

Project Narrative

The proposed study explores whether poor sensory (phonetic) perception for speech underlies poor phonemic awareness and reading disability (RD). The study measures how well 8 to 12 year old children with RD can perceive all English consonants and vowels in nonsense syllables, in a series of experiments that increase the auditory memory load, add print to the auditory signal, and provide training for phonetic perception. Preliminary work suggests that although children with RD do not experience severe confusions, they do experience moderate confusions for many sounds, significantly more often than good readers. Cumulatively, this increased level of syllable confusions could result in considerable difficulty with reading.