

RtI:

Possibilities & Questions

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The Possibilities of RtI

We should be able to:

- Provide help to students who need it (based on level and growth)
- Reduce inappropriate referrals to Special Education



The Possibilities of RtI

We might be able to:

- Improve long-term outcomes for struggling learners
- Identify students who may have disabilities



The Questions We Study

- How to ensure high quality in Tier 1
- Nature and content of Tier 2
- Measures:
 - Of risk and protection
 - Catch and release criteria for Tier 2, 3, beyond
- Long-term outcomes across risk levels when RtI is implemented well



Problems with Tier 1

- Tier 1 is the backdrop for identifying risk
- School and Teacher Effects

Al Otaiba & Fuchs (2006):

More poor responders in classrooms where instruction was implemented with lower quality

More Problems with Tier 1

- O'Connor et al. (in press)
 - In 4 MT schools, we found 5 poor responders (n = 98)
4 of these were in one school
(reading instruction described as “eclectic”)
 - In 4 CA schools, we found 14 poor responders (n = 312)
2/3 were in 1 school;
Over half were in 2 of the 8 teachers' classes
(classes described as having “control problems”)

Nature and Content of Tier 2

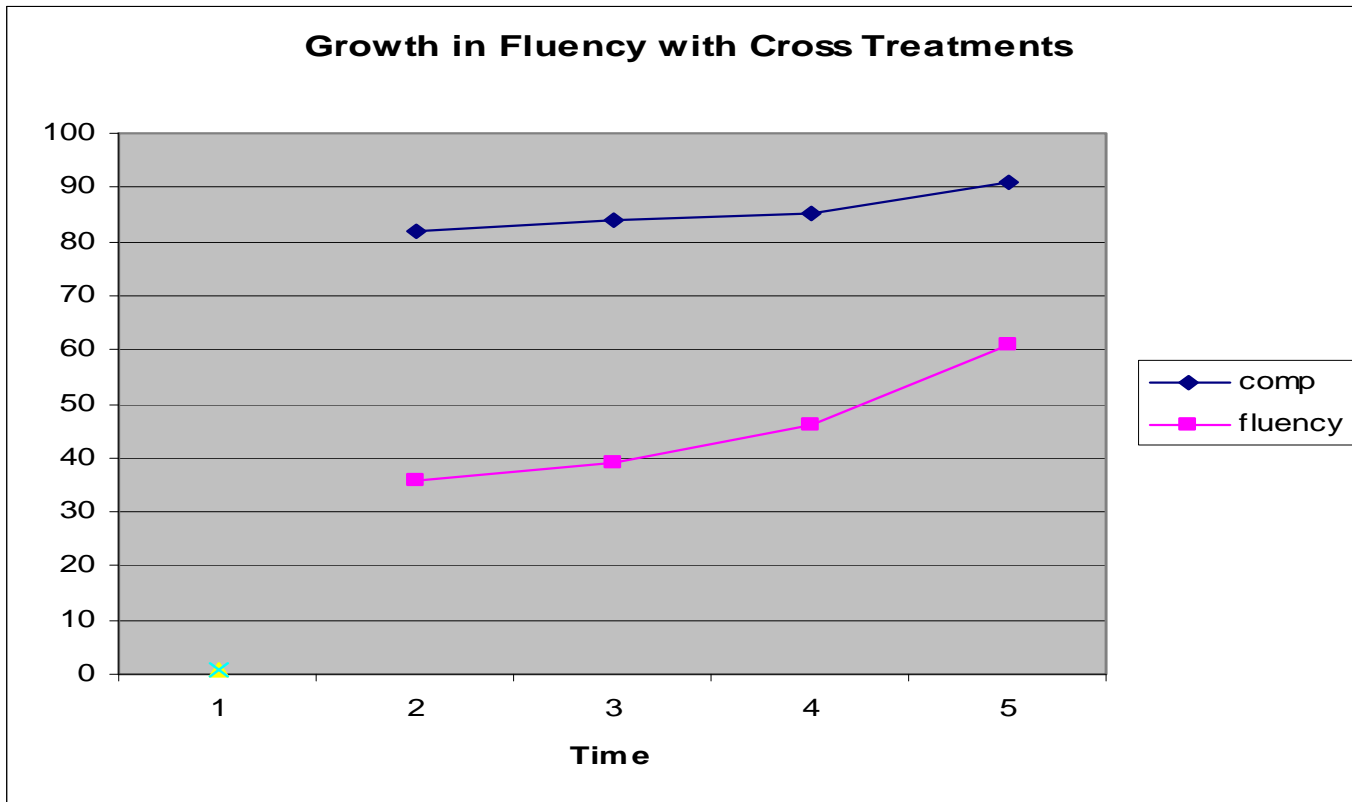
- Do we want a good intervention “to be delivered?”
 - Standard protocol (Fuchs et al., Torgesen et al., Vellutino et al.)
- Do we want interventions “to be adjusted or changed altogether” when students do not respond as expected?
 - Individualized treatments (O’Connor et al., Marston et al.)
- Complicated with developmental concerns for young children (to be determined)



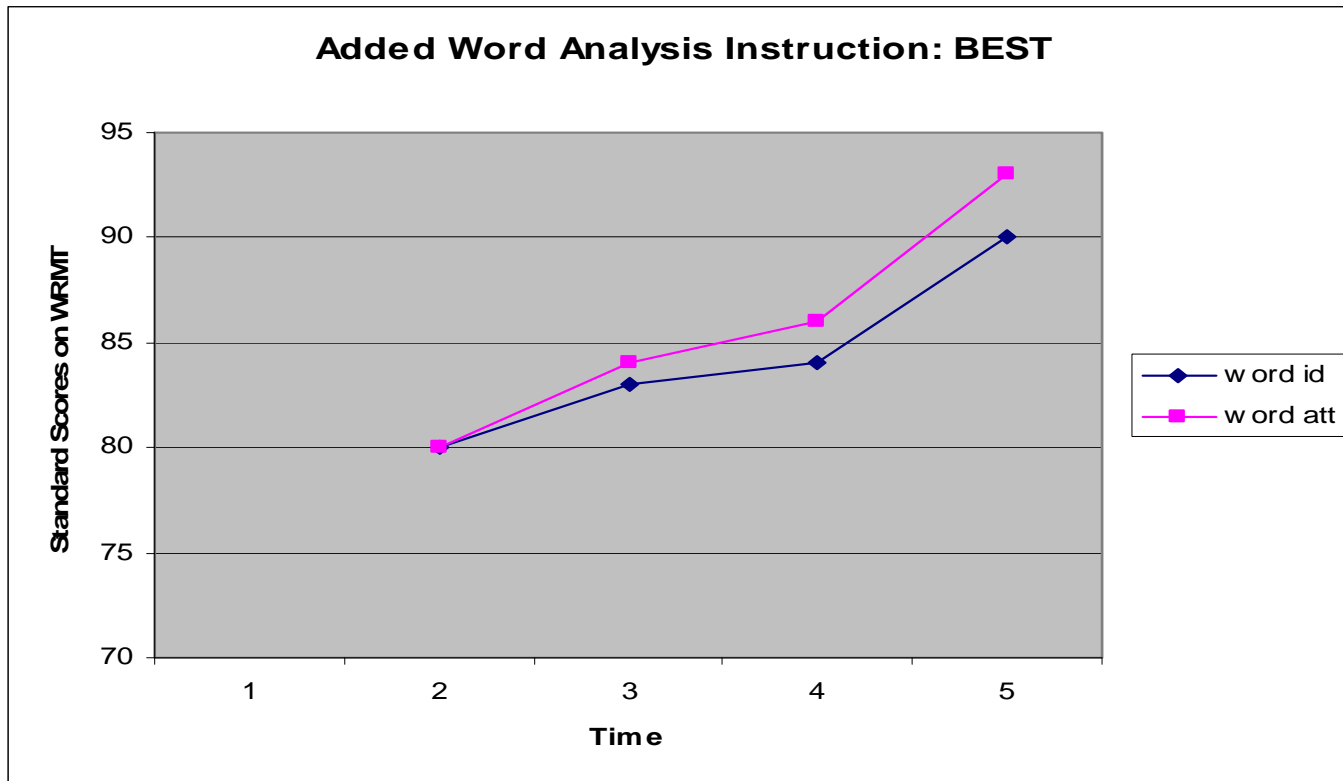
Standard Protocol or Individualized Tier 2?

- Students who respond poorly might be receiving the wrong intervention.
 - Difficult to test if only a standard protocol is available.

Responding Across Interventions



Responding Across Interventions



Responding to Students' Response

- Skills of the Interventionist
 - Teachers, Graduate students, Teaching Assistants
 - In preschool—includes parents
- Why it matters:
 - Responsiveness of students is related to how the teacher responds to students during instruction
 - Changing or fine-tuning instruction is hallmark of skilled teaching
 - Awkward to change instruction if the competing goal is adherence to a standard protocol



What Does RtI Imply?

- At Tier 1, general class instruction is good enough.
- At Tier 2, general class instruction was insufficient, but small group, focused instruction closes the gap.
- Students with ‘true’ disability respond poorly to Tier 2

Across 3 years, Grades 1-3 (O'Connor et al., 2005)

Tier 2	Tier 2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tier 2			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	Tier 2		X	X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	Tier 2				X	X	X	X
Tier 2					X	X	X	X	X	X
Tier 2			X	X	X	Tier 2	X	X	X	X
Tier 2			X	X	X	Tier 2	X	X	X	X
Tier 2			Tier 3			Tier 2	X	X	X	X
Tier 2			Tier 3				X	X	X	X
Tier 2			Tier 3				X	X	X	X
Tier 2	X	X	X	Tier 2	X	Tier 2	X	X	X	X
Tier 2	X	Tier 2		X	X	Tier 2		X	X	X
Tier 2			Tier 3		Tier 2			X	X	X
Tier 2			X	Tier 2		X	X	Tier 2 Tier 2 Tier 2		X
Tier 2						X	X			X
Tier 2	X	X	X	Tier 3			X			Tier 3
Tier 2			Tier 3			X	Tier 2		Tier 3	
Tier 2	X	X	Tier 2		Tier 3					
Tier 2				Tier 3						
Tier 2			Tier 3							
Tier 2			Tier 3							
Tier 2			Tier 3							

Summer Slippage

- Students who responded poorly in school also lost ground in key skills between K-1 (O'Connor, 2000; Vellutino et al., 2007)
- And also between Gr 1-2 and Gr 2-3 (O'Connor et al., 2005).
- What should be expect with breaks in preschool?

Identification of Disability

- Given that RtI will not eliminate disabilities, reflect on how we interpret RtI:
 - Poor responding = disability
 - But--Ample evidence shows that students with disabilities respond to good interventions
 - Responding means a child doesn't have a disability
 - Tier 2 helps some students with disabilities; they may need Tier 2 to thrive.

Do Response Rates Differ for ELLs?

For literacy in K-1:

- Linan-Thompson et al. (2006)
 - Not predictive of response
- O'Connor et al. (2007)
 - Not predictive of response
- VanDerHeyden et al. (2007)
 - Not predictive of response
- Linklater et al. (in press)
 - Not predictive of response

When intervention focus is oral language and development in preschool?

- Unknown

Diminishing Correlations for ELL (O'Connor et al, 2007)

- ELL scores correlated significantly with pretests
 - PSF (.32)
 - LNF (.31)
 - PPVT-III (.34)

- But not with reading outcomes in Grade 1
 - PSF (.04)
 - LNF (.03)
 - NWF (.01)
 - ORF (.12)



Substantial Variability Across Studies

- Procedures for determining poor response
- Criteria for determining poor response
- Measures
- Interventions



General Areas of Agreement

- Screen early in the school year and again later to consider starting points and growth
- Instruction should be increasingly specific and focused in Tiers 2 and 3



Lingering Concerns

- Skill of the intervener is a consistent predictor of responsiveness of students
- What level of response is good enough?
- Students “fixed” on low level reading skills may become less responsive as learning grows in complexity in later grades