INTRODUCTION
The purpose of this project was to develop an intervention to improve vocabulary for children who were not successful in a larger vocabulary study.
- Vocabulary knowledge plays a large role in reading comprehension and academic success.
- Low SES students from minority backgrounds are at an increased risk for reading failure (Washington, 2001).
- NRP (2000) suggests vocabulary instruction must be appropriate to age and ability of the reader; task restructuring and repeated exposures may be needed to enhance learning.
- Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tiered approach based on a student’s progress. It is a means to develop reading interventions for children who are not responding to standard instructional practices (Justice, 2006).

RESEARCH QUESTION
• Can the vocabulary of low SES students, who also have low scores on standardized language and cognitive tests, be improved through one-to-one intervention?

METHOD
ORIGINAL LISTENING CENTER INTERVENTION
- Students independently listen to interactive stories through headphones for 20 minutes, 4 days/week
- Students hear definitions and examples of 7 target words embedded into the story
- Students respond orally with words and definitions and complete a worksheet with pictures representing the targets
- Minimum of 8 exposures of the target words and 4 exposures of the definition provided
- Students were tested on the weekly target words every Friday

MODIFICATIONS MADE FOR THE CURRENT STUDY
- Adult attention throughout entire story
- Child and adult listened using a boom box instead of headphones
- CD was paused when student asked to respond with a target or definition
- Scaffolding hierarchy implemented when inaccurate responses given

PARTICIPANTS
- Participants were part of a larger study, Project ILIAD, that taught vocabulary embedded in story contexts.
- 3 first grade students from Title I funded elementary school were chosen based on performance in Project ILIAD:
  - Poor performance on weekly measures of vocabulary learning
    - Expressively labeled less than 10% of novel words
    - Defined less than 10% of novel words with partial decontextualized definitions
  - Scored at least 1 SD below the mean on CELF-4, PPVT-4, EVT-3, and KBIT-2
- Participants were 2 males and 1 female (6 years old) in 3 different first grade classrooms.

DATA COLLECTION
- Data sheet was used to monitor number of opportunities to respond (prompted vs. independent)
- Participants were tested on targets expressively and decontextually with the other students participating in the intervention on Fridays
- Credit given for complete or partial knowledge on the decontextualized definition test and complete knowledge on the expressive labeling test

RESULTS
WEEKLY ASSESSMENT RESULTS:
- Participants made gains, but were highly variable in their learning.

DISCUSSION
- All participants showed gains in independent responses each week, which suggests the benefits of repeated exposure and scaffolding.
- Minimal effects found for improving decontextualized knowledge and expressive labeling.
- Causal factors include the choice of targets and length of intervention time.
- Future research includes examining other modifications to the intervention through:
  - Teaching words in more than one context
  - Using additional stories that have targets embedded
  - Alternative prompting hierarchies
  - Creating an alternative weekly test format
  - Using a third tier component consisting of direct instruction and teaching strategies effective for word learning
- A scaffolding hierarchy, as the one used, may be beneficial for promoting emerging knowledge, but more direct instruction is necessary for those with language delays.

This project was funded by Project ILIAD from DOE, IES Award R324L060023 and the Language & Literacy grant, funded by DOE, OSEP Award H04325S090046, PI, Howard Goldstein.