

The cognitive and linguistic profiles of Tier 2 and Tier 3 students in kindergarten and their reading outcomes in first grade

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Research topic: My research focuses on analyzing, understanding, and profiling the 25% lowest achieving students in kindergarten and subsequently assessing their outcomes in 1st grade. I will use the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework, and the OR curriculum, developed and validated by members of the Safra Center.

Why is my study unique? Response to Intervention is currently considered ‘best practice’ in the field of education and was written into law in the United States in the 2004 update of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act but has not yet been codified or manualized in Israel. Currently, the Safra Center is conducting longitudinal and intervention studies. Yet, little research applying RTI has been conducted in Israel. My study will focus on understanding struggling students who may develop learning disabilities and the current processes used to mediate these issues.

Planned analyses: First, I will examine the differences between the participants in Tier 2 and Tier 3 in kindergarten. The same process will be run on reading and cognitive measures in 1st grade in the two groups. Additionally, a questionnaire will be developed to ascertain the interventions and outcomes of low-achieving students within the current education system.

How is my research relevant for educational practices? Essential components of RTI include consistent data collection and implementation of empirically validated curricula among students, unrelated to their degree of responsiveness. The Safra Center is endeavoring to disseminate the RTI approach as a national educational practice in Israel. My study will develop the empirical foundation of RTI practices in the current groups studied and will (hopefully) allow us to see trends in the current education system that can be systematically addressed in order to help all learners succeed.