Abstract

This study examined the development of literacy skills in children in a district that used a Response to Intervention (RTI) model. The district included children whose first language was English and children who were learning English as a second language (ESL). Tasks measuring phonological awareness, lexical access, and syntactic awareness were administered when the children entered school in kindergarten at age 5. Reading, phonological processing, syntactic awareness, memory, and spelling were administered in grade 7. When the children entered school, significant numbers of them were at risk for literacy difficulties. After systematic instruction and annual monitoring of skills, their reading abilities improved to the extent that only a very small percentage had reading difficulties. The results demonstrated that early identification and intervention and frequent monitoring of basic skills can significantly reduce the incidence of reading problems in both the ESL and language majority children.