



Reading Recovery Research Brief

Early Intervention in Children with Reading Difficulties: An Evaluation of Reading Recovery and a Phonological Training

Sylva, K, & Hurry, J. (1996). *Literacy, Teaching and Learning: An International Journal of Early Literacy*, 2(2), 49–73.

Background

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of two different interventions, Reading Recovery and Phonological Intervention. Their study included almost 400 children from seven English local authorities. Although the sample was diverse, inner city children were over represented. The schools included 22 Reading Recovery schools, 23 Phonological Intervention schools, and 18 control schools. The measures used included the British Ability Scale Word Reading, Neale Analysis of Reading, Clay's Diagnostic Survey (five tasks), Assessment of Phonological Awareness, British Ability Scale Spelling, and background information on each child.

Findings

During the intervention year, the effect of Phonological Intervention was more specific than Reading Recovery and not as secure. The only area where Phonological Intervention children significantly improved compared to the control group was on the test of phonological awareness. Reading Recovery children made significantly more progress than the control group on every measure of reading. During the second year, the Phonological Intervention was less effective than Reading Recovery, and the effects narrowed.

Reading Recovery was the more powerful intervention and the more expensive. However, Reading Recovery was particularly effective for socially disadvantaged children who were overrepresented in special needs programs. While the cost of Reading Recovery was higher than of other groups, the cost gap was narrowing and predicted to narrow further.

See follow-up analysis 4 years later for more cost information:

Long-Term Effects of Two Interventions for Children with Reading Difficulties

<http://222.readingrecovery.org/sections/research/longtermeffectsoftwoint.asp>

Portions of this abstract appeared in *What Evidence Says About Reading Recovery*. (2002). Columbus, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America, and in Schmitt, M. C., Askew, B. J., Fountas, I. C., Lyons, C. A., & Pinnell, G. S. (2005). *Changing Futures: The Influence of Reading Recovery in the United States*. Worthington, OH: Reading Recovery Council of North America.