
Making expert practice visible: evidence from four rounds of effective TaRL implementation

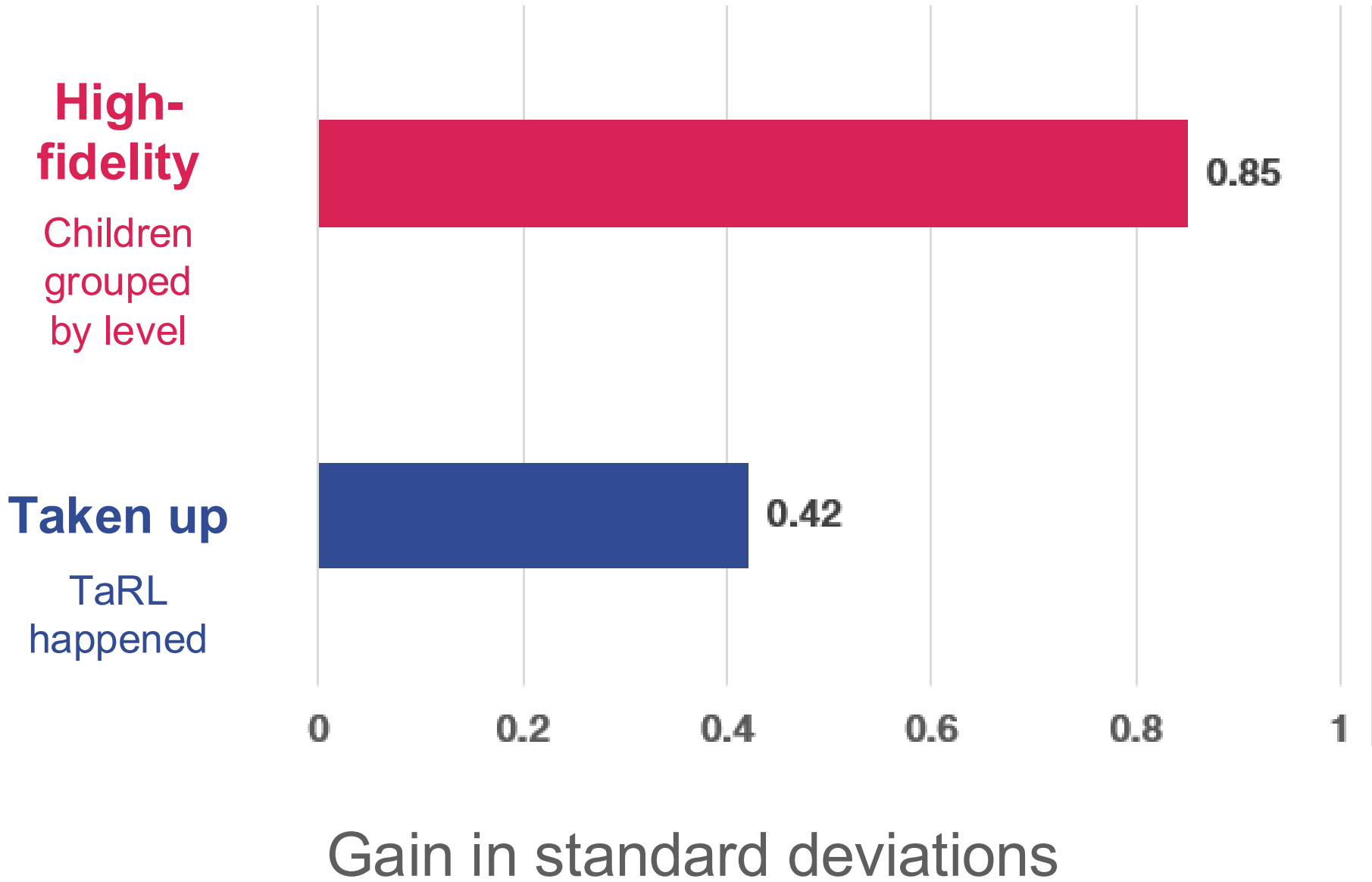
A presentation for the What Works Hub for Global Education conference

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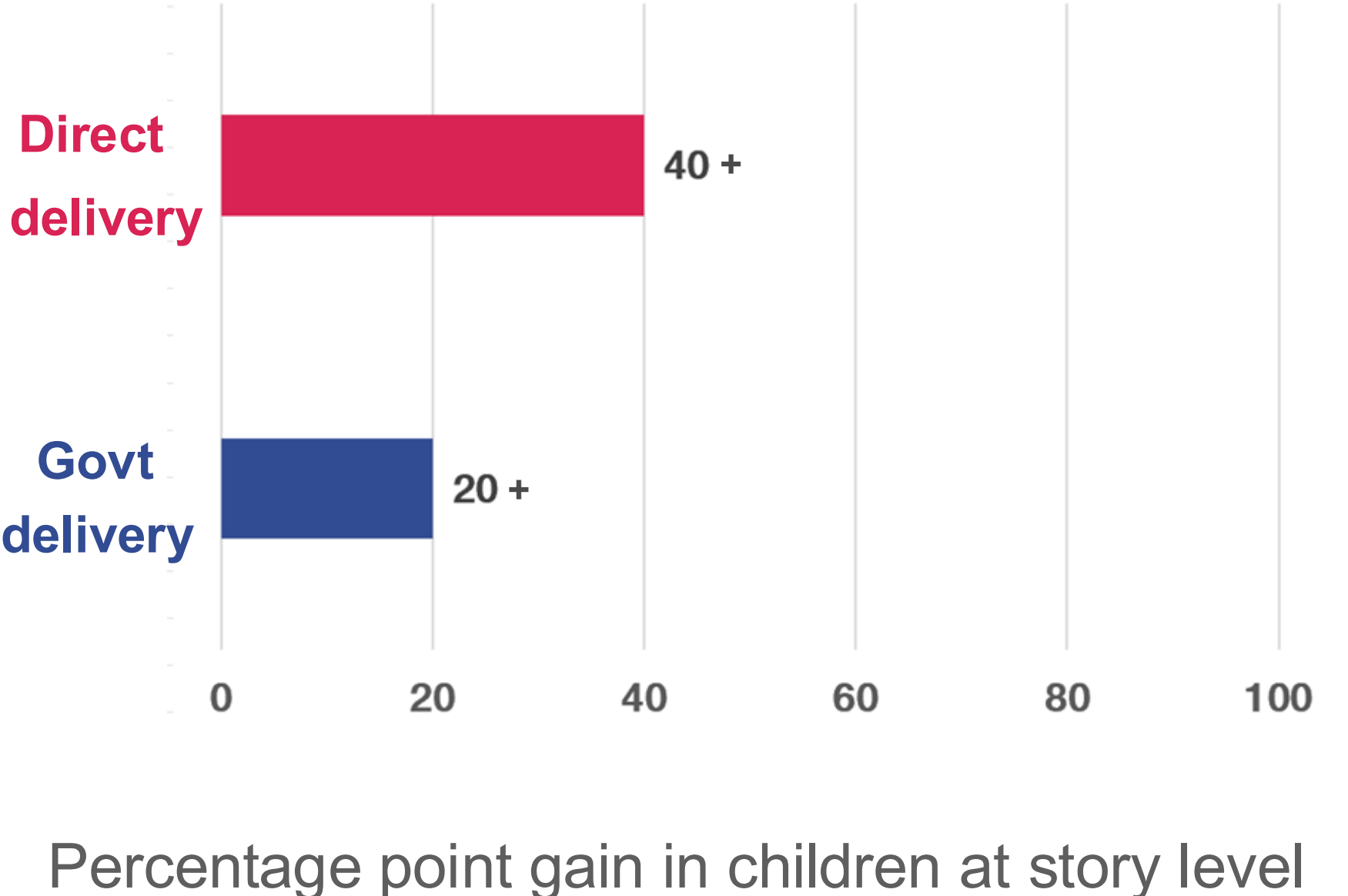
16 September 2026



TaRL's effects differ by context, implementer capacity, and delivery model



[Angrist and Meager 2023](#)



Pratham implementation data

Pratham identified several key pain points



Insufficient guidance on how to address variation within ASER levels

Instructors need to address students' specific learning challenges not just across but within levels, e.g., reading instruction should be different within the beginner group



Training and manuals do not address every class composition

Every class has a different mix of children across levels. The instructor gets a single manual of principles and activities and has to adapt it to her own class.



Groups and activities less synced with learning progress over time

As children progress, they need to be regrouped and should receive more challenging activities. In practice instructors often maintain baseline groups and repeat initial activities.

Bootcamp objective: unpack how expert instructors and coaches addressed pain points



4 bootcamps
18 months
~3,000 students
~100 instructors
~35 days per bootcam
16 states

- 1 PadhAI: AI-powered oral reading assessment**
Including WCPM. Collected 4x/camp.
- 2 Attendance and regrouping collected via PadhAI app**
Daily attendance; when and why each student was regrouped
- 3 Instructor activity guides**
Instructors created daily plan for guiding instruction in their class.
Recorded subject, activity domain (e.g, language: oracy, reading, writing; math: number knowledge, word problems), group mode (big, small, individual), and activity description
- 4 Group debrief call recordings**
Virtual sessions in which instructors reflected on classroom challenges with content and instruction experts, who recommended best practices
- 5 Instructor interviews**
Instructors documented teaching decisions like regrouping choices, activity modifications, and attendance, via interview bot

Bootcamp learnings led to two teacher support tools we are testing



Oral reading assessment

Already live; beyond bootcamps, assessed 135,000 children so far



Nudges

Instructors receive daily, targeted academic support nudges that help them work more effectively with their specific class. Nudge provides suggestions of what to notice, what to think about, and in some cases what to do.



Chatbot

Responds to an individual instructor's question or query. On-demand. Provides context-specific instructional support

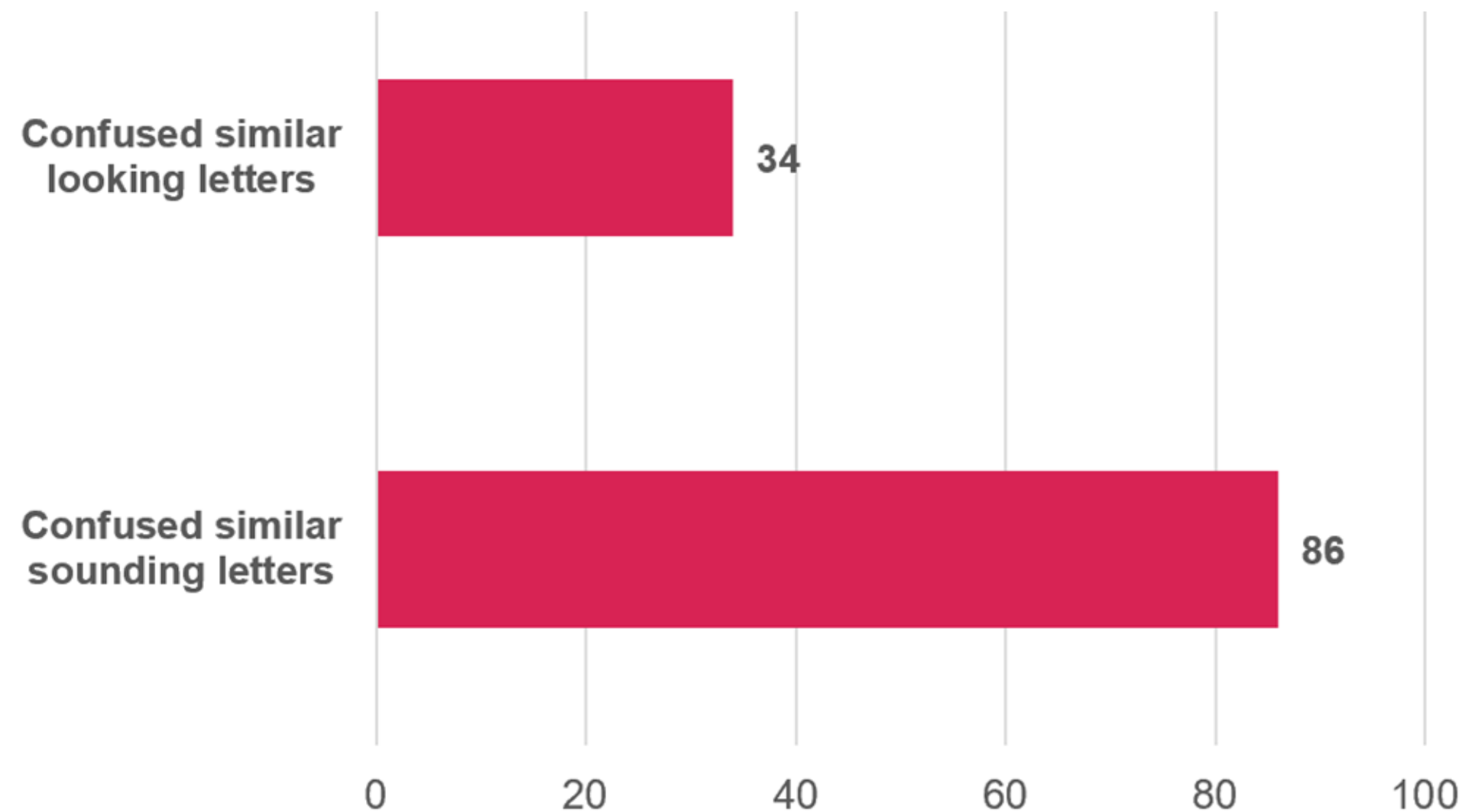
Findings

What we learned from the bootcamp analysis, how we changed TaRL practice, and what technology supports we are testing



We were better able to support children with different reading challenges in the same TaRL level

Percent of beginner and letter level children who gained 1 or 2 levels, by error type



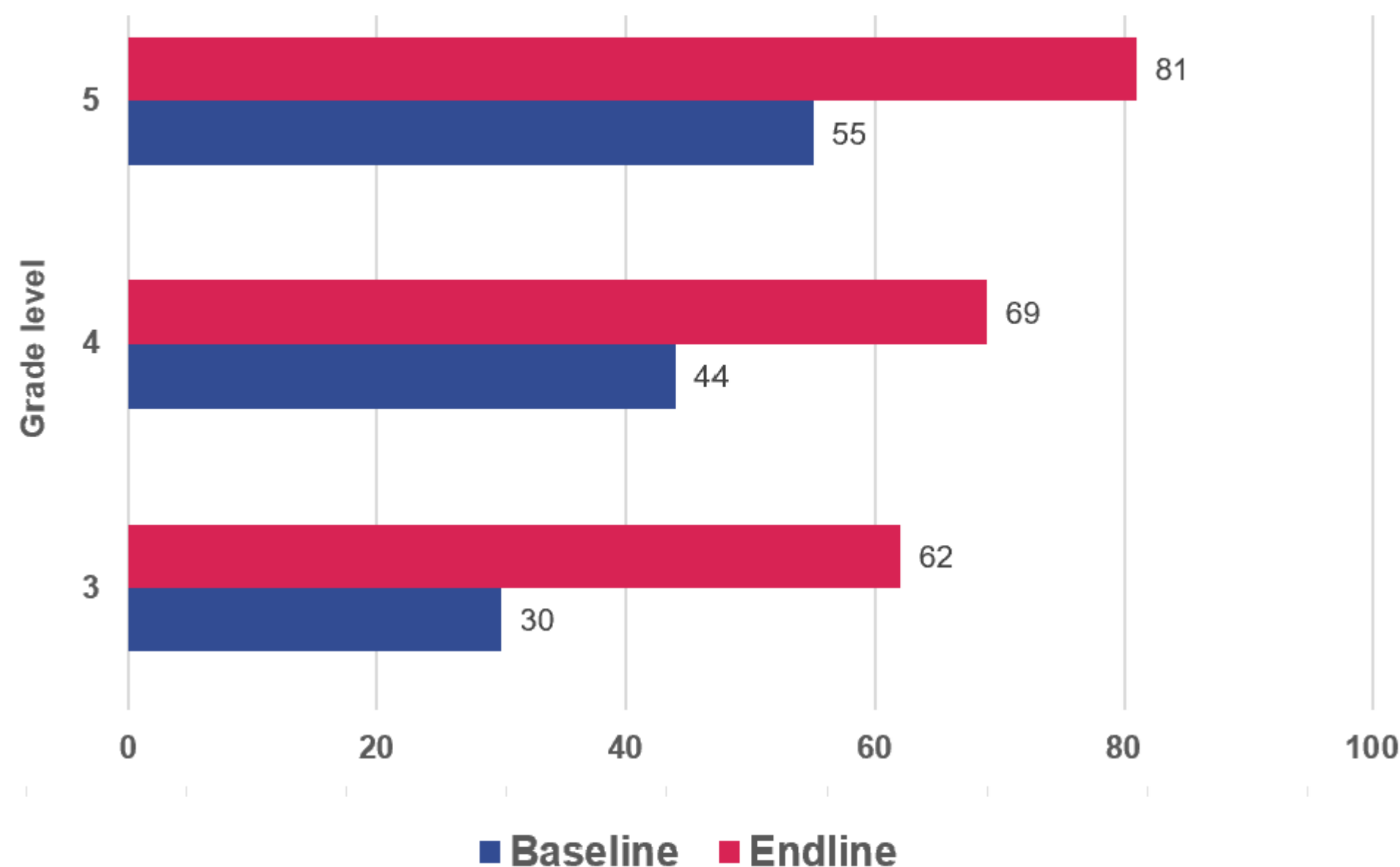
How we adjusted

- **Target at-risk students by error type:** Easier to identify and support students who need specific letter reversal support
- **Letter focus:** Practice built around the letters children most often confuse, in easy-to-hard order
- **Materials:** Modified syllable (barakhadi) chart to highlight similar sounding letter/consonant types
- **Literacy manual & training:** updated to include most commonly misread words and letters



We were better able to support word+ level children using WCPM data

Percent of children meeting NIPUN Bharat grade 3 benchmark (60 WCPM)



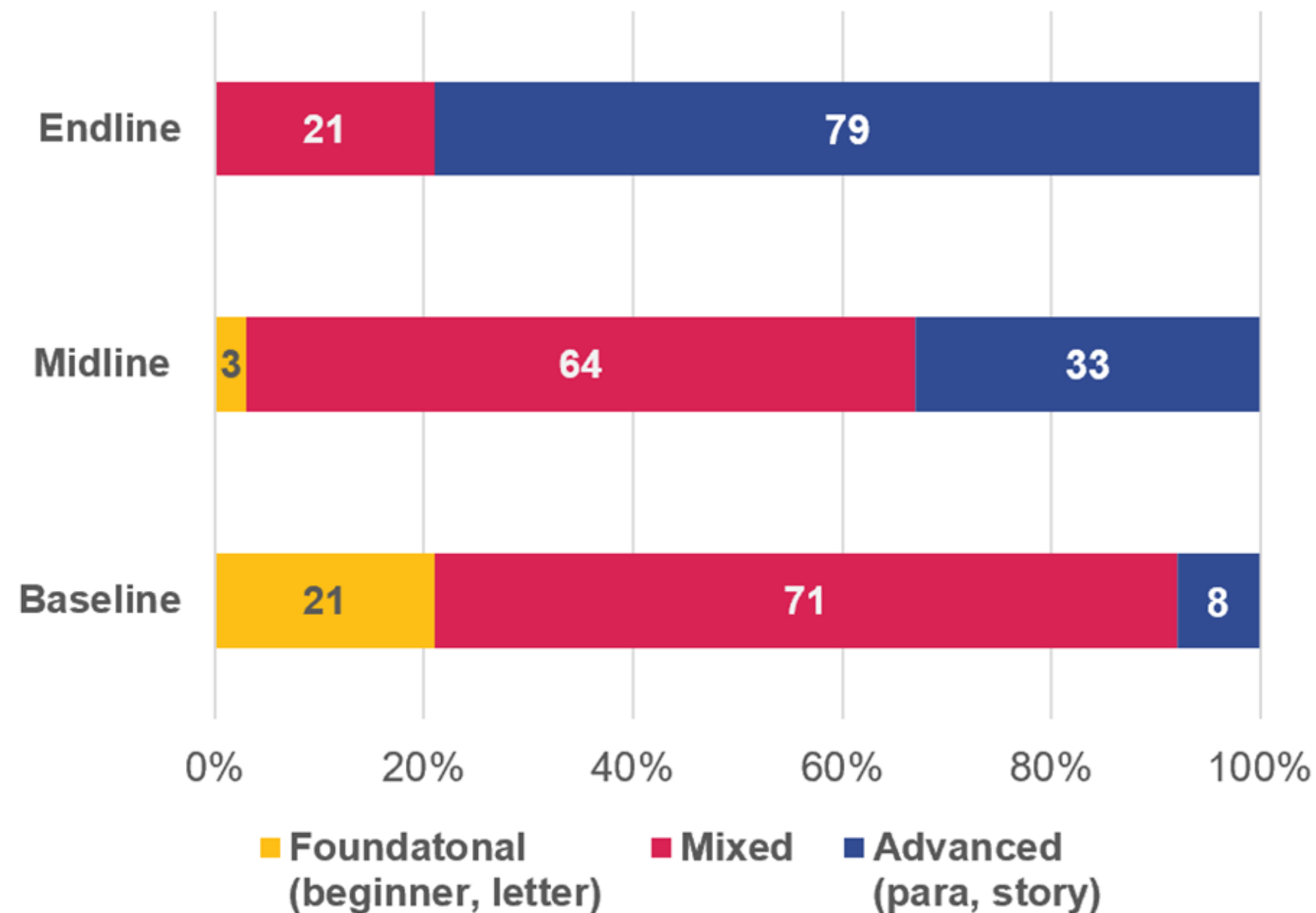
How we adjusted

- **Activities:** introduced more reading practice in class and at home
- **Tech:** encouraged more fluency-building activities based on student and class profiles at key points in TaRL cycle



We were better able to support instructors in adjusting lessons as students progressed

Percent of classes in each type over the course of a TaRL cycle



How we adjusted

- **Practice:** instructors planned activities based on assessment data and principle that for each activity there should be progression over time aligned with and scaffolding children's progress.
- **Tech:** nudges provided suggestions according to class type



We were better able to support instructors in adjusting lessons to changing class composition

Different class types use different activities for the same domain:
Phonological and decoding → moving to word activities (vocabulary)

Class type	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Foundational (beginner, letter)	Segmenting and blending sounds	Identifying first and last sounds; reading barakhadi (syllable chart)	Sound-based word building using barakhadi	Differentiating similar-looking or similar-sounding letters	Generating words using barakhadi
Advanced (paragraph, story)	Forming words using given sounds	Building vocabulary through everyday themes	Understanding and using synonyms	Identifying and using action words in sentences	Organizing, classifying, and using words through mind mapping



Phonological / decoding

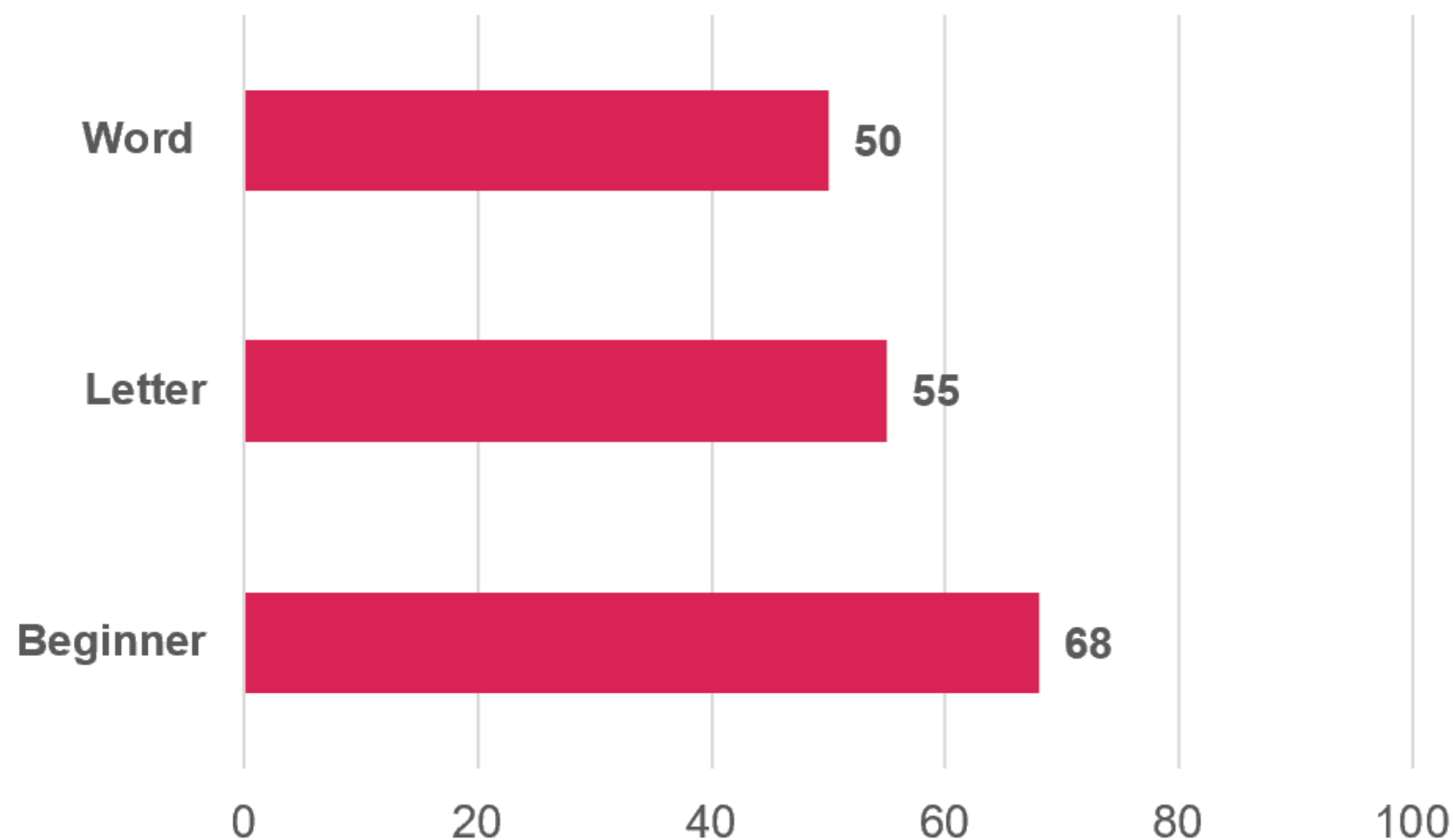


Word activities / vocabulary



We tried to encourage more timely regrouping

Percent of children never regrouped, by baseline level



How we adjusted

- **Training:** added explicit, timed regrouping checkpoints
- **Practice:** greater encouragement of regrouping based on class type and student progress

Expanding PadhAI reach and testing TaRL technology in different contexts

Expanding PadhAI reach

- **PadhAI assessment:** development in Kenya, Senegal, Colombia, eight other Indian languages
- **PadhAI + practice:** adaptive learning, developing parent-facing PadhAI + practice module for the app

Developing implementation support for different contexts and instructors

- 1 **Pratham staff:** 16 states
- 2 **Community volunteers:** Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan
- 3 **Government teachers:** Bihar
- 4 **Planned RCT** with J-PAL
- 1 **Kenya:** Bootcamp and learning process with TaRL Africa