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Phonemic Awareness Contributes to Text Reading Fluency: Evidence From Eye Movements

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Abstract. Although phonemic awareness is a known predictor of early decoding and word recognition, less is known about relationships between phonemic awareness and text reading fluency. This longitudinal study is the first to investigate this relationship by measuring eye movements during picture matching tasks and during silent sentence reading. Time spent looking at the correct target during phonemic awareness and receptive spelling tasks gauged the efficiency of phonological and orthographic processes. Children's eye movements during sentence reading provided a direct measure of silent reading fluency for comprehended text. Results indicate that children who processed the phonemic awareness targets more slowly in Grade 2 tended to be slower readers in Grade 3. Processing difficulty during a receptive spelling task was related to reading fluency within Grade 2. Findings suggest that inefficient phonemic processing contributes to poor silent reading fluency after second grade.
Questions?

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