



Response to Intervention

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**& Its Applications to Students with Reading
Difficulties/Disabilities & Language Learners**

Response to Intervention (RTI)

School-Wide Systems for Student Success: A **Response to Intervention** (RTI) Model

Academic Systems

Tier 3/Tertiary Interventions

- Individual students
- Assessment-based
- High intensity

Tier 2/Secondary Interventions

- Some students (at-risk)
- High efficiency
- Rapid response
- Small group interventions
- Some individualizing

Tier 1/Universal Interventions

- All students
- Preventive, proactive

1-5%

5-15%

80-90%

Behavioral Systems

Tier 3/Tertiary Interventions

- Individual students
- Assessment-based
- Intense, durable procedures

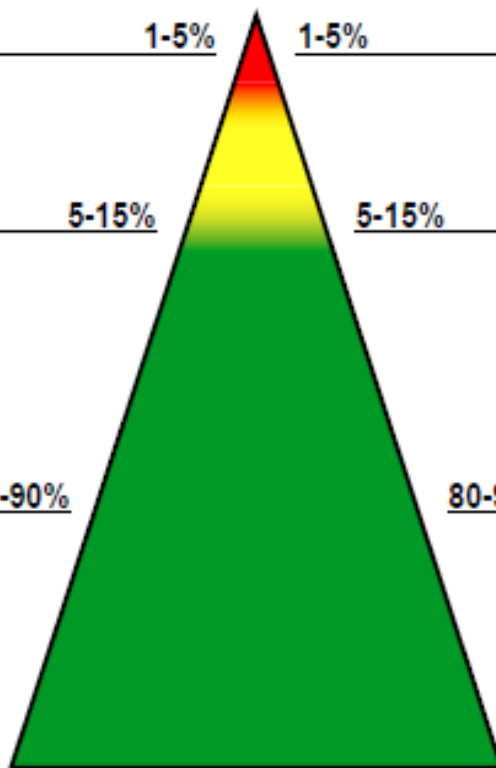
Tier 2/Secondary Interventions

- Some students (at-risk)
- High efficiency
- Rapid response
- Small group interventions
- Some individualizing

80-90%

Tier 1/Universal Interventions

- All settings, all students
- Preventive, proactive

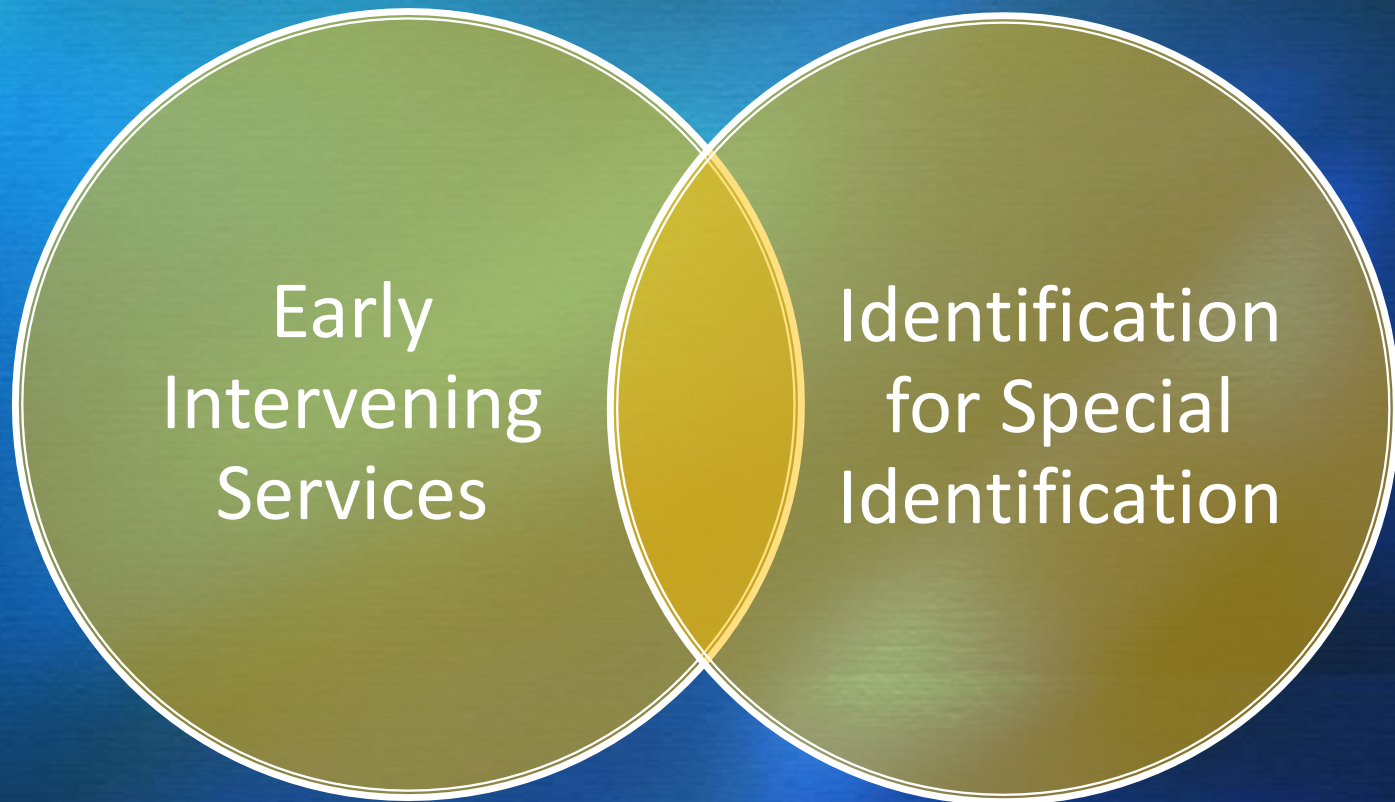


Illinois PBS Network, Revised May 15, 2008.
Adapted from "What Is School-Wide PBS?"
OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive
Behavioral Interventions and Supports.
Accessed at <http://pbis.org/schoolwide.htm>

Why RTI?



Two Purposes



Changes...

- RTI “will require some fundamental changes in the way general education and special education engage in assessment and intervention activities” (NASP, 2006).
 - “Response” to instruction and interventions
 - Screening and progress monitoring of all students
 - Looking at contexts, the quality of instruction, and classroom datasets, not just individual students
 - Focus on the quality of core “Tier 1” instruction

Challenges when Implementing RTI with Language Learners AND Possible Solutions



Challenge 1: School personnel are confused by what it means for instructional practices and interventions to be “research-based.”

What Do We Mean by “Research-based”?

- The RTI model is based on the principle that instructional practices or interventions at each level should be based on scientific research evidence about “what works.”
- However, it is essential to find out ***what works with whom, by whom, for what purposes, and in what contexts—***



One size does not fit all.

With Whom?



- When deciding if a practice is appropriate for implementation as part of an RTI model, it should have been validated with students like those with whom it will be applied.
- The U.S.A. National Reading Panel report “**did not address issues relevant to second language learning**” (2000, p. 3).

With Whom?

- Language learners are often omitted from participant samples because of their limited language proficiency.
- Yet language dominance and proficiency are important research variables and can affect treatment outcomes.
- Leaving students out of studies limits the external validity and applicability of such studies, especially for those who teach culturally and linguistically diverse students.



With Whom?

- Research reports should include information about:
 - language proficiency
 - life and educational experiences (e.g., socio-economic, previous schooling)
- Data should be disaggregated to show how interventions might differentially affect students from diverse backgrounds.



By Whom?

- Who is implementing the instructional practice?
 - Researcher?
 - Experienced teacher?
 - Specialist?
 - Paraprofessional?



For What Purposes?

- What is the goal of instruction?
 - Some widely touted instructional approaches help improve word identification skills, but not necessarily reading comprehension.
 - According to the Reading First Impact Study: “Reading First did not have statistically significant impacts on student reading comprehension test scores in grades 1-3.”



In What Contexts?

- Variations in program implementation and effectiveness across schools and classrooms are common (see the First Grade Studies for a classic example, Bond & Dykstra, 1967).
 - When students struggle, is it the program, the teachers' implementation, or the school context?
 - What is it about the system that facilitates or impedes learning?
 - Schools are dependent on larger societal influences that should not be ignored.

In What Contexts?

- It is essential to **observe** in classrooms.
 - Is the instruction appropriate for students' language and learning needs?
 - What is the relationship between a teacher and students?
 - How does the teacher promote interest and motivation?
- **We draw different conclusions when several students are struggling rather than just a few ...**



More thoughts on research...

- Experimental research studies tell us what works best with the majority of students in a research sample, not *all* students.
- Some practices may be effective but have not yet been researched.
- Qualitative research helps us understand why a practice works or not and factors that can affect implementation.
- Observation studies in the classrooms of effective teachers tell us a lot about the attributes of successful teachers and the characteristics of effective instruction.



- If a child does not make adequate progress with *research-based instruction* that is presumed “to work,” the assumption is made that the child must have a deficit of some kind.
 - *How do we ensure that the child has in fact received culturally and linguistically responsive, appropriate, quality instruction?*
 - As with earlier identification criteria, this model *must* be based on students having received an adequate “*opportunity to learn.*”

Opportunity to Learn?

Instruction in RTI By Teachers who Lack Preparation
in Teaching Language Learners and Use Generic
“Evidence-based” Practices

Tier 1 Example: Kindergarten

Students are seated in a circle on the alphabet rug. Teacher asks them to stand up, and says, “Let’s do the alphabet rap song.” Teacher begins to rap and makes motions with her hands to symbolize sound-letter correspondence. Sings A-Alley, B-Bubba, C-Catina, D-Deedee... Students are trying to mimic the teacher, however, they are falling behind. [Students are not understanding this--the teacher is going too fast.] Teacher says, “Let’s try it one more time.” More and more students are falling behind to the point where the majority are just looking around and bumping into each other. They look like bumper cars. These students cannot keep up with the song and hand motions. Teacher, “S is for Sammy Snake (making a slithering motion)... V is for Vinny Vampire (motioning with her hands to her mouth that she had vampire fangs)....W is Willie Weasel....” (Orosco, 2007)

Tier 1 Example: First Grade

The whole Class is sitting in a circle, with the teacher seated at the head. Teacher says, "Yesterday, how many of you knew your sight words? One student speaks out, "One?" Another, "Three?" Teacher replies, "You are right. Three students were able to tell me their sight words. We need to practice these words; we are really behind. Every one of you should know these sight words by now. You need to practice these at home. Don't you practice these at home?" Teacher says this with frustration in her face and voice. Teacher states, "Only those 3 students will be able to pull from the treasure chest." ... Teacher begins sight words practice and holds up index cards with-*Big, My, See, Like, I, At, This, And, Up, Have, Too*. Students repeat sight words as Teacher holds up index cards. This is a repetitive process. She then holds up the word "Big" without saying anything. One student says the word "Big." She holds up a another. "See." The same student says the word again. She holds up the word "see" again and tells the student who knew the previous answer not to say anything. Pause. Another says "see." She continues to go through this process with all the words, and says, "Okay guys, you need to practice these at home, you are not paying attention, you should have known these words by now." (Orosco, 2007)

What is the significance of these examples?

We cannot distinguish between LD and language acquisition without making sure that language learners are receiving adequate opportunities to learn.

We can not determine whether language learners have LD without looking into their classrooms and comparing how they are doing with their peers.

Challenge 2: In many cases, screening and progress monitoring assessment batteries do not provide a comprehensive view of literacy skills or identify our language learners who are at risk for reading difficulties.

Progress Monitoring for ELLs

- ***Multiple*** assessment methods are needed to provide a comprehensive view of learning.
 - No single best test or assessment strategy.
 - Different assessments tap into different skills and knowledge.
 - Assessments should be used only for the purpose for which it was designed.
- Progress monitoring helps to ensure that instruction is adjusted to meet the needs of individual students and classrooms of learners—use it to find what works!

The Comprehensive Assessment System

- Many skills go into “literacy”; we need measurements across different areas to fully gauge student progress.
- The assessments currently being used only provide a partial assessment of literacy skills.
- Oral reading fluency does not predict comprehension for language learners like it does for fluent English speakers (Crosson & Lesaux, 2009).

A Common Scenario: Early Literacy Measures

Lesaux

**Letter Names &
Letter Sounds**

**Phonological
Awareness**

Word Reading

Accuracy
Efficiency

**READING
COMPREHENSION**

• **Oral Language**

Vocabulary

Word
Learning
Strategies

Knowledge
of word
function or
type

Metalinguistic
Skills

• **Text Characteristics**

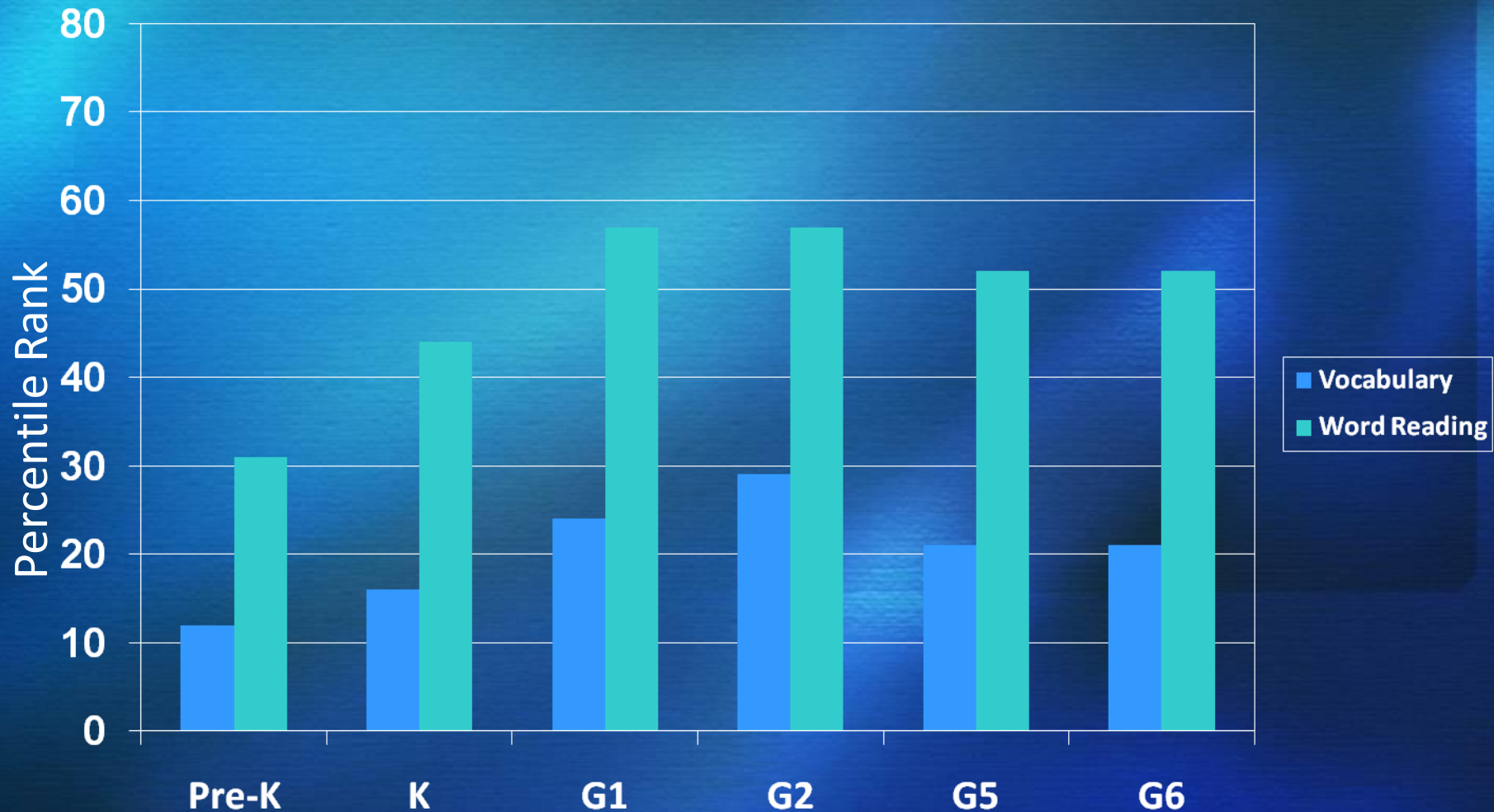
Organizational
structure

Sentence
structure

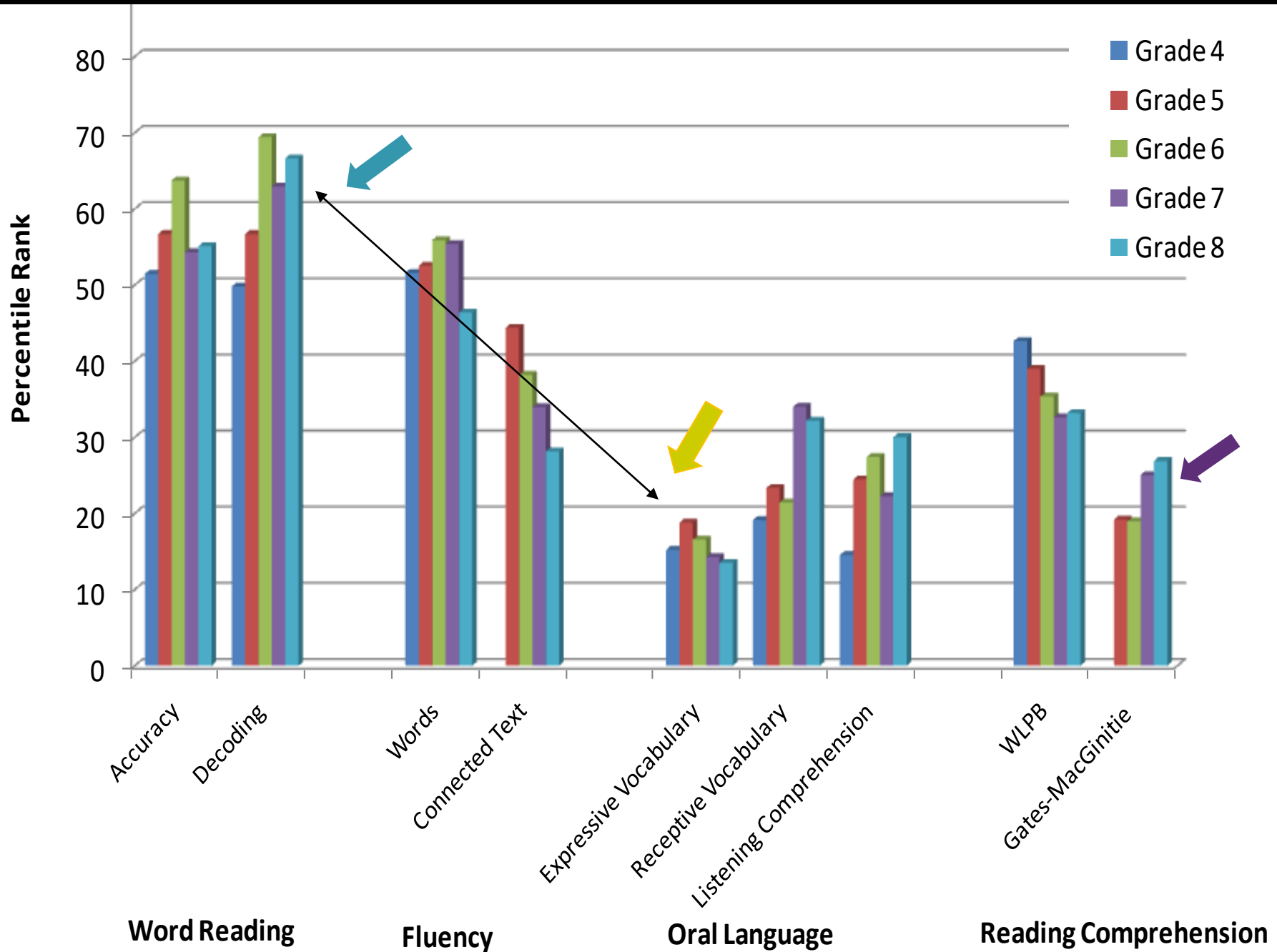
• **Background
Knowledge**
• **Interest**
• **Motivation**
• **Understanding of
Purpose**

Gaps during Early Childhood

Lesaux



The Gap between Reading Words & Comprehending Text (Lesaux)



Challenge 3: Teachers and other school personnel are unclear about differences in learning to read in one's first language or a second/additional language.



- There are important differences between learning to read in a first or additional language (August & Shanahan, 2006; Goldenberg, 2008).
- Learning trajectories for emerging *simultaneous* bilinguals (learning two or more languages at once) are not well understood.
- Benchmarks and expected rates of progress may not be the same (Hopewell, Escamilla et al., 2012; Linan-Thompson, Cirino, & Vaughn, 2007).
- Many language learners have a gap between their English word reading and their word knowledge and comprehension (Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2011).
- Some recommendations put too much emphasis on phonological awareness and letter naming at the expense of other skills, such as oral language, vocabulary, and comprehension (e.g., the Institute for Education Sciences Practice Guide).

Factors that Influence Reading for Language Learners

Reading
skills in L1 &
L2

Learning context

Oral
proficiency in
L1 & L2

Teacher's skills
& behaviors

Interest,
prior knowledge,
motivation

Instructional
practices



The Relationship b/w Second-Language Oral Proficiency and Second-Language Reading

- English second-language oral proficiency and English second-language reading have a *reciprocal relationship*. Therefore, we do not teach one and then the other, in linear fashion, but can teach both.
- There may be a threshold level of oral proficiency in the second language that must be achieved before reading in that language is strongly correlated.
- Optimal programs for ELLs include a focus on oral English language development as well as on reading.

Differences b/w Second Language Readers and Native Language Readers

Translation, cognate awareness, and information transfer across languages are unique to L2 reading.

Unknown vocabulary is more of an obstacle for bilingual readers.

Good second-language readers focus much more on word meaning than do good monolingual readers.

Cohesive signals (e.g., referents such as “them” or “it”) are more problematic.

Phonological Awareness and Language Learners

Phonological awareness transfers from L1 to L2.

Phonological awareness (in English) can present special challenges to ELLs.

- Phonemes not present in the student's first language are difficult to distinguish auditorily from similar sounds.
- Sound placement in words differs across languages.
- Phonological tasks with unknown sounds and words are more difficult.

Teachers can help ELLs by finding out which phonemes exist and do not exist in their native language and helping them hear new sounds.

Alphabetic Principle, Decoding, and Language Learners

The process of learning to read in an L2 is facilitated when students are already literate in their L1 and the orthographic systems of the two languages are similar.

- Spanish and English share many similarities (e.g., the sounds represented by the letters *b, c, d, f, l, m, n, p, q, s,* and *t*).
- However, vowels look the same in Spanish and English but represent different sounds. Therefore, English vowel sounds and their various spellings can be very challenging for ELLs.

Unfamiliar phonemes and graphemes make decoding and spelling difficult.

Not knowing L2 vocabulary prevents language learners from using context clues and word meaning to figure out how to read a word.

Learning letters and sounds can seem very abstract.

Vocabulary and Language Learners

Language learners can be confused by common words:

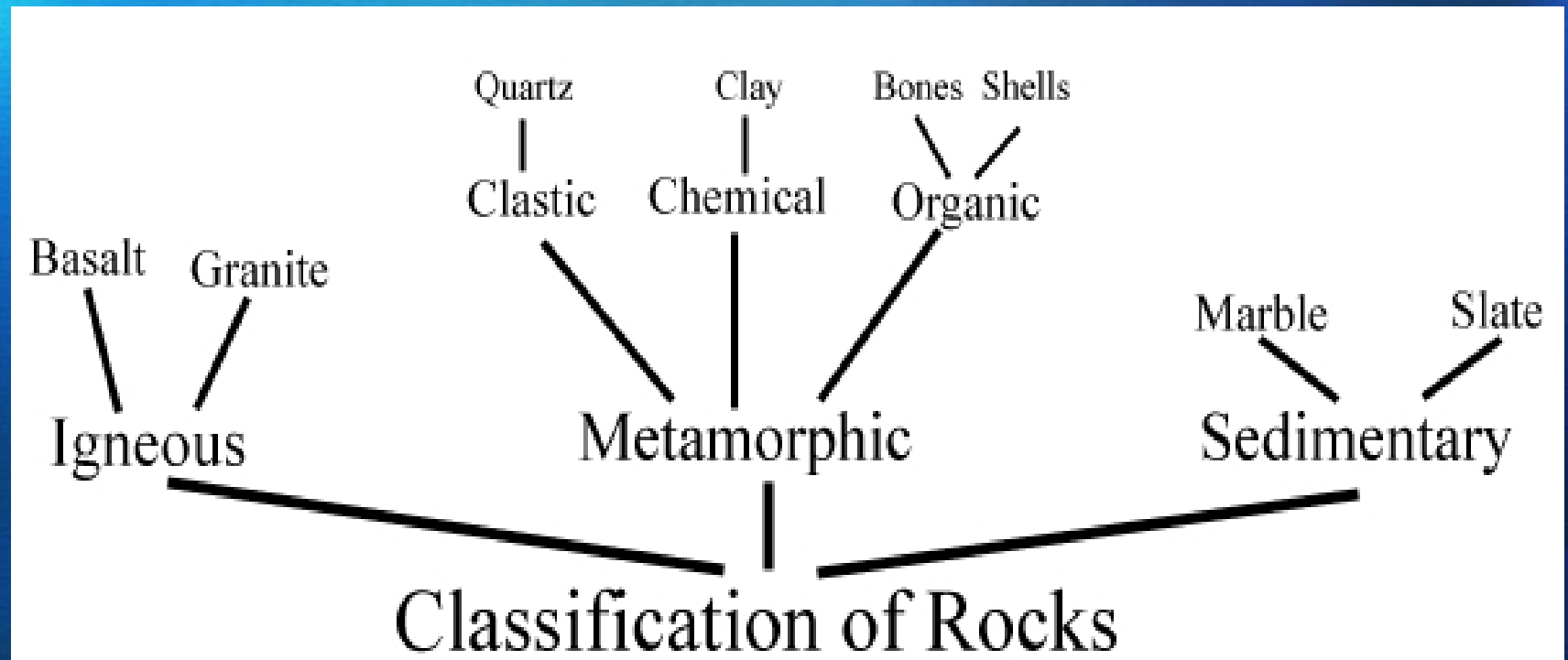
- prepositions (e.g., “on,” “above”)
- pronouns (e.g., “she,” “they”)
- cohesion markers (e.g., “therefore,” “however”)
- words with multiple meanings (e.g., “bat,” “light”)
- figurative language such as similes (e.g., “swims like a fish”) or metaphors (e.g., “his stomach was a bottomless pit”)
- idioms (e.g., “to know something inside out”)

False cognates can perplex students (e.g., “fast” in German means “almost”; “embarazada” in Spanish means “pregnant”)

ACTIVITY:

Remembering Vocabulary

Sample Tree Diagram



Reading Comprehension and Language Learners

Many factors
affect the
reading
comprehension
of language
learners:

- language proficiency
- vocabulary knowledge
- ability to use comprehension strategies
- differences in text structure
- culture influences
- interest
- schema

The Importance of Background Knowledge (Example)

- Group 1:
Told that they were gathering information in order to rob a house.
- Group 2:
Told that they were prospective home buyers.
- Both groups read the same passage describing a house.
- Results:
Memory for information varied according to activated schema and prior knowledge.

Collaborative **S**trategic **R**eading

WORKING TOGETHER

USING STRATEGIES

UNDERSTANDING
WHAT YOU READ

Collaborative Strategic Reading

- Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) combines reading comprehension strategy instruction and collaborative learning to:
 - Improve reading comprehension.
 - Increase content learning.
 - Maximize students' involvement.
 - Increase opportunities for students to use academic language (especially important for English language learners).
 - Increase students' confidence.

COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIC READING

Before Reading

PREVIEW

1. Read

Read the title, subtitles, headings and keywords to learn about the passage.

2. Brainstorm

Think about what you already know about the topic.

3. Predict

Predict what you will learn.

During Reading

CLICK & CLUNK

1. Look for clunks

Find words or ideas you don't understand.

2. Use fix-up strategies

- Re-read the sentence with the clunk.
- Re-read sentence before and after clunk.
- Look for prefixes, suffixes and root words.
- Look for cognates.

GET THE GIST

1. Figure out the main idea

- Determine the most important who or what.
- Find the most important information about the who or what.
- Write a brief gist statement.

After Reading

WRAP UP

1. Question

Write three types of questions that can be answered by reading the passage and thinking about what you already know.

- Right There
- Think and Search
- Author and You

2. Review

Identify the most important information.



CSR Colorado
Read. Lead. Succeed.

CSR Learning Log



Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Today's Topic _____

BEFORE READING: Preview

Brainstorm: Connections to prior knowledge



Key Vocabulary:

_____ = _____
_____ = _____
_____ = _____

Predict: What I might learn about the topic

DURING READING: Section 1

Clunks



Fix-up Strategies

_____ = _____ 1 2 3 4
_____ = _____ 1 2 3 4
_____ = _____ 1 2 3 4

Gist:



Fix-up Strategies

_____ 1 2 3 4
_____ 1 2 3 4
_____ 1 2 3 4

Fix-up Strategies

_____ 1 2 3 4
_____ 1 2 3 4
_____ 1 2 3 4



Q:

A:

Review:

CSR learning logs enable students to keep track of learning “as it happens” and provide a springboard for follow-up activities.

Logs support all students to be active participants.

CSR Expert Roles

Everyone contributes and is a valued member of the group.

CSR CUE CARD

i3 CSR-CO

CSR Leader

Job Description

The leader's job is to guide the group through all steps of the process. The leader keeps track of time, keeps the group on task, and leads the review.

DURING READING

Read

- Who would like to read the next section?

Click and Clunk

- Write your clunks in your learning log.
- Clunk expert, please help us.

Get the Gist

- It's time to get the gist. Gist expert, please help us.
- [Repeat all of the steps in this section.]

AFTER READING

Questions

- It's time to ask questions. Question expert, please help us.

Review

- Now it's time to write the most important information from the text.
- [When everyone is done.]
- Who would like to share?
- Remember to say why your ideas are the most important.

Compliments and Suggestions

- Something that went well today was _____
- Next time we need to work on _____
- Is there anything else that would help us do better next time?

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Clunk Expert

Job Description

The clunk expert makes sure that students write down their learning logs. The clunk expert also helps students figure out the meaning of unknown words.

DURING READING

Click and Clunk

- Who has a clunk?
- Does anyone know the meaning of the word?

If YES

- Please explain what the clunk means and write it in your learning log.
 - Let's reread the sentence and make sure it makes sense.
- [Check for understanding.]

If NO, Use Fix-Up Strategies

- [After you come up with a definition.]
- Write the definition in your learning log.
- Let's reread the sentence and make sure it makes sense.

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Gist Expert

Job Description

The gist expert makes sure that all students in the group write their own gists. The gist expert also leads the group in writing their gists and discussing the quality of the gists. The gist expert contains the topic (the most important "who" or "what" information about the topic. Gist is 10 words.

DURING READING

Get the Gist

- What is the most important "who" or "what" information about the topic?
- [Ask students to share.]
- Everyone, think of your own gist and write it in your learning log.
- [When everyone is done.]
- Who would like to share their gist?

[Help your group come up with a gist that includes the most important information, leaves out the details, and contains about 10 words.]

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Question Expert

Job Description

The question expert guides the group in coming up with questions that address important information from the reading. The question expert makes sure that students ask different levels of questions. The question expert checks to see that all students write questions and answers.

AFTER READING

Wrap Up

- Let's think of some questions to check whether we really understood what we read. Write your questions and the answers in your learning log.

Remember to write different types of questions:

- a. "Right there"
- b. "Think and search"
- c. "Author and you"

[After everyone is finished writing questions, ask:]

- Who would like to share his or her best question?

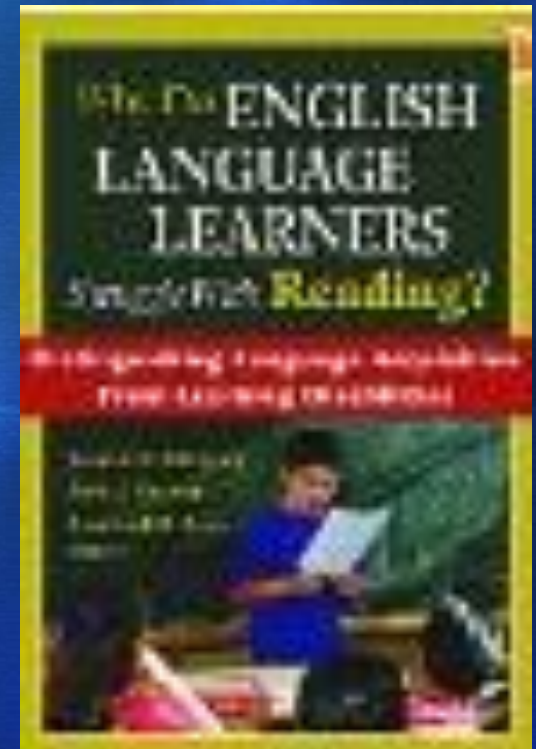
[Check that the question begins with "who," "what," "when," "where," "why," or "how."]

- Who would like to answer that question?
- Where did you find the information to answer that question?

CSR In Action



Challenge 4: Many school personnel are unsure how to distinguish between language acquisition and learning disabilities.



Language Acquisition or Learning Disability?

The single biggest error made in placing language learners into special education is:

misinterpreting language acquisition as a learning or language disability

We must help educators become better at making this distinction



Language Acquisition or Learning Disability?

To a large extent, determining whether an English language learner has a learning disability is a process of elimination.

- Many factors must be considered and ruled out as possible reasons for a child's struggles.
- There are multiple possible explanations for every behavior.

There are no tests that can definitively tell us whether the student has LD.

It's important to...

Understand the second language acquisition process

- Oral language
- Written language
- Literacy (and what can be confusing)

Know possible characteristics associated with LD

Look at the quality of instruction and students' opportunities to learn

Child Study Team Example

James was at ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Level 1.

Teacher: *“My real concern is that when I give a direction (in English) he gives me a blank look, like he doesn’t understand. He’s lost.”* She also noted that he had difficulty paying attention.

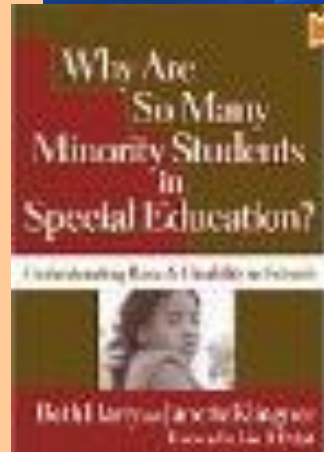
Assistant principal: *“A lot of children in ESOL have these difficulties.”*

Teacher: *“But I think it’s more than that. It’s more a matter of higher level thinking.”*

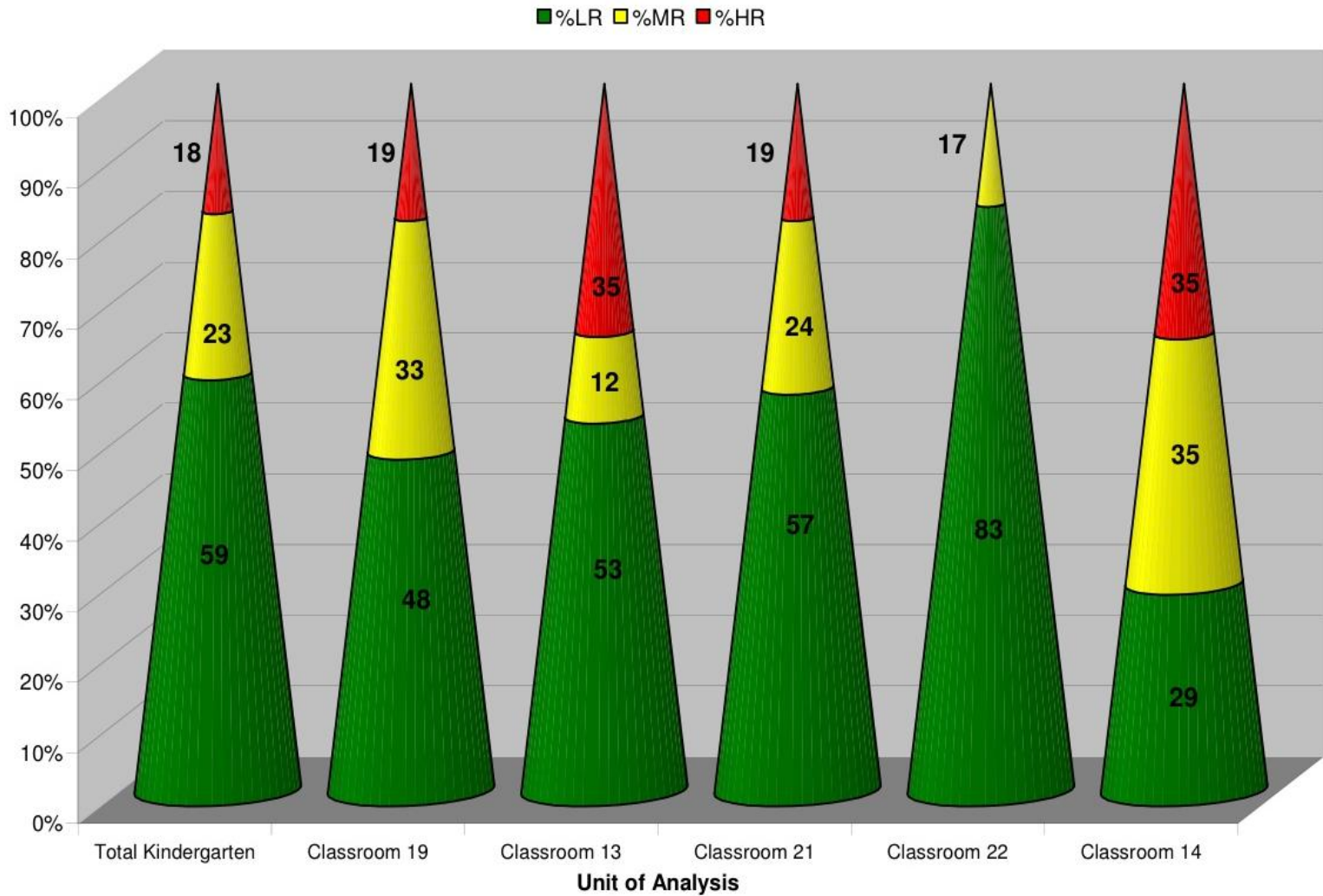
This was accepted by the team and they proceeded to refer the student for an evaluation. They did not discuss his native language skills, and whether he exhibited these same problems in Haitian Creole.

James' Class (with almost all language learners at beginning stages of proficiency)

Teacher: "The last sense is the sense of touch. That means you feel. Feel the floor with your elbows. Can you feel it?" [OC: The students don't understand what to do. There are no visual cues.] Teacher (yelling), "Some of you are being extremely rude." Then she asks more calmly, "So did you feel the floor with your elbows, but do you normally feel with your elbow?" A few students respond, "No." Teacher yells again, "You just finished telling me you were listening, Ezekiel. Were you lying to me? I'm only going to call on the people who are listening." ...Teacher: "If I wanted to eat cake, what sense would I use?" ... "My point is that you use your sense of taste to decide if you like it." Teacher (yelling): "Pay attention to me, not his shoes! His shoes aren't going to give you a grade. I will." "If one more person touches shoes, I'm going to throw it in the garbage. It's important to make sure your shoes are tied, but not while I'm teaching."



Letter Naming Fluency Risk Level Overview



George Batsche & David Tilly

(Some) Similarities b/w LD and Language Acquisition

<i>Behaviors Associated w/ LD</i>	<i>Behaviors when Acquiring an L2</i>
Difficulty following directions	Difficulty following directions
Difficulty with phonological awareness	Difficulty distinguishing b/w sounds not in L1
Slow to learn sound-symbol correspondence	Confusion w/ sound-symbol correspondence when different than in L1 Difficulty pronouncing sounds not in L1
Difficulty remembering sight words	Difficulty remembering sight words when word meanings not understood
Difficulty retelling a story in sequence	May understand more than can convey in L2
Slow to process challenging language	Slow to process challenging language
May have poor auditory memory	May have poor auditory memory
Confused by figurative language	Confused by figurative language
May have difficulty concentrating	May have difficulty concentrating
May seem easily frustrated	May seem easily frustrated

In conclusion...



- A comprehensive, systemic approach to RTI includes:
 - strong leadership,
 - a well-established infrastructure,
 - coordinating curriculum and assessment considerations,
 - addressing teachers' and others' professional development needs,
 - attending to school climate issues,
 - collaboration among special educators, general educators, and families,
 - and enhancing leaders' capacities to orchestrate and respond to multiple (often contradictory) reforms (Adelman & Taylor; Burdette, 2007).

Questions?

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