

Inclusive Assessment in the USA: Diagnosis, Instruction, & Accountability









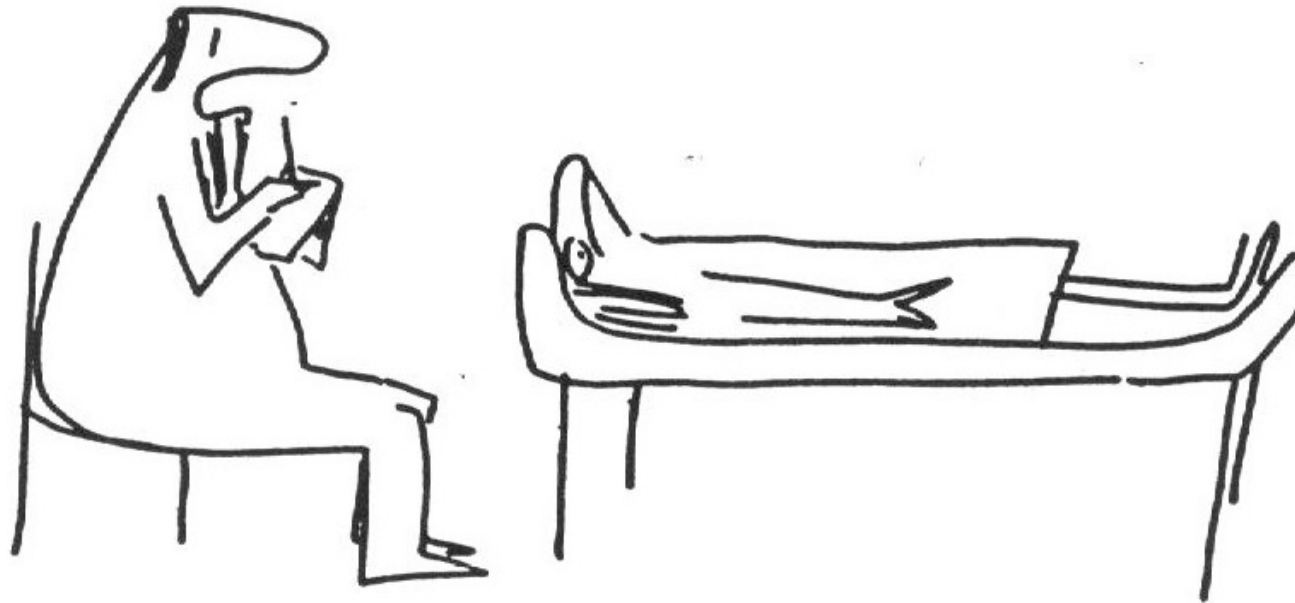
Overview

- Diagnosis of mild LD
- Instructional decision-making
- Accountability



Some Lessons Learned about Assessing Specific LD in the US

- SLD varies as function of general instruction
- Assessment irrelevant to treatment
- “Wait to fail” diagnostic model
 - Discrepancy between IQ/achievement age-related
 - Diagnosis after critical period has passed



“Your feelings of insecurity seem to have started when Mary Lou Gurnblatt said, ‘Maybe I don’t have a learning disability—maybe you have a teaching disability.’”

CHASS

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Changes in Diagnosis

- Response to Intervention (RtI)
 - Assessment of current performance levels
 - Delivery of “scientific, research-based” intervention
 - Progress monitoring
 - Decision based on (lack of) progress
- Must allow RtI, may allow traditional approach

Problems with Rtl

- Identifying “scientific, research-based” interventions.
- Building/sustaining capacity
 - Progress monitoring strong
 - Intervention integrity/delivery weak
 - Capacity unequally distributed across schools
- Logic
 - Response to aspirin \neq aspirin insufficiency

Assessment for Instruction

Benchmarking, Progress Monitoring,
and Treatment Integrity

Lessons Learned about Instructional Assessment

- Instructional decisions not linked to objective data
- Regular data useful for
 - Screening
 - Grouping
 - Changing
- Benchmark vs. Progress Monitoring
- However, assessment must be reliable & valid

Additional Concept: Instructional/Intervention Integrity

- Defined as
 - Specification (“Manualization”)
 - Adherence to plan
 - Competence
 - Differentiation
- Overall: Doing intervention/instruction as intended.
- Why does it matter?



The Preamble to the U.S. Constitution

We the people of the United States,
in order to form a more perfect Union,
establish justice, insure domestic tranquility,
provide for the common defense, promote the
general welfare, and secure the blessings of
liberty to ourselves and our posterity,
do ordain and establish this Constitution
for the United States of America.

Accountability Assessment

Accessibility and Principles for
Inclusive Outcomes Evaluation

Accessible Assessment

- Target vs. Access Skills
 - Target Skills: Those skills the assessment intends to measure.
 - Access Skills: Those skills needed to gain access to assessment content.
- Performance influenced by differences in target skills = valid assessment
- Performance influenced by differences in access skills = invalid assessment

Example

This is a test of your reading comprehension. A _____ is somebody with expertise already shared by members of the organization, but who lives at least 100 miles away and owns a brief case.

- a) Ostrich
- b) Consultant
- c) Nucleus
- d) Teacher

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Target vs. Access Skills?

- Identify Target vs. Access Skills
- Which accommodations are valid or invalid?
 - Enlarging text
 - Reading passage aloud
 - Reading individual words aloud
 - Providing text reader or Braille
 - Changing language of passage

Lessons Learned: Accountability Assessment

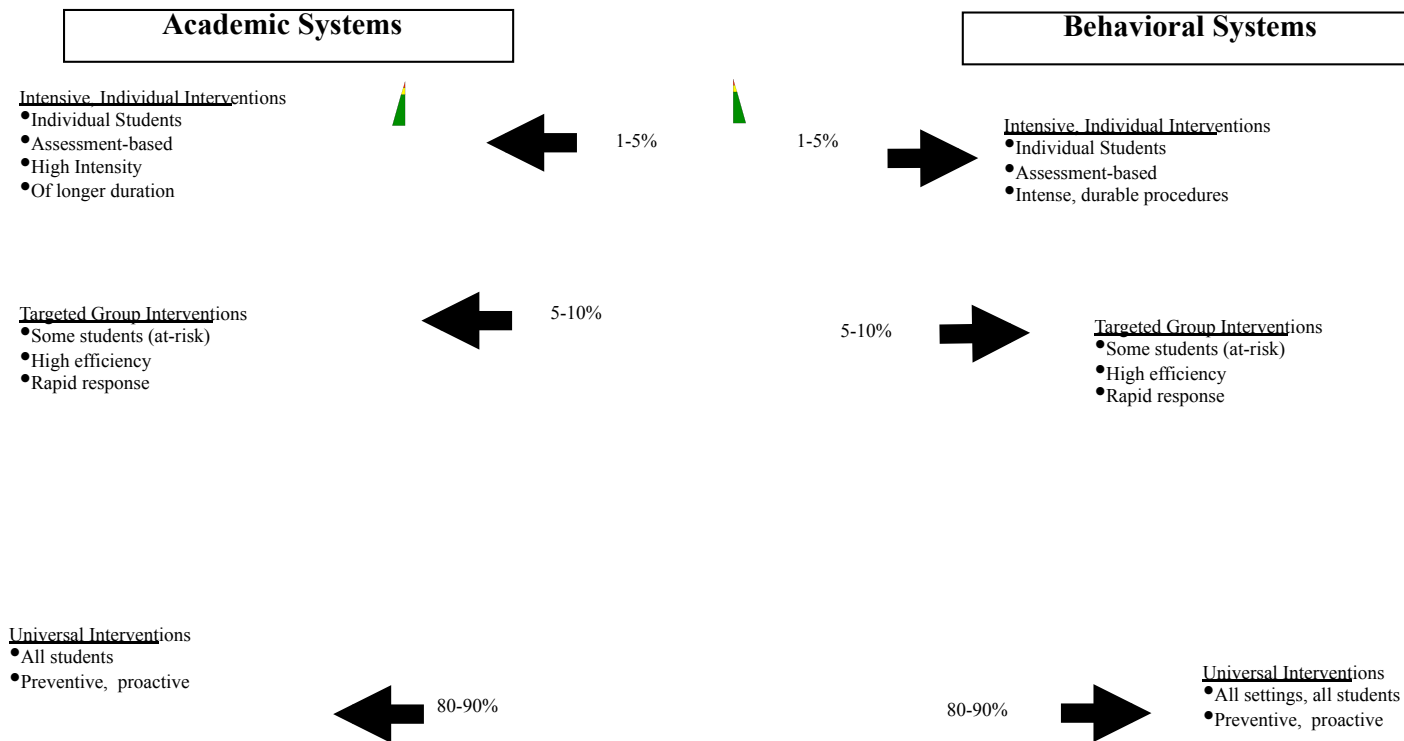
- No Child Left Behind (2002) mandated assessment of children to evaluate schools
- Annual testing in grades 3-8 and once in secondary school in Reading and Maths
- Initial efforts resulted in high rates of exclusion for students with disabilities
 - Make school look better
 - “Protect” students with disabilities from harm

Key Points

- That which is measured is valued
- Those who are counted, count
- It is better to fail a test than to be denied the opportunity to achieve
- High expectations necessary but not sufficient
- Consequences matter
 - Intended: Students supported to meet standards
 - Unintended: system corruption

Putting it All Together

Diagnostic, Instructional, and
Accountability Assessment



From Tilley, W. D. (in press). The evolution of school psychology to science-based practice. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.) *Best practices in school psychology* (5th ed.). Silver Springs, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Seeing into the Future...



Some Questions for This Group

- Do we really believe all children can learn...
The same thing? At the same rate?
- How do we reconcile high/common expectations w/ student needs?
- How do we identify access and target skills?
- How do we integrate assessment systems?
- How do we maximize intended consequences and avoid unintended consequences?



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