<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACRONYM</th>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMAO</td>
<td>Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives</td>
<td>The objectives that school districts must meet with regard to their Language Instruction Education Program. Required by No Child Left Behind, Title III.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQS</td>
<td>Acculturation Quick Screen</td>
<td>An informal assessment used to determine the level of acculturation of a student from another country or culture. <a href="http://www.crosscultured.com">http://www.crosscultured.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BICS</td>
<td>Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills</td>
<td>The language ability required for face-to-face communication where linguistic interactions are embedded in a situational context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALP</td>
<td>Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency</td>
<td>The language ability required for academic achievement in a context-reduced environment such as classroom lectures and textbook reading assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBA</td>
<td>Curriculum Based Assessment</td>
<td>Measurement procedures that use direct observation and recording of a student’s performance in the local curriculum as a basis for gathering information to make instructional decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELA</td>
<td>Colorado English Language Assessment</td>
<td>A State-wide assessment used to measure the speaking, listening, reading and writing proficiency of ELLs based on the State ELD standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBM</td>
<td>Curriculum Based Measurement</td>
<td>A broad group of classroom and curriculum based tasks which are sensitive to increments in student performance and learning trends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CER</td>
<td>Competent English Reader</td>
<td>A term used to describe the status of an English language learner on an English reading proficiency test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEW</td>
<td>Competent English Writer</td>
<td>A term used to describe the status of an English language learner on an English writing proficiency test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLD</td>
<td>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse</td>
<td>A term used to describe students of differing cultural and/or linguistic backgrounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>Differential Abilities Scales</td>
<td>The Differential Ability Scales is an individually administered test battery intending to measure cognitive and achievement levels for children for classification and diagnostic purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIBELS</td>
<td>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills</td>
<td>A curriculum based measure used to track progress of young students' reading abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>English Language Acquisition</td>
<td>Providing services to English language learners through a transitional native language instruction model and/or an English as a second language (ESL) model. The goal of the program is for students to transition to the mainstream English language instructional program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELD</td>
<td>English Language Development</td>
<td>Can be a program or simply a set of guidelines for the language development of ELLs. The State of Colorado has English Language Development Standards to guide districts, schools and teachers in developing appropriate programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
<td>English Language Learner</td>
<td>A student who participates in the ELA program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
<td>A model for providing services to English language learners that includes supported English content instruction and English language development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEP</td>
<td>Fluent English Proficient</td>
<td>Students who come from another language background and are now fluent in English (speaking, listening, reading and/or writing).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>G/T</td>
<td>Gifted and Talented</td>
<td>Students who give evidence of high performance capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, leadership, or specific academic areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLQ/HLS</td>
<td>Home Language Questionnaire/Survey</td>
<td>A form completed at the time of registration used to identify English language learners for the purpose of providing access to appropriate educational opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA</td>
<td>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</td>
<td>The federal law pertaining to Special Education. Reauthorized in 1997.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individual Education Program</td>
<td>Required for students served under the guise of Special Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPT</td>
<td>Idea Proficiency Test</td>
<td>A test distributed by Ballard and Tighe used to assess English Language Proficiency. Available for ages 3 to grade 12. Approved by the Colorado Department of Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISD</td>
<td>Integrated Service Delivery</td>
<td>A multi-disciplinary team that serves ALL students together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAS-O</td>
<td>Language Acquisition Scales - Oral</td>
<td>A language proficiency test (oral).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lau</td>
<td>Not really an acronym</td>
<td>Refers to a legal case Lau vs. Nichols in 1974 which gave us our Lau codes for documenting levels of proficiency for English Language Learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>Local Education Agency</td>
<td>The local school district or BOCES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEP</td>
<td>Limited English Proficient</td>
<td>Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English can be Limited English Proficient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LER</td>
<td>Limited English Reader</td>
<td>A term used to describe the status of an English language learner on an English reading proficiency test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEW</td>
<td>Limited English Writer</td>
<td>A term used to describe the status of an English language learner on an English writing proficiency test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIEP</td>
<td>Language Instruction Education Program</td>
<td>Districts are required to provide evidence that appropriate programming is available for ELLs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRE</td>
<td>Least Restrictive Environment</td>
<td>LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) comes from the Federal Special Education Law IDEA 97. This law mandates that every child with a disability be educated in the setting that least restricts opportunities to be with their non-disabled peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCLB</td>
<td>No Child Left Behind</td>
<td>The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) -- the main federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school. NCLB is built on four principles: accountability for results, more choices for parents, greater local control and flexibility, and an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEP</td>
<td>Non-English Proficient</td>
<td>Students who come from another language background and are not fluent in English (speaking, listening reading and/or writing).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NER</td>
<td>Non-English Reader</td>
<td>A term used to describe the status of an English language learner on an English reading proficiency test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Non-English Writer</td>
<td>A term used to describe the status of an English language learner on an English writing proficiency test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR</td>
<td>Office of Civil Rights</td>
<td>The department of the federal government that watches out for violations of civil rights laws. They can also be contacted by parents and teachers to report violations by school districts with regards to ethnicity or language discrimination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening</td>
<td>An assessment used to measure literacy fundamentals in grades K-3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHLOTE</td>
<td>Primary or Home Language Other Than English</td>
<td>A designation given to students based on information from the Home Language Questionnaire that indicates the primary language spoken at home is not English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>RtI</td>
<td>Response to Intervention</td>
<td>A model for providing interventions to students when they fail to make adequate progress in the general curriculum and monitoring their response to those interventions. Also used as part of the criteria for determining placement in Special Education for ELLs and other students with learning disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLOM</td>
<td>Student Oral Language Observation Matrix</td>
<td>An informal language acquisition matrix done through observation of the student in various settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SpEd</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>A short version of the two words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIT</td>
<td>Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test</td>
<td>Designed to provide a fair, comprehensive, standardized, and norm-referenced assessment of general intelligence with entirely nonverbal administration and response formats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WM</td>
<td>Woodcock-Munoz</td>
<td>There are several assessments produced by &quot;Woodcock-Munoz&quot;, but the most common is the language proficiency test used by districts to determine if students will be placed in an ELA program or not.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Gap Analysis**

A critical component of determining a student’s response to an intervention as well as the intensity level of an intervention is conducting a Gap Analysis. A Gap Analysis is determined by dividing the expected benchmark by the current student performance. The following steps provide a structure for determining the Gap along with a method of determining realistic growth expectations.

A student is in second grade and is reading 20 words per minute (wpm) based on an Oral Reading Fluency probe given during the winter screening.

1. Determine the current benchmark expectation. For the above student the benchmark is 68 words per minute for winter.

   To establish the Gap:

2. Divide 68 wpm (the expected benchmark) by 20 wpm (the current performance)
   \[ \frac{68}{20} = 3.4 \]

   The Gap the student has to close by the end of the year is >3.4.

3. Determine if the Gap is significant. Any Gap above 2.0 if often considered significant, especially at the elementary level.

The next phase of Gap analysis includes determining what sufficient progress is necessary to close the Gap. (For the above student significant intervention is needed to attempt to close the Gap because the gap is more than 2.0.)

4. Determine the gain the student needs to make to close the Gap. To determine the necessary gain subtract the student’s current performance from the expected benchmark in the next benchmark period.

   For the above student the calculation is as follows: 90 wpm (benchmark) – 20 wpm (student’s current performance) = 70 wpm (necessary to close the gap).

5. At this point, the problem-solving team determines what progress is realistic for the student. 70 wpm (necessary gain) divided by 15 (number of weeks for intervention) = 4.6 wpm (weekly gain needed)

   The SFT determines whether this is a realistic goal for the student. The team may decide to determine the number of weeks needed to close the Gap based on a reasonable weekly gain. For example if the student is expected to gain 3 wpm a week then the team could dived 70 wpm (necessary gain) by 3 wpm (weekly gain) to establish the length of intervention as 23 weeks.

Gap Analysis needs to be conducted regularly throughout the intervention to determine sufficient progress and response to intervention. A Gap Analysis should always be conducted with grade level expectations.

*(Adapted from George Batche Presentation)*
A Cultural, Linguistic, and Ecological Framework for Response to Intervention With English Language Learners

Julie Esparza Brown
Portland State University

Jennifer Doolittle
Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education

The Council for Exceptional Children is pleased to partner with the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCREST) to periodically include in TEACHING Exceptional Children topical briefs to support your efforts in addressing the learning needs of exceptional students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Response to Intervention (RTI) has been heralded by many as the long-awaited alternative to using a discrepancy formula for special education eligibility decisions. Use of the discrepancy formula for eligibility decisions has commonly been called a “wait to fail model” (Donovan & Cross, 2002; Fuchs, Mock, Morgan & Young, 2003; Mellard, 2004) because in this paradigm, students proceed through long pre-referral, formal referral, and assessment processes prior to getting help in special education programs. By the time students received assistance, they were often too far behind to ever catch up, even with individualized support.

RTI instead focuses on intervening early through a multi-tiered approach where each tier provides interventions of increasing intensity. It includes the practice of screening all children early in their education to identify those who are not responding to classroom instruction and providing support through the use of research-based interventions at each tier while monitoring progress frequently (Batsche, Elliott, Graden, Grimes, Kovaleski, Prasse, et. al., 2005). RTI has the potential to affect change for English language learners (ELLs) by requiring the use of research-based practices based on individual children’s specific needs. All ELLs, however, need culturally and linguistically appropriate instruction no matter the educational setting. In other words, instruction and interventions must consider a student’s cultural background and experiences as well as their linguistic proficiency (in both English and the native language) in order for instruction to be appropriate. The focus of this brief is to provide an initial framework in the use of RTI that considers students’ life experiences, including their language proficiencies in their first and second language, as well as the contexts in which they are taught.

**Opportunity to Learn**

As conceptualized, RTI is predicated upon effective, research-based and appropriate instruction in the general education classroom or Tier 1. That is, it is assumed that all students are provided with scientifically validated instruction delivered with a high degree of fidelity to the curriculum, and thus all children are provided with an equal opportunity to learn. This, however, is problematic for ELLs in several ways. First, since RTI currently focuses on literacy, it is important to examine the existing reading research for ELLs. Although there is a growing body of research on effective reading instruction for ELLs with and without disabilities (Artiles & Klingner, 2006; Linan-Thompson, Bryant, Dickson, & Kouzehanani, 2005), it appears that not all ELLs are receiving appropriate literacy instruction (D’Angiulli, Siegel, & Maggi, 2004; Saenz, Fuchs, & Fuchs, 2005). Less than 20% of the 56% of public school teachers in the U.S. who have at least one ELL in their class are certified to teach ELLs (Waxman, Telles & Walberg, 2004). Thus, most teachers lack the training, expertise, and experience in teaching reading and other subjects to ELLs. The second issue is that most multidisciplinary school teams charged with making special education eligibility decisions for ELLs also lack the training and experience in differentiating language difference from a learning disability (Collier, 2001; Flanagan & Ortiz, 2001; Klingner, Artiles, & Barletta, 2006; Ortiz, 1997). Consequently, the use of RTI without a foundation in culturally and linguistically appropriate instruction may lead to greater disproportionality (both under and over representation) of ELLs in special education.

To summarize, an appropriate foundation for RTI must include knowledge of each child’s particular set of life experiences, and how these experiences may facilitate learning in an American school system. It is essential to address teacher-related and school-related issues as well as child traits. Further, all educators must be knowledgeable in first and second language acquisition principles and culturally responsive pedagogy, as well as have access to specialists who are well-trained in differentiating cultural and linguistic differences from disabilities. We provide an
initial framework for understanding children's backgrounds below.

**The Framework**

Personalized instruction lies at the very heart of RTI in that each child's unique needs are evaluated and appropriate instruction provided so that all children have opportunities to succeed in our schools. As evidenced by the current achievement gap as well as the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse children in special education programs, many of these students are underachieving. To ensure that RTI does not become one more discriminatory system, a framework for RTI addressing the needs of ELLs is required. This includes: (a) a systematic process for examining the specific background variables or ecologies of ELLs (i.e., first and second language proficiency, educational history including bilingual models, immigration pattern, socioeconomic status, and culture) that impact academic achievement in a U.S. classroom; (b) examination of the appropriateness of classroom instruction and the classroom context based on knowledge of individual student factors; (c) information gathered through informal and formal assessments; and (d) nondiscriminatory interpretation of all assessment data.

**RTI: A Tiered Intervention Approach**

Experts promote two distinct RTI models (Bradley, Danielson, & Hallahan, 2002; Fuchs, Mock, Morgan & Young, 2003): a standard treatment protocol model and a problem-solving model, though in reality most school districts use a combination of the two (National Association of State Directors of Special Education [NASDE], 2006). According to NASDE, both models outline tiers or stages of interventions (Figure 1). In the standard treatment protocol model, the same empirically validated treatment is used for all children with similar problems, and achievement is measured against specified benchmarks. The problem-solving model is more flexible, as explained by NASDE as well: problems are defined behaviorally, interventions are planned specifically for the targeted student and provided over a reasonable period of time, performance is measured in the natural setting, and students' progress is compared to that of peers.

Beyond the approach to intervention planning, another difference in the various RTI models is the number of tiers. Generally, models include three or four tiers. In this brief, a three-tiered framework is outlined, which (in this case "that" is the defining pronoun, so should be used instead of "which") considers students' ecologies, cultural and linguistic needs, and the skills that members of an educational team must possess when an ELL student becomes a focus of concern.

**Tier 1: Universal Screening and Research-Based Instruction**

At Tier 1, baseline data through universal screening are gathered for all students and achievement is monitored regularly. An RTI system relies on the use of evidence-based curricula that is taught in a manner consistent with its authors' intent (treatment integrity). It is assumed that effective and research-based instruction already occurs in the general education classroom for all students. For ELLs, as discussed earlier, for instruction to be "effective and appropriate," assessment as well as instruction must be both linguistically and culturally congruent. That is, the teacher who wants to teach ELLs appropriately and effectively must know their levels of language proficiency in their first language (L1) and second language (L2) when planning assessment and instruction, and provide culturally relevant curricula that reflect the background and experiences of the students (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 1989; Macedo & Bartolome, 1999). Appropriate instruction for ELLs requires that teachers embrace a pedagogy that is "rooted in the cultural capital of [their students] and have as its point of departure the native language and culture" (Freire & Macedo, 1987, p. 151). In other words, a child's language and culture are never viewed as liabilities but rather as strengths upon which to build an education. When an ELL student becomes a focus of concern, the

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*Figure 1. Response to Intervention: Three-Tier Model for ELLs*

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIER 1</th>
<th>All Students receive high quality and appropriate instruction, behavioral support as well as regular progress monitoring (universal screening). All students are provided additional appropriate instruction or support in the general education setting. (General education: 100% of the population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TIER 2</td>
<td>Students who do not make progress in Tier 1 are provided more intensive support through intensive interventions (double dose) still as part of general education. (General education: About 15% of the population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIER 3</td>
<td>Students who need intensive individualized interventions either in small groups or one-on-one. (may be Special Education: 5% of the population)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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continues
The instructional program itself must be examined to determine the match between the demands of the curriculum and the child's current level of proficiency in the language of instruction. It is important to examine the achievement of the student's "true peers" (similar language proficiencies, culture and experiential background) to see if they are excelling or not. If several "true peers" are struggling, this is an indication that the instruction is less than optimal for that group of students.

At Tier 1, once instruction is adjusted to meet each student's individual or personalized needs, progress is closely monitored and decisions are made as to whether students are meeting predetermined targets or benchmarks. If, after providing instructional modifications that could include re-teaching, smaller groupings in the general education classroom, or perhaps some instruction in a child's L1, the student does not make the targeted gains, it may be recommended that the student receive Tier 2 support. A table is provided below to help delineate factors that must be examined for ELLs at Tier 1, as well as the kinds of instructional support and personnel who can provide the needed instruction.

**Tier 2: More Intensive Support**

In Tier 2, interventions, rather than just instructional adjustments to the general curriculum, are provided to the student. Tier 2 interventions are often delivered in a small group setting and may be provided by a specialist (i.e., Title I teacher, reading specialist, special education teacher, speech and language specialist), or by the classroom teacher. Tier 2 interventions are supplemental to the general education curriculum. In other words, students should receive a "double dose" of instruction targeted at specific goals based on students' needs identified by Tier 1 screening. As stated...
### Tier 1

**POPULATION: ALL STUDENTS  SETTING: GENERAL EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>Achievement is <em>both</em> at a lower level when compared to “true-peers” (same levels of language proficiency, acculturation, and educational background) and occurs at a substantially slower rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**GUIDING QUESTIONS**
- Is scientifically-based instruction in place for the target student and consideration given to his/her cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic and experiential background?
- Is instruction targeted to the student’s level of English proficiency?
- Is the concern examined within the context (i.e., language of instruction, acculturation)?
- Have the parents been contacted and their input documented?
- Has accurate baseline data been collected on what the student can do as well as what he/she must still learn?
- Are L1 and L2 language proficiency monitored regularly?
- Have the *ecology* of the classroom and school been assessed?
- What were the child’s pre-school literacy experiences, if any?
- Have hearing and vision been screened?
- What tasks can the student perform and in what settings?
- Have specific Tier 1 RTI interventions that are culturally, linguistically and experientially appropriate been developed?

**INSTRUCTION/INTERVENTION**
- All students receive high-quality, research-based instruction by qualified staff
- Universal screening of academics and behavior of all students to identify those who need close monitoring or intervention
- Progress monitoring compares ELL student to other true-peer ELLs since their rate of progress cannot be compared to that of the English-only group
- Appropriate instructional interventions are developed such as individually designed instructional units, or different instruction using the general education curriculum
- Background knowledge is built
- Research-based interventions are implemented for at least 8–12 weeks and progress is monitored
- Culturally responsive instruction is fundamental at this tier and not an add-on
- Explicit and linguistically appropriate instruction is also fundamental (attention given to language forms and functions)
- Strategies appropriate for instructing ELLs such as Total Physical Response, visuals, real objects, modeling, repetitive language and gestures must be used
- Instruction includes language activities and explicit instruction in phonological awareness, the alphabetic code, vocabulary development and comprehension strategies
- Instruction in the native language is provided

**SERVICE PROVIDER**
- If the course topics remain the same, what new research, examples, and writings can illustrate these topics?
- Is there a new thematic approach to this material that will help to put cultural diversity in the foreground?
- How do I integrate new material so that it is not simply an “add-on”?
- What teaching strategies will facilitate student learning of this new material?

**NECESSARY SERVICE PROVIDER SKILLS**
- Able to: provide developmentally, culturally, linguistically and experientially appropriate instruction and assessment to *all* students
- deliver culturally responsive instruction
- describe behaviors/areas in observable terms and establish baselines
- identify the elements that will lead to success in the identified problem area
- identify instructional and student variables that may contribute to a solution
- understand that no student characteristic (e.g., disability label, race, SES, cultural group) dictates *a priori* what intervention will work
- collaborate with other service providers and parents
- use tools that assess L1 and L2 skills
Tier 2:
POPULATION: STUDENTS WHO NEED DIFFERENT AND MORE INTENSIVE INSTRUCTION THAN PROVIDED IN TIER 1
SETTING: SMALL GROUP SETTING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>Achievement continues both at a lower level as compared to “true-peers” and occurs at a substantially slower rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| GUIDING QUESTIONS       | - Will instruction in a small group setting lead to success?  
                          - Has the student’s progress been compared to him or herself using data collected over time and across settings?  
                          - Does the child’s learning rate appear to be lower than that of an average learning “true peer”?  
                          - Is the child responding to interventions?  
                          - Will an alternate curriculum help the student succeed?  
                          - Is scientifically-based instruction in place for the target student and consideration given to his/her cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic and experiential background? |
| INSTRUCTION/INTERVENTION| - Option of receiving different curriculum from Tier 1 (time and intensity) which would be systematic and explicit instruction with modeling, multiple examples, and feedback  
                          - This supplemental instruction is in addition to the time allowed for core reading instruction in general education  
                          - The curriculum addresses the student’s specific learning needs and progress is carefully monitored and reported  
                          - Observations should occur across settings and be of various activities/tasks  
                          - If the student does not respond to Tier 2 interventions, consider referring to Tier 3 |
| SERVICE PROVIDER        | - Specialist (Title I Teacher, Reading Teacher, Special Education Teacher, Related Service Provider) or General Education Teacher  
                          - General education teacher responsible for integrating all tiers of instruction into the classroom and monitoring instruction |
| NECESSARY SERVICE PROVIDER SKILLS | - Able to:  
                          - ensure that culturally and linguistically appropriate classroom instruction was provided in Tier 1 and continues in Tier 2  
                          - accurately monitor and report student’s progress and adjust instruction accordingly |

Previously, instructional interventions for ELLs should be both linguistically and culturally appropriate. School personnel continue to collect and monitor the student’s achievement and assess the learning environment and suitability of instruction. A Tier 2 student who fails to reach identified instructional targets is a candidate to move to Tier 3 once it has been established that he or she truly has received an adequate opportunity to learn. Conversely, a student who makes the expected gains may cycle back to Tier 1 with close observation of the student’s continuing progress. Below is a table outlining Tier 2 for ELLs.

**Tier 3: Intensive Individual Instruction**

In Tier 3, interventions are more intensive and may be delivered individually or in small groups. The student’s progress continues to be closely monitored. RTI models vary in their conceptualization of Tier 3. In some models, Tier 3 would be considered special education and students who progressed to this tier would automatically qualify for special education services. In other models, children would be provided intensive and individual interventions at this tier while concurrently undergoing an assessment for special education eligibility. In models with four tiers, students would receive intensive and focused interventions in Tier 3, and if they fail to make adequate progress, be moved into Tier 4. Tier 4 might then be considered special education. Below is a table summarizing Tier 3 for ELLs.

**Conclusion**

**No More “Business As Usual”**

After the above discussion, it should be apparent that we cannot continue “business as usual” when ELLs are struggling in our classrooms. There is great promise, though, in using an RTI approach, for many reasons. First, the universal screening and progress monitoring called for in the RTI process allow for comparison of students to other similar or “true” peers in their local cohort rather than to national norms. Second, an effective RTI model requires collaboration among all educators (e.g., speech and language therapists, school psychologists, counselors, English as a second language/Bilingual specialist), thereby providing increased opportunities for professional dialogue, peer coaching, and the creation of instruc-
Tier 3:  
POPULATION: STUDENTS WHO NEED DIFFERENT AND MORE INTENSIVE INSTRUCTION  
SETTING: ALTERNATIVE SETTING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>Achieving continues both at a lower level than like-peers, occurs at a substantially slower rate, and the student needs individualized instruction in order to learn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| GUIDING QUESTIONS       | - How many rounds of Tier 2 instruction has the student had?  
- Is there evidence of progress from previous interventions?  
- Is the student successful with different curriculum, teaching approaches and an individualized setting?  
- Does the student differ from like “true peers” in the following ways:  
  - Level of performance?  
  - Learning slope?  
- What are the child’s functional, developmental, academic, linguistic, and cultural needs?  
- If additional assessments are used, are the instruments technically sound, valid, and used appropriately for the ELL student?  
- Are test results interpreted in a manner that considers student’s language proficiency in L1 and L2 and their level of acculturaiton?  
- Do assessments include information in the student’s home language and English?  
- Has the student received continuous instruction (i.e., absences do not make up a good portion of the student’s profile)? |
| INSTRUCTION/INTERVENTION| - Option of receiving different curriculum from Tiers 1 and 2  
- Curriculum and instruction address the specific learning needs and progress is carefully monitored  
- Standardized cognitive and academic assessment should be conducted at this tier to identify processing profile  
- If cognitive assessment is conducted, native language assessment should be included  
- Any standardized test data must be interpreted within the context of student’s language proficiency and acculturaiton |
| SERVICE PROVIDER        | - Special education teacher or related service provider  
- General education teacher responsible for integrating all tiers of instruction into the classroom  
- All service providers must collaborate with the ELL specialist |
| NECESSARY SERVICE PROVIDER SKILLS | Able to:  
- ensure that appropriate instruction was provided in Tiers 1 and 2  
- accurately monitor student’s progress  
- develop culturally and linguistically appropriate IEP and plan appropriate individualized instruction  
- instruct appropriately to the student’s development level and needs, level of language proficiency and acculturaiton |

NOTE: Parental rights and consent may be required at this tier because the student is removed from the general education environment for instruction. Student could be qualified to receive special education services under the eligibility category of Specific Learning Disability and have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed at this tier without further assessment.

Our future rests on the promise of the next generation. Accordingly, we must develop the capacity to respond to an increasingly diverse student population, and ensure that these and all children develop to their fullest potential. By building on the cultural wisdom and linguistic knowledge students bring with them, we can help all children succeed.

References


