

WEEK 8: EDUCATIONAL TESTING AND ASSESSMENT

Lecture Outline: Section 1: Role of testing and assessment in education

Section 2: Types of educational tests

Section 3: Psychoeducational test batteries

Section 4: Other tools of assessment

Section 1: Role of testing and assessment in education

NOTE: -Text refers to educational assessment and testing practices that are specific to USA

-Educational testing is mandated by state or federal law in USA, but it is not in Australia.

-Exception: National Assessment Program – language and numeracy (NAPLAN)

The role of educational testing: -Is a child ready to begin primary school? (school readiness)

-Has information taught in class been learned by the student?

-Does a child have a learning difficulty?

-How well will a secondary school student perform at university?

>Testing and assessment in educational settings are focused on questions like these

Four basic categories of tests:

-Assessments of **how much learning** has taken place and to **what degree** it has been mastered

-Assessments of how knowledge acquired by a given student **compares to that acquired by various groups** of students

-Whether a child is having **difficulties learning** material, and if so, why and what might be done to alleviate the difficulty

-To what degree does a child have the **pre-requisites** for learning

Response to Intervention (Rti): -Background to educational testing

-In the mid-1970's, US federal mandate to identify and assist children with learning problems defined a *learning disability* as a "severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability."

-While it is not mandated in Australia, there are federal and state based education policies on the identification and remediation of children with learning difficulties.

Specific Learning Disability (SLD): -Neurodevelopmental Disorder that impedes the ability to learn or use specific academic skills, which serve as the foundation for other academic learning.

-A single, overall diagnosis, incorporating deficits that impact academic achievement

-After a diagnosis, clinicians provide greater detail into the type of deficit using specifiers, in the domains of **reading, mathematics or written expression**

-Can occur if they have above or low IQ

-Impacts on one's ability to perceive and process accurately. Have low academic achievement despite intervention

-Number of state and fed laws regarding SLD in childfree

DSM-5 Diagnosis: A. Difficulties learning and using academic skills (in one or more of reading, spelling, or mathematics) persisting for at least 6 months, despite the provision of interventions that target those difficulties

B. Academic skills must be substantially below those expected for the individual's chronological age (confirmed by standardized tests)

C. Learning difficulties begin during school-age years but (^in others) may not fully manifest until the demands for those affected academic skills exceed the individual's limited capacities (e.g. in timed tests, writing a lengthy report for a deadline)

D. Difficulties must not be better explained by developmental, psycho-social adversity, neurological, sensory (vision, hearing), or motor disorders

-The four diagnostic criteria are to be met based on synthesis of individual's history (developmental, medical, educational, family history), psychoeducational testing and school reports/observations.

3 major specifiers:

-*Specific learning disorder with impairment in reading* – word reading accuracy, reading rate or fluency, reading comprehension

>Alternate term 'dyslexia' to specify with reading impairment. Can dyslexia+be intelligent e.g Einstein

-*Specific learning disorder with impairment in written expression* – spelling accuracy, grammar and punctuation accuracy, clarity or organisation of written expression

-*Specific learning disorder with impairment in mathematics* – number sense, memorization of arithmetic facts, accurate or fluent calculation, accurate math reasoning

>Alternate term 'dyscalculia' to specify with mathematics impairment

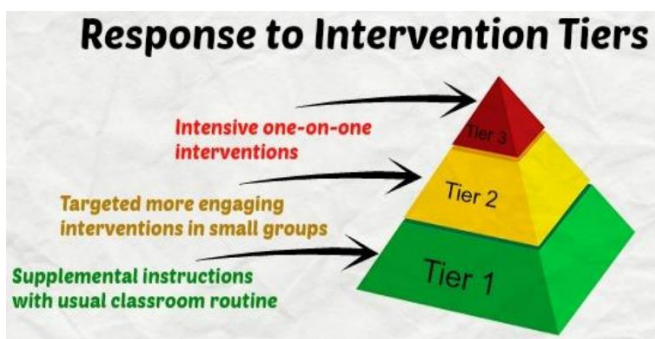
Response to intervention (RtI) model today: -A multilevel prevention framework applied in Model educational settings designed to maximize student achievement through the use of data that identifies students at risk for poor learning outcomes combined with evidence-based intervention and teaching

-Teachers provide evidence-based instruction. Teacher aided model, teacher facilitates and adjusts.

-Regular evaluation of student learning

-Intervention (if required) occurs in some form of appropriate adjustment in the instruction

-Re-evaluation, intervention and re-assessment occur as necessary



Multimodel dynamic approach:

-**Tier 3:** 3-6% of students will have difficulty on level 3 and will need special education. If they can't do this, then considered for a LD

-**Tier 2:** Small group segregated for special teaching e.g small group work in class

-**Tier 1:** Classroom environment: all students taught what teacher is teaching. 80-85% can do it

Dynamic Assessment: -Departs from reliance on fixed (static) tests

-Dynamic assessment is an approach to exploring learning potential that is based on a test-intervention-retest model

-Vygotsky (1978) introduced concept of **zone of proximal development**; the gap between what learner can do without help and what they can do with help. Says children work better with guidance from adult.

-Differs from traditional assessment in several ways:

>Dynamic assessors do not remain neutral; instead, they may do everything in their power to help the child master the material in preparation for retesting

>Variations (such as clues or prompts) may be introduced that help the child better understand, or to remediate, the obstacles to learning

>Potential problems with validity of dynamic assessment

