

Is there a role for cognitive processes in interventions for at risk students with and without learning disabilities?

Doug & Lynn Fuchs, PhDs
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1:30 – 2:30
0306 Benjamin Building



Over the past 2 decades, researchers have validated the effects of interventions that substantially improve the academic outcomes of many at-risk learners. The dominant approach in validated interventions is explicit skills instruction. Yet, research demonstrates that this approach does not meet the needs of all students, especially those with learning disabilities. So a need exists to expand our approach to address a broader range of students. One idea is to embed instruction on the domain-general abilities associated with academic performance. We illustrate this idea by presenting recent experimental research on embedding working memory training in reading comprehension instruction and language comprehension instruction within math problem solving intervention.

Lynn Fuchs is Professor and the Dunn Family Chair in Psychoeducational Assessment at Vanderbilt University. She has conducted programmatic research on assessment methods for enhancing instructional planning, on instructional methods for improving mathematics and reading outcomes for students with learning disabilities, and on the cognitive and linguistic student characteristics associated with mathematics development and responsiveness to intervention.

Douglas Fuchs is Professor and Nicholas Hobbs Chair in Special Education and Human Development at Vanderbilt. His research has helped develop models of service delivery (e.g., pre-referral intervention, RTI); assessments (e.g., formative measures of student and teacher evaluation, dynamic assessment); and instructional approaches (e.g., PALS). He is currently exploring effects of academic interventions that combine cognitively-focused and skills-based instruction for most difficult-to-teach children.

In 2014, Doug and Lynn received the American Educational Research Association's Distinguished Contributions to Research in Education Award. According to AERA, the award's purpose "is to publicize, motivate, encourage, and suggest models for educational research at its best."

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