



National Center on Response to Intervention

Handouts

Implementing Effective Literacy Practices for Instructing English Language Learners Within the Response to Intervention (RTI) Framework

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Handout I: Terms and Definitions Relevant to This Module

These definitions are generally consistent throughout National Center on Response to Intervention (NCRTI) materials although they may be defined differently in other contexts. The following terms are defined based on concepts described in the IES Practice Guide *Effective Literacy and English Language Instruction for English Learners in the Elementary Grades* (Gersten et al., 2007), within a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework.

- **Academic English.** English language used in academic disciplines (e.g., science, history, and literary analysis) in texts and literature and in extended, reasoned discourse. It is more abstract and decontextualized than conversational English.
- **Classification accuracy.** The extent to which a screening tool is able to accurately classify students as being at risk or not at risk for a particular outcome.
- **Data-based decision making.** Within RTI, the use of screening and progress monitoring data to make decisions about instruction, movement within the multi-level prevention system, and disability identification (in accordance with state law).
- **Disaggregated data.** Data that have been reported separately for specific subpopulations (e.g., race, economic status, special education, and English language learners [ELLs]).
- **Effect size.** A measure of the magnitude of the relationship between two variables. In intervention studies, the effect size represents the magnitude of the relationship between participating in a particular intervention and an academic outcome of interest.
- **English language learners.** Students who are native speakers of another language and are learning English.
- **External validity (generalizability).** The extent to which results generated from a sample are pertinent to a larger population.
- **Internal validity.** Based on the research design, the extent to which conclusions about causal relationships can be made.
- **Multi-level prevention system.** The three levels of intensity or prevention within RTI. The primary prevention level includes high-quality core instruction. The secondary level includes evidence-based intervention(s) of moderate intensity. The tertiary level includes individualized intervention(s) of increased intensity for students who show minimal response to secondary prevention.
- **Peer-assisted learning.** Instructional activities in which pairs of students at different ability levels or different English language proficiencies work together on academic tasks in a structured fashion. These activities should practice and extend material already taught.
- **Progress monitoring.** Repeated measurement of academic performance used to inform instruction of individual students in general and special education in Grades K–8. In RTI, it is conducted at least monthly to (a) estimate rates of improvement, (b) identify students who are not demonstrating adequate progress, and/or (c) compare the efficacy of different forms of instruction to design more effective individualized instruction.

- **Quasi-experiment.** A design in which groups participants are not randomly assigned to groups. For a quasi-experimental design to be rigorous, the intervention and the comparison groups must be similar, demonstrating baseline equivalence on observed characteristics before the intervention is started.
- **Randomized controlled trial.** A design in which group assignment is random. Carried out correctly, random assignment results in groups that are similar on average in both observable and unobservable characteristics, and any differences in outcomes between the groups are due to the intervention alone.
- **Reliability.** The extent to which scores are accurate and consistent.
- **Response to intervention (RTI).** RTI integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems. With RTI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions, adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities.
- **Screening (universal screening).** Brief assessments conducted with all students to identify or predict students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes.
- **Statistical significance.** The likelihood that a finding is due to a real difference rather than chance. Most researchers label a finding statistically significant if the likelihood that the difference is due to chance is less than 5 percent.
- **Validity.** The extent to which a procedure measures what it is intended to measure.

Reference

Gersten, R., Baker, S. K., Shanahan, T., Linan-Thompson, S., Collins, P., & Scarcella, R. (2007). *Effective literacy and English language instruction for English learners in the elementary grades* (NCEE 2007-4011). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/20074011.pdf

Handout 3: Professional Development Planning

Use the following table to help your team plan what professional development is needed to implement the IES Practice Guide recommendations for literacy instruction for ELLs. Under “Target Participants,” write the people who would receive the professional development. This could be teacher teams, ELL teachers, reading coaches, or other specialists. You also may want to specify grade levels or schools here. Under the “Time Frame” column, estimate when the professional development would be provided and whether it would be ongoing, a one-time training, or occur a few times during the year. In the fourth column, identify those who would be responsible for planning. In the remaining columns, you can brainstorm possible providers for the professional development and estimate the total cost.

Activity	Target Participants	Time Frame	Person/People Responsible for Implementation	Provider	Estimated Cost
Train school-based teams of teachers to examine formative assessment data to identify ELLs at risk and determine what instructional adjustments will increase progress.					
Provide training and ongoing support for teachers and interventionists who provide small-group instruction.					
Engage teachers in planning effective vocabulary instruction through teacher study groups.					
Provide teachers with ongoing professional development to help them learn how to teach academic English.					
Provide professional development for teachers setting up peer-assisted learning systems.					

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