachers can extend experienced multilinguals' oral and written output in the classroom. We present scaffolds for vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and academic discourse patterns that encourage secondary multilinguals to express, both verbally and in writing, their understanding of increasingly complex content.

CHAPTER 7: COLLABORATING FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS

The closing chapter provides school leaders (principals, coaches, coordinators, department leads, etc.) with a suggested sequence of actions to methodically implement the instructional framework in this book schoolwide. This chapter shows how teachers can collaborate to amplify the linguistic, cultural, and experiential assets of experienced multilinguals. Through collaborative analysis of student work, co-planning instruction, and lesson study, school leaders can create conditions for experienced multilinguals to thrive in every content area.

MEET THE TEACHERS

Throughout the chapters we discuss how secondary content teachers use strategies to support and challenge experienced multilingual students. In order to protect the identity of the teachers in each vignette, we have changed names and backgrounds, and, in some cases, we have combined experiences of several teachers we have worked with. However, the scenarios we describe remain authentic.

Mrs. Rivera (Chapter 1 and 7): Mrs. Rivera was born in the United States to Spanish-speaking parents from Mexico. As the English language development specialist at Graciela's diverse high school in the United States, she knows how to support experienced multilinguals. She identifies with experienced multilinguals like Graciela because she was also classified as an English language learner until she was in high school. Unfortunately, she does not have enough time in her schedule to directly teach students who are no longer beginning-level English learners. Additionally, she only sees Graciela in passing, at school-related events, or when she has to give her the annual English language proficiency assessment.

Mr. Nguyen (Chapter 2): Mr. Nguyen was born in Vietnam and educated in the United States. He has been a math teacher at an international school in several different countries in Southeast Asia for fifteen years. He understands the academic language needs of multilingual students because Mr. Nguyen also studied in English, which was not his heritage language. In this chapter, Mr. Nguyen follows our instructional framework to help all students become successful mathematicians who can clearly express their thinking and explain their processes.

Mrs. Maple (Chapter 3): Mrs. Maple, who hails from the Midwest, is an experienced international school teacher who is certified to teach science. She received little coursework on instructing multilinguals during her teacher college preparations. However, over her years of collaborating with English language specialists in her various international schools, she has acquired several strategies and approaches to scaffolding learning for multilingual students, especially at the assessment level.

Ms. Maita (Chapter 4): This Afro-Brazilian educator teaches art at a public high school in the United States. As a multilingual learner herself, she empathizes with her students and firmly believes in their potential to succeed in her class. She is certified as an art teacher and is working on her endorsement in working with multilingual learners as well. In Chapter 4, Ms. Maita uses a lesson planning approach that integrates both content and academic language.

Mx. Delgado (Chapter 5): Mx. Delgado is another Spanish-speaking teacher born in the United States. They teach design and have attended several workshops focusing on sheltered instruction for multilinguals. They share ways to make design concepts and its language comprehensible. Their experience shows that everyone is responsible for teaching academic language in order for students to be successful.

Mr. Ichiro (Chapter 6): Born to a Japanese-American family, Mr. Ichiro now spends his time teaching social studies at international schools. Before transitioning over to social studies, he spent many years as an English language specialist, so working with multilinguals is a passion of his. As a social studies teacher, he wants students to think like historians. So that his students can communicate like historians, Mr. Ichiro structures opportunities for them to speak and write using academic language. In this chapter, he shares strategies that structure academic language output.

Ms. Valladares (Chapter 7): Mrs. Valladares teaches high-school business. She was born in the United States, but her parents emigrated from Cuba and she grew up bilingual. She is passionate about

working with experienced multilinguals and has seen their growth in her business classes. She actively seeks ways to support these students and challenge them to continue their education beyond high school, including leading the Latinos in Action club. In this chapter, Ms. Valladares shows the benefits of collaborating with the school's English language specialist and participating in lesson study as meaningful, relevant forms of professional learning.

FEATURES OF THE BOOK

The following special features in each chapter of the book are intended to make the concepts and strategies presented in the book more concrete and comprehensible. These features are just some of the ways we intentionally model the numerous teaching strategies for experienced multilinguals. They invite readers to write reflections and make notes directly in the text and encourage educators to frequently reference it when planning a new unit or lessons. These features are intended to create the best conditions for implementing the instructional framework to support experienced multilinguals. We hope that through this book, experienced multilinguals and the passionate teachers that serve them will experience *long-term* success.

Chapter Sketchnotes

Every chapter begins with a colorful sketchnote hand drawn by our graphic artist, the talented Jen Giffen. These sketchnotes capture the key ideas in the chapter, serve as a visual summary of the information in the chapter, and model one way teachers and students can use sketchnotes to make content more comprehensible.

Student Portraits

Each chapter begins and ends with a short story of a secondary multilingual student and their successes and challenges in a grade-level content class. We follow two different students, Min Woo (Korean) and Graciela (born in the United States to parents from Mexico), through a middle school or high school day as they meet the integrated objectives of different classes.

Image source: iStock.com/gigavector

We have developed charts, tables, and graphics that summarize and illustrate key points. These figures also serve as models for summarizing.

From the Field

These stories come from our and other teachers' experiences in schools and share another perspective on the topics in the chapter.

Try It Out

These boxes ask questions that encourage teachers to try the strategies discussed and apply them to their own classes.

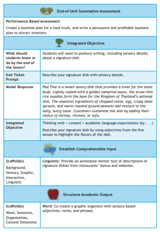
Reflections

These reflection questions at the end of each chapter encourage teachers and leaders to reflect on their own practice. These questions could be stimuli for department meetings, professional learning communities, or a book study.

Templates

These templates can be downloaded and customized. (Visit **resources.corwin.com/Long-termSuccessfor ExperiencedMLs.**) They are designed as a resource for educators as they work with experienced multilinguals across the curriculum.

Appendices



These additional resources consist of

- a chart with verbs, definitions, and some related sentence frames; and
- completed lesson plans from seven different content areas that follow the instructional framework presented in the book.

1

AN AFFIRMING SHIFT

A high school English language development teacher walks into the Grade 10 English Language Arts class. Graciela sinks into her chair upon seeing the teacher, Mrs. Rivera. The teacher gently taps Graciela on the shoulder. "Hola, Graciela. It's time for the annual English language proficiency test. Please follow me." Graciela sighs and grudgingly puts away her class work, hurriedly packs up her school bag, and ducks self-consciously out of class, trying to draw as little attention to herself as possible. She always feels a bit embarrassed about taking the test every year, especially since some of her multilingual classmates no longer have to. She had just begun to understand figurative language in poetry and did not want to miss the rest of the discussion with her table group. Now she will have to do extra work to figure out what she missed. Every year during the state English language proficiency test, Graciela feels the same frustration. In the hall, she asks with some irritation, "Why do I have to take that test *again*? I speak English already, and I was born in America!"

Graciela was first identified as an English language learner (ELL) when she started kindergarten, because her mother noted at registration that she only spoke Spanish at home and an English language test indicated she was not yet proficient in English. In elementary and middle school, Graciela experienced a variety of programs designed to help her develop English, including two years of bilingual education and a few years of pull-out English classes. Now in high school, she feels comfortable speaking English in class and works hard to complete all her assignments. Although writing essays, presenting reports, and reading textbooks are still a challenge for her, she is proud that she is passing her classes. She thought she had also "passed" the English proficiency test last year, but her scores in reading and writing did not meet the state requirements.

Like all students in the United States who are classified as an English language learner, Graciela has to take an English proficiency test every year until she meets certain criteria. Yet, her peers and teachers would not know that she is still considered an English learner as her spoken and social English is on par with her classmates. Until she is **"reclassified"** as English proficient, she will be required to take the yearly test to assess her English language proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Reclassified: When students classified as English language learners (ELLs) achieve a state-required level of English proficiency and receive the status "fully English proficient (FEP)." This process is also known as "redesignation" or "exit" in some states.

FROM THE FIELD

English Language Proficiency Testing

Jackie Doner-Campbell teaches experienced multilinguals in the United States. She recently posted on Facebook the following note about her experience during the annual English language proficiency testing period.

"I had such a hard day at school today. It started with one of my LTEL students expressing their frustration about still being in the program and then saying it's because he is dumb. I tried my best to help him reframe that, but it's so hard. This student is truly smart and has a lot of knowledge and vocabulary, but has not done well on tests."

In this chapter, we describe a specific group of multilingual learners in Grades 6 through 12 who are currently classified as long-term English learners (LTELs). These multilingual learners have been studying in English for six or more years but are still classified as "English language learners" (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015, p. 163). In the United States, these students still have the right to language assistance programs (U.S. Department of Justice & U.S. Department of Education [USDOJ & USDOE], 2015). When schools fail to provide students with appropriate services, this can be seen as a violation of students' civil rights to equitable learning (Calderón et al., 2020). While continuing to offer direct English language development classes for these secondary multilinguals is one way to provide appropriate services, this book focuses on the scaffolds and appropriate grade-level expectations all content teachers across the curriculum can provide. We believe all teachers need to understand this diverse group of students so they can serve their needs.

We have designed this chapter to build background knowledge about these secondary multilingual learners so their math, science, social studies, language arts, and other content area teachers can meet their needs. First, we situate this group of English language learners within the bigger picture of multilingual learners. Then, we provide some insights into the state and federal requirements that these students need to meet in order to be considered as English proficient. We ask educators to consider how these requirements impact their own students and their perception of their students, who are labeled as LTELs. Later, we address the research about how long it takes to

develop grade-level academic language skills and the issue of the overrepresentation of these students in special education. Finally, we propose a new, asset-based term for this growing population of students: *experienced multilinguals*. We highlight the linguistic, cultural, and experiential assets these students bring to their schools and communities. We will close by introducing two experienced multilingual students who will be featured throughout the book.

As you read, consider this series of guiding questions:

- Who are multilingual learners?
- Who are long-term English learners, and how are they classified?
- What are the impacts of the LTEL label?
- How long does it take to develop proficiency in English?
- How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact secondary multilinguals?
- Who are experienced multilinguals?
- Why and how should teachers get to know the experienced multilinguals in their classes?

WHO ARE MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS?

Multilingual learners comprise a growing population of students in classrooms across the United States and around the world. In fact, people who speak more than one language make up the majority of the world's population (Gration, 2021).

> Around the world, being multilingual is the norm,
> not the exception.

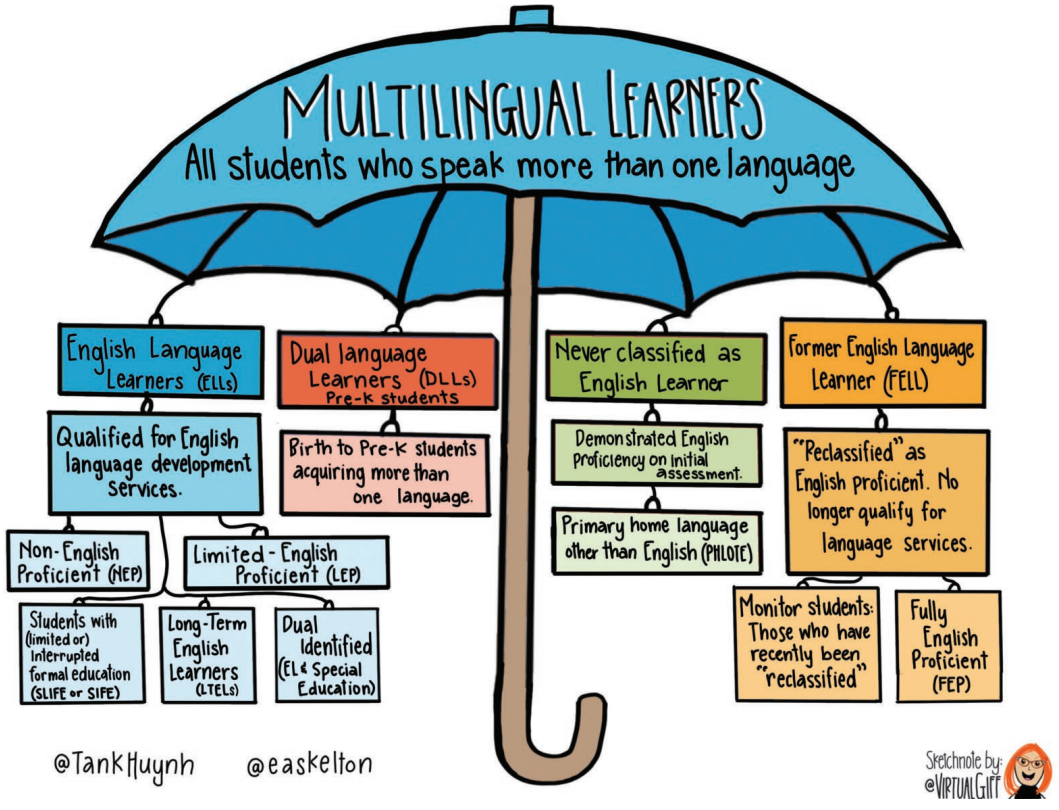
The umbrella term **multilingual learner** (ML) includes all students who speak more than one language. In this book, we apply this term to students learning in schools where English is the primary language of instruction and "whose parent or guardian reports speaking one or more languages other than English at home" (Snyder & Staehr Fenner, 2021, p. 2).

Some of these multilinguals may already be considered English proficient, but many are still developing the English proficiency necessary

Multilingual learners: Students who speak more than one language

to succeed in schools where English is the primary language of instruction, also known as **English-medium schools**. Multilingual learners who are still developing English proficiency now represent over 10 percent of total school enrollment in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). As shown in Figure 1.1, the term *multilingual learner* comprises a veritable alphabet soup of labels for different groups of students, each with unique backgrounds, assets, and educational needs. With this book, we hope to share the central message that multilingual learners are diverse and dynamic; they bring tremendous assets to the classroom and enrich the educational experience for all learners.

1.1 Categories of Multilingual Learners With Some Terms Used by States, Organizations, and Countries



online resources

English-medium schools: Schools where English is the primary language of instruction

WHO ARE LONG-TERM ENGLISH LEARNERS, AND HOW ARE THEY CLASSIFIED?

The term *long-term English learner (LTEL)* has been used in the United States for over two decades to distinguish between newcomers, refugees, and other beginning-level English language learners and students like Graciela who have attended school in English for many years. They no longer need the type of support provided in newcomer English language classes, but they still do need appropriate scaffolds and grade-level challenges in order to continue developing their academic English skills and content knowledge. Because these secondary multilinguals have experience in English and understand the culture of their schools, they possess different strengths and needs than students at more beginning levels of English language acquisition. They are often quite fluent when interacting socially with their peers and teachers, which may lead some educators to misinterpret their ability to comprehend class content and follow instruction without additional support. However, when their strengths are not recognized and their needs are not addressed, these students may not experience success in school.

In the United States, multilingual learners are classified as long-term English learners if they "have not attained English language proficiency within 5 years of initial classification as an English learner and first enrollment in the local educational agency" (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015, p. 163). Determining exactly what constitutes English language proficiency, however, has been left up to individual states.

There is no nationwide, consistent
definition of English language proficiency or
federal-level data about students classified as LTELs.

Sources from regional and state agencies reveal that students with the classification LTEL make up between 25 and 75 percent of all middle and high school English learners in many cities and states across the country (Buenrostro & Maxwell-Jolly, 2021; Menken et al., 2012; Uro & Lai, 2019). Because each state, agency, and international school

sets its own requirements for determining if a student has reached English proficiency, the numbers of students with this classification vary widely.

In addition to requiring a certain language proficiency level on a standardized English assessment, some states and international schools also require students to prove their proficiency through a body of evidence that may include standardized academic tests, passing grades in core content classes, and teacher recommendations (Okhremtchouk et al., 2018). It is possible that a student like Graciela living in California may still be classified as an LTEL, but if she were in Colorado with those same scores and body of evidence, she would be considered English proficient and no longer carry the LTEL label. In international schools, the determination of which students qualify for additional English language support services is made at the school level and varies widely from school to school, even within the same country. Some of the different ways states and international schools determine English proficiency are shown in Figure 1.2.

The various requirements for demonstrating proficiency in English indicate that the construct of English proficiency is neither static nor standard. It is no wonder that Graciela questioned why she had to take the English language proficiency assessment. Some students currently classified as LTEL may have scored at a proficient level on their state's English language proficiency test one year but unfortunately have not yet met the required score on a state academic achievement test. In other equally upsetting cases, they may have scored well on the state academic achievement test *and* the English proficiency test but received low grades in a core content class. Although many monolingual English-speaking students also score unsatisfactorily on standardized achievement tests and receive low grades in core content classes, they are not therefore labeled as English Learners. Students who are currently classified as LTELs clearly have a significant, inequitable burden of proof to be reclassified as fully English proficient (FEP). As Dr. Maneka Brooks states,

> "It cannot be assumed that the primary reason that [a student] remains classified as an [English Learner] is because of her English proficiency" (Brooks, 2016).

1.2 Requirements for Reclassification to English Proficient

Criterion	Explanation	Examples
English Language Proficiency Assessment	There are many different English Language Proficiency assessments used across the United States and internationally. Each has a different definition of *proficiency* based on different criteria such as accuracy, fluency, use of discipline-specific language, etc. Some tests weigh each language domain (listening, speaking, reading, writing) differently.	WIDA ACCESS or MODEL test, ELPA 21, ELPAC, LASLinks, EILTS, Oxford English, IDAT, Woodcock-Muñoz, TELPAS
Grades	Some states and schools require students to achieve a certain score or grade in core content classes. Individual teachers vary in how they grade, and the criteria for a passing grade can vary from teacher to teacher, even within the same department at the same school.	Course grades may include criteria not related to English language proficiency such as attendance, bringing materials, homework completion, and participation.
Standardized Achievement Tests	Some states and schools require students to achieve at a certain level on a standardized test in reading, math, and other content areas.	SAT, ACT, ISA, NAEP, PARCC, IGCSE, iREADY, MAP, and various state-developed tests
Other Requirements	Some states and schools also require an additional body of evidence to show English proficiency. In some places, a student may not be reclassified unless they meet all of the criteria in one academic year.	Writing sample, teacher recommendation, classwork, additional reading assessment

With the need to meet so many requirements for reclassification as English proficient, it is no surprise that these students comprise such a high percentage of middle and high school students. The tremendous variation in requirements students need to meet in order to shed the label of LTEL also means that students in this subgroup of multilingual learners are highly diverse.

REFLECTION

How has your understanding of students labeled as LTELs shifted based on the information presented in this section?

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WHY IS THE LTEL LABEL PROBLEMATIC?

Unfortunately, students classified as LTEL are often viewed as a homogenous group of struggling learners; we know they are diverse and dynamic individuals.

Because the label itself indicates these students are taking longer than their peers to achieve English proficiency, a series of undeserving, deficit-based characteristics such as "unmotivated," "struggling reader," and "disengaged" often come attached to the label. The LTEL label itself is therefore problematic because it is deficit-based, and that perception can detrimentally impact students' educational experience.

The problematic classification of LTEL is not neutral and can "have life-impacting consequences for individuals" (Kibler & Valdés, 2016). If secondary content teachers perceive that students with the LTEL label are struggling, they may hold lower expectations or even over-scaffold lessons. As author and educator Dr. Doug Fisher says,

"Teachers' perceptions become students' realities" (Fisher, 2021).

That reality for many students classified as LTEL is all too often classes focused on basic skills rather than challenging and engaging content. While the intention may be to support these students and "fill gaps," the result is too often unmotivating skill drills, knowledge-level questions, and less engaging content that leaves students further behind. When Soto (2021) shadowed high school students classified as LTEL throughout their school day, she discovered that they mostly completed worksheets in classes and rarely had the opportunity or expectation to discuss rigorous topics with their peers. Additionally, if content teachers believe these students are struggling readers, they may not require them to read the grade-level text but instead provide oral summaries or simply bullet points of the main ideas (Brooks, 2020). These well-intentioned supports are actually examples of over-scaffolding that reduces the rigor of the lesson so significantly that students are no longer challenged. Certainly, students who frequently experience these kinds of lessons and scaffolds may appear unmotivated or disengaged. When teachers think that secondary multilinguals cannot learn grade-level content, students may not be held to the same expectations. The lack of consistently high expectations and challenging content across the school day may also cause students to stagnate in their development of both academic English and content-specific skills.

When teachers think that secondary
multilinguals cannot learn grade-level content, students
may not be held to the same expectations.

REFLECTION

- How has the LTEL label impacted the way you instruct these learners in your classes?

_____

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_____

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- To what extent are LTELs held to the same grade-level expectations, or do they receive simplified assignments and assessments?

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- How does your school collect data for this subgroup of students?

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Students' educational programming may also be affected by the LTEL label. In some schools, students classified as LTEL are required to take an English language development class or enroll in specialized content courses designed for English learners, which unfortunately may restrict their access to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, elective courses focused on a blossoming area of interest, or other challenging, upper-level courses. These specialized language development courses may also negatively influence how students perceive themselves. When one student who was classified as an LTEL was asked why they were in an English language development class, the student simply said, "Because we are dumb" (Thompson, 2015, p. 35). Additionally, some schools and districts require students at lower English language proficiency levels to take lower-level content courses as well, which can negatively impact their entire high school career. If students do not have access to higher-level courses, they may not meet necessary graduation requirements or college entrance expectations. An opportunity withheld is a door closed on a new world full of potential. One recent study of graduation rates across four different subgroups of multilingual learners found that students classified as LTEL had a lower graduation rate than even newcomers (Haas et al., 2014). Statistics like this confirm that many students classified as LTEL "have not been well-served by their schools" (Calderón et al., 2020, p. 23). In this book,

we hope to shift the deficit-based narrative around these students, provide administrators with practical approaches for schoolwide supports, and set these students up for a more equitable educational experience in secondary schools.

An opportunity withheld is a door closed
on a new world full of potential.

FROM THE FIELD

Educational Programming

Beth shares an experience with an experienced multilingual who advocated for participating in grade-level English classes.

When I was a high school English language development (ELD) teacher, one of my ninth-grade students approached me at the end of the first week of school. He respectfully requested a change in his schedule from my ELD class to the ninth-grade English Language Arts (ELA) class. I hesitated because his scores on the English proficiency test suggested he would struggle in the ninth-grade ELA class without additional support. I asked him why he wanted to switch classes and his thoughtful response moved me. He argued that he wanted to graduate and study at a university. He knew that the ELD class did not give him the necessary credits for graduation. He did not want to take both the ELD class and the ninth-grade ELA class, because he wanted to explore an elective during the ELD class instead. After I explained the situation to the ninth-grade ELA teacher and got her approval, I changed the student's schedule. I told him he could come to me for extra help at any time. He gleefully changed classes, and I never saw him for extra support. He passed the ninth-grade ELA class with a B. When he stopped by to thank me at the end of the year, I had to thank *him* for helping me see beyond a test score.

When identified English learners struggle with academics or seem to underperform relative to their peers and grade-level expectations, schools may begin the process of providing appropriate interventions and eventually identify a learning disability. While "timely and accurate identification of disabilities for ELs can be extremely challenging" (Sahakyan & Poole, 2022, p. 4), many schools around the world do

follow a careful, multitiered process for identifying learning disabilities in multilingual learners. Despite these processes, many studies have shown that students classified as LTEL are overrepresented in special education compared with other groups of students (Thompson, 2015; Uro & Lai, 2019). In fact, a recent longitudinal study of over a half a million multilingual learners in a U.S. state revealed that up to 80 percent of students identified with a learning disability in elementary school later became classified as LTEL (Sahakyan & Poole, 2022). This overrepresentation may be due to the initial identification process or the later reclassification process.

The process of identifying and reclassifying multilingual learners with learning differences and disabilities is not the intention of this book; providing general educators with a framework and strategies for serving the needs of all students classified as LTEL, even those who have been dual-identified with special learning needs, is the intent. This book focuses on secondary content classes because "even if a student is found eligible for special education services, their academic progress will be influenced by the quality of instruction they receive in their *general* education classes" (Haas & Brown, 2019, p. 29). The framework and strategies in this book are designed to help teachers provide high-quality instruction in general education classes for all students classified as LTEL.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO DEVELOP PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH?

Since one of the ways students are classified as LTEL is the length of time they take to achieve English proficiency, it is important to review the research in this area. The time multilingual learners need to develop grade-level English proficiency varies widely depending on many factors, including the following:

- Prior schooling
- Socioeconomic status
- Access to bilingual education
- The student's heritage language
- Quality and language of instruction
- Age of entry into an English-medium school
- Literacy development in the student's heritage language

Regardless of all these variables, research indicates that students require between four and ten years to develop a level of proficiency in English that approaches grade-level peers, if they receive comprehensible instruction and supported opportunities to speak and write across the curriculum (Collier & Thomas, 2002; Cummins, 1981; Takanishi et al., 2017). Based on this research, we contend that students who are classified as LTELs after just five years may actually be on an *expected* English development trajectory. Developing grade-level academic English is a long process just like mastering any complex skill. Although our society expects students to take years to master a complex skill like playing an instrument, when it comes to academic English development, we expect full proficiency after just a few years. These unreasonable expectations are then expressed in the deficit-based LTEL label. By stating these students are taking a long time to develop English,

the LTEL label indicates they have a problem.
We believe they have potential.

Of all the factors listed previously, the one teachers have the most control over is the quality of instruction. This book provides a framework so that secondary multilinguals can receive quality content and academic language instruction across the curriculum.

HOW DID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACT SECONDARY MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS?

An additional factor that has impacted the time students need to develop academic English is the COVID-19 pandemic. The unexpected pandemic interrupted the formal educational experience of all students around the world for many months. Online and hybrid instruction, social distancing, masking requirements, and frequent quarantines made it especially challenging for multilingual learners to learn new content in English and forge meaningful relationships with their peers and teachers. Although schools did their best to provide students with the necessary technology to connect to online classes, many students, including multilingual learners, sadly lacked a consistent high-speed internet connection. Even when the technology

worked, most teachers (we included) had little to no experience prior to the pandemic in providing engaging, comprehensible lessons with adequate academic language scaffolds in a virtual environment. Most students also never experienced virtual instruction. Teachers, schools, students, and their families were all in uncharted, unfamiliar waters. In addition, some multilingual learners also experienced food and housing insecurities (Lazarín, 2020), which impacted their ability to focus during online and hybrid classes.

The long-term impacts of school closures, online instruction, and lack of consistent face-to-face interaction with teachers and peers on school-age multilingual learners is not yet known. However, we can predict that two years of interrupted in-person education means that many students may not have received the consistent academic English support they needed during the pandemic. Students may experience the repercussions of these two years of crisis teaching for the next decade. For example, students who were beginning-level language learners during the spring of 2020 may not have received the necessary comprehensible input and support required to develop academic English at the expected rate during those first years as teachers were understandably careening from the whiplash of the transition to online teaching. Students who were already at intermediate levels of English proficiency at the beginning of the pandemic may not have had regular opportunities for interactions with English-proficient peers. Once schools went back to consistent face-to-face instruction, students could again more easily develop academic English and content skills, but those years during the pandemic will still count toward a possible future classification as LTEL. These interrupted school experiences will likely result in even more middle and high school students being classified as LTEL in the coming years.

Despite the challenges of learning during the pandemic, experienced multilinguals showed remarkable resilience as they participated in virtual classes while caring for younger siblings, cooking meals for their family, or sitting in a car outside a public library to access the internet. They may not have made expected gains in academic English, but we believe that these students gained tremendous life experience that teachers can now build on. Additionally, many multilingual learners supported their families financially and took on more adult roles in the household when their guardians had to work frontline jobs. This is the perfect time to reconsider the limitations of the LTEL label and shift our focus instead to the assets these students have.

FROM THE FIELD

Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic

One of Beth's students illustrates the resilience and growth many students experienced during the height of the pandemic.

I had the privilege of tutoring several highly resilient students classified as LTEL during the pandemic. One of the eighth-grade students, Josue, decided to move back to Mexico to live with his grandfather because the school offered a fully online option for the fall of 2020. Josue continued to Zoom into school in the United States for all of his classes and signed up for extra virtual tutoring hours with me after school twice a week. Due to the time difference between Mexico and his school in the United States, he had to log in very early in the morning every day. During our tutoring sessions, he showed me how to navigate various websites, and I provided him with additional scaffolds for completing assignments in his core content classes.

After school, he helped his grandfather around the ranch. He fed the animals every day, cooked meals, and repaired the chicken coop. He played on a local baseball team and learned how to waltz for a friend's quinceañera celebration.

When he decided to return to face-to-face instruction in his U.S. school for the second semester, he successfully reintegrated into grade-level classes. He had improved his Spanish language skills, regained his connection to his Mexican culture, and passed his academic courses in English. The life experiences this student gained during his virtual schooling are irreplaceable and will certainly support his continued education.

REFLECTION

- What academic gains or nonacademic experiences did your students make during the pandemic?

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- What have your students learned during school closures and virtual instruction that you could tap into during your content lessons?

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WHO ARE EXPERIENCED MULTILINGUALS?

In order to focus on these students' assets, we are choosing to refer to students currently classified as long-term English learners as *experienced multilinguals* (EMs) (Brooks, personal communication, July 30, 2021). This assets-based term highlights the fact that these middle and high school students have gained valuable experience and that they already speak at least one other language. We hope to shift teachers' perceptions and focus the attention on the assets these students bring to the classroom rather than focusing on perceived deficits.

Labels matter. As Brooks (2020) wrote, "Labels impact the way in which educators engage with students and understand their needs and abilities" (p. 7). Therefore, we have chosen a label that aims to *positively* shape the way educators view these students. Experienced multilinguals bring many positive life experiences, linguistic assets, and cultural funds of knowledge to their learning (Moll, 2019). They know how to navigate multilingual, multicultural spaces fluidly. Teachers can value the experiences these students, their families, and their communities possess as important instructional treasures that play a central role in teaching and learning (Zacarian et al., 2021). The assets that experienced multilinguals, families, and communities offer include such things as

- having lived through specific historical events,
- a rich tradition of oral and written literature,
- personal experience living in different regions, and
- knowledge of various cultural practices, traditions, and beliefs.

Throughout the book, we will focus on what experienced multilinguals *can* do. We understand that they continue to need support across the curriculum, but we take an asset-based perspective on what these students can achieve and how to best provide that support. We believe their heritage languages, cultures, and lived experiences are valuable resources that enhance and facilitate learning (González et al., 2005; Little et al., 2017; Moll, 2019). Developing an assets-based mindset as shown in Figure 1.3 is one essential way to create long-term success for experienced multilinguals.

1.3 Differences Between a Deficit-Based and an Asset-Based Mindset

Deficit-Based Mindset	Asset-Based Mindset
• Experienced multilinguals (EMs) are not capable of learning grade-level content. • EMs' heritage languages hinder their ability to learn English. • EMs lack the experiences needed to learn this content. • EMs are reading below grade level so they won't be able to access the text.	• EMs are capable of learning and excelling in grade-level content. • EMs' cultures provide rich opportunities for curricular connections. • EMs' languages enhance learning. • EMs' lived experiences provide context for learning. • EMs who are less proficient in English can learn grade-level content with intentional support and graduate from high school.

We encourage educators to begin using the more assets-based term *experienced multilinguals* when referring to their students who have been learning in an English environment for five or more years. We hope this book goes a long way in achieving the wish Claravall expressed on his podcast, "Maybe ten years from now the word LTEL is gone" (EdPod, 2018). In its place, we hope that more experienced multilinguals will find the long-term success they are capable of.

REFLECTION

- How does the term *experienced multilingual* shift how you perceive students who have been learning English for five or more years?

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- What would happen if the term *experienced multilingual* were used more often at your school?

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- How would you explain the purpose and benefits of shifting to the term *experienced multilingual* to a colleague?

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_____

WHY AND HOW SHOULD SECONDARY CONTENT TEACHERS GET TO KNOW THE EXPERIENCED MULTILINGUALS IN THEIR CLASSES?

We recognize that this group of multilingual learners is as diverse as any other group of students. Understanding the complex identities of

experienced multilinguals is an essential first step in successfully and equitably educating them. If secondary content teachers understand their students' rich backgrounds—including their vast experiences in and out of school, their heritage languages, and their cultural values—they can meaningfully connect their lessons to these funds of knowledge (Moll, 2019; Paris & Alim, 2017; Snyder & Staehr Fenner, 2021). Throughout the book, we will share concrete ways to make these connections to enrich the education of all students.

Therefore, we encourage teachers to spend some time getting to know their experienced multilinguals. There are many ways to listen to students' stories and learn about their educational experiences, including the following:

- Surveys
- Journal entries
- One-on-one interviews
- After-school or lunchtime chats

Surveys may seem like the most efficient way to gain this information, but we caution teachers to build rapport with their students first and only ask a few questions at a time. It is often more effective to ask questions about students' backgrounds that directly connect to the current unit rather than asking students to complete a long survey at the beginning of the year. Figure 1.4 provides some topics and questions teachers might ask students as journal prompts, in informal interviews, in small focus groups, or on written surveys. Although we include a variety of open and closed questions in several different categories, we advise teachers to be cautious asking questions about students' educational background and family. While this information can be valuable in informing instruction, it may also cause students some anxiety, especially if they are undocumented or have interrupted formal education. Sometimes asking the more open-ended questions like "Please tell me something about your education before you came to this school" or "Please tell me something about the adults in your home" allows students to share within their comfort zone and open the communication channels for follow-up questions later. We suggest teachers ask just a few of these questions at a time and continue building connections to their students throughout the school year through a variety of interactions. These interactions not only build relationships with the students but also help teachers design lessons to connect with their students.

1.4 Possible Questions for Interviews, Surveys, Focus Groups, or Informal Chats

Topic	Possible Questions or Prompts
Educational Background	• Where were you born? • What countries have you lived in? • Tell me about your schooling before you started at this middle school/high school. • When you were in elementary school, how did your teachers help you learn English? • Did you go to a special English language development class? What did you do in that class? • Have you ever had bilingual classes or instruction in your heritage language(s)? What was that like for you? • Did any of your teachers ever use your heritage language(s) in class? What was that like for you? • Did you change schools during your elementary education? How often? Did you change schools during your middle school education?
Linguistic Background	• Which language(s) do you speak with adults in your home? • Which language(s) do you speak with siblings in your home? • When you speak with bilingual friends, which language(s) do you use? • In which language(s) do you prefer to read for fun outside of school (texts, chats, games, books, websites, articles, etc.)? • In which language(s) do you prefer to write outside of school when texting, writing lists, sending emails, and so forth? • Which language(s) do you consider your most proficient or "best" language(s)? Why? • If you have a choice to read or write in any language in a class in school, which language would you choose? Why?
Current Academic Experience at School	• When do you feel most successful at school? Why? • Do you feel motivated to succeed at school? Why or why not? • What do you like about school? • What is challenging or frustrating for you at school? What kind of assignments are most difficult for you (essays, readings, extended projects, etc.)? • What is your favorite subject at school? Why? • How do your teachers support you? • What could your teachers do to support or challenge you? • What do you do when you are having difficulty in a class, with homework, or with a project? • Which classes do you think will be most useful for you in the future? Why?

(Continued)

(Continued)

Topic	Possible Questions or Prompts
Sense of Belonging	• What activities are you involved with at school (clubs, sports, volunteer activities, etc.)? • How do you feel about your peers? Do you feel respected by other students in your classes? • Do you have a group of friends at school? • Is there a teacher, coach, or other adult at school that you feel close to? What do you like about that person? • What is something you wish your teachers knew about you? • How do you perceive yourself as a student at this school?
Family	• Tell me about the adults who live in your home. • Who do you feel closest to in your family? Why? • How do you help your family or around the house (chores, work, child care, etc.)? • Do you have any siblings? Tell me about them. • What do you like to do at home or with your family members?
Other Experiences	• What do you like to do outside of school or school-related activities? • Are you involved in community organizations (church, youth groups, community sports, music groups, etc.)? • What brings you joy? • What are your hobbies or personal interests outside of school?
Future Plans	• What would you like to do after high school? • What goals are you most excited to achieve by the end of middle school/high school? • How have your experiences and education influenced your interests for the future? • How could this school best support your plans for the future?

online resources

Adapted from Dr. Maneka Brooks, Patty Payne, and the CUNY-NYSIEB Framework. Available at **resources.corwin.com/Long-Term SuccessforExperiencedMLs**

Teachers in the United States may be surprised to learn that the majority of experienced multilinguals in their classrooms were born in the United States and have attended U.S. schools since kindergarten (Batalova et al., 2007). They may discover that some students no longer speak their heritage languages well and others consider English

as their most proficient language. Most likely, these interviews and interactions will reveal students who are motivated to succeed and have high aspirations for their future (Kim & García, 2014). Through these personal connections, we can get to know the individuals behind the labels and counter the negative stereotypes.

TRY IT OUT

Student Interview or Survey

1. Create a set of interview questions for your experienced multilinguals that includes at least one question from each topic in Figure1.4.
2. Use an online survey platform like Survey Monkey or Google Forms to collect the information. Use the information you gather to inform your instruction and interactions with the students.

STUDENT PORTRAITS

There is no one "typical" experienced multilingual. The students highlighted in the following portraits are composites of many students we have worked with over the years. The following students provide a sense of the diversity and variety of assets experienced multilinguals bring to school. These student portraits provide a focus for our work and the strategies we present. Although we focus on just two experienced multilinguals, their educational experiences mirror many of these students. We acknowledge that the educational programming we describe for both of these multilinguals for many reasons may be considered out of compliance with federal requirements, but these portraits share the reality of many experienced multilinguals.

We will follow the students in these portraits, Graciela and Min Woo, through their school day and use them as examples of how teachers can support and challenge their experienced multilinguals. We believe all students will benefit by building on the assets of experienced multilinguals and offering appropriate scaffolds in challenging secondary content courses.

GRACIELA

Portrait of an Experienced Multilingual

Graciela is a hard-working tenth-grade student. Her parents are from Mexico, but she was born in the United States. She went to a bilingual school from kindergarten to second grade. However, when her parents moved to a new school district, she received pull-out English language development classes instead of bilingual education. As a middle school student, she received academic language support in the sheltered English language arts class but took all other content classes without additional academic language support. Now in tenth grade, she has no direct English language support classes.

Graciela speaks Spanish with her parents, bilingual friends, and community members. She reads shopping lists, menus, and headlines in Spanish but prefers to read books and magazines in English. She uses her complete linguistic repertoire (Spanish and English) when interacting socially between classes, at lunch, and at recess. On the weekends, she helps her father in their family store and interacts with customers in Spanish and English. At this point, she is interested in marketing and graphic design and is planning to study at a university in the United States.

In school, Graciela is motivated to do well but is often disappointed when her grades on projects and report cards do not reflect her hard work. She tries to complete all the assignments, so she wonders why her grades are not better. Occasionally she asks for extra help, but she is fearful of being ridiculed by her classmates, so she often slips under the radar as she tries to figure it out on her own or with her friends.

Talking with her friends is the best part of each school day. Graciela appreciates the opportunity to talk to her bilingual classmates about class topics, because it helps her understand content texts. When she has to read independently, she depends on visuals, headings, and key words to comprehend the main ideas.

Graciela would rather give an oral report in class than labor to write an essay. She knows how to write full, comprehensible sentences, but she needs more coaching and explicit instruction to write more like a scientist, mathematician, and historian. When teachers give her specific feedback on writing, she gladly makes changes.

Although Graciela is still classified as an English learner, she does not receive any extra support classes or work with an English language development teacher anymore. After ten years of education in the United States, she sees herself as English proficient.

MIN WOO

Portrait of an Experienced Multilingual

Min Woo is a bouncy, positive, and helpful seventh grader born in Korea to adoring Korean parents. Min Woo's dad works for a Korean technology company that has manufacturing plants throughout Southeast Asia. Min Woo went to Korean-speaking schools in Korea up to first grade when he followed his father as he worked on multiyear projects outside of Korea. In each place, he enrolled in international schools where English is the language of instruction. Fortunately, at these schools, Min Woo continued to learn Korean formally through after-school tutors and at international schools that offered opportunities to learn Korean. Understandably, his reading and writing level in Korean is not on grade level compared with other seventh graders in Korea. Not surprisingly, Min Woo has a more proficient command of English than Korean.

At home, Min Woo's family speaks Korean but everyone in the household is literate in English as well. Min Woo is highly literate in Korean for a person who only spent his first school year in Korea as a result of his parents painstakingly investing time and financial resources to grow his Korean language skills.

During free-voluntary reading time at school, he switches between Korean and English books. When speaking to Min Woo, one would see he is a fluent, confident user of English without any issues following his teachers' spoken instructions. Min Woo can decode and pronounce all words found in a grade-level text but needs support to comprehend the text. He can write in grammatically correct sentences and paragraphs but needs support in producing writing that meets discipline-specific expectations and to use evidence drawn from texts and video resources.

Though Min Woo does not qualify for English language development services at his international school, he still needs additional support to be successful in his content classes.

TRY IT OUT

Assets-Based Student Portrait

1. Use the information you gathered in the student survey or interview to create a student portrait that highlights the student's assets.
2. Share the portrait with your colleagues and encourage them to build on the student's assets in their lessons.

CLOSING REMARKS

This book serves as a guide for all secondary content teachers who are fortunate enough to work with experienced multilinguals. In the following chapters, we share a framework for planning and teaching so that all students receive appropriate support for both academic English and content learning. We stand by the belief that through the collective efforts of all teachers in the school, experienced multilinguals will have long-term success.

As Robinson (2010) explains, "Farmers and gardeners know you can't make a plant grow. . . . The plant grows itself. What you do is provide the conditions for growth." In Chapter 7, we offer some suggestions for programming that will create the conditions for more equitable educational experiences across the curriculum. We offer a systematic approach to collaboration that raises awareness, capitalizes on teachers' expertise during co-planning, and provides differentiated support for experienced multilinguals. We are convinced that if more teachers implement the equity-based framework in this book, they will create the conditions for growth so their experienced multilinguals can reach their fullest potential.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- *Experienced multilingual* is an assets-based term that highlights the valuable resources these secondary learners possess.
- In many middle schools and high schools, experienced multilinguals make up a large and growing percentage of students identified as English learners.
- Experienced multilinguals have the right to equitable education that includes meaningful access to grade-level content courses.
- Content teachers have the responsibility to learn about the linguistic, experiential, and cultural assets of their experienced multilinguals.
- Experienced multilinguals are a diverse group of individuals with rich backgrounds.