

The Phonological Deficit Hypothesis

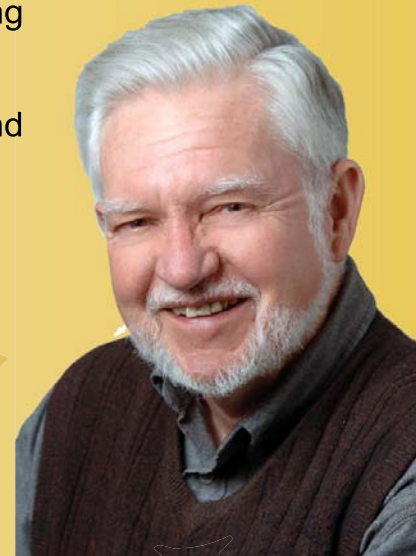
How Well Has It Withstood the Test of Time (and Evidence)?

A SSSR Pre-Conference Symposium, July 9 2008

Honoring the Career of Donald Shankweiler

The Phonological Deficit Hypothesis, first proposed in the 1970's by Donald Shankweiler and his colleague Isabelle Liberman, has been the leading explanation of difficulties in reading abilities for several decades. The hypothesis posited that underlying impairment in the phonological system accounts for the characteristic difficulties struggling readers encounter with phoneme awareness, decoding, spelling and word recognition, with secondary consequences for reading comprehension. In particular, weaknesses in the phonological processes and/or representations serving speech perception, speech production, and verbal memory were hypothesized to be causally related to individual differences in reading aptitude.

In the decades since, this theory has directly and indirectly influenced much of the research in the field of reading, as well as attendant shifts in educational policies and practices. Research pursuits have expanded to include sophisticated studies of behavioral, genetic, and neurological factors linked with reading development and reading disabilities. In this symposium, advances in research and theory will be reviewed to assess the adequacy and completeness of the Phonological Deficit Hypothesis as an account of reading disabilities.



PROGRAM

Introduction (S. Brady): Summary statement about the original Phonological Deficit Hypothesis; clarification regarding common misunderstandings.

1. Accidentally Weeding: Individual differences in phonological representations of lexical items associated with phoneme awareness and reading abilities? (C. Elbro)
2. The Early Development of Phonological Sensitivity: Implications for differences in phonological awareness. (D. Braze and G. McRoberts)
3. Variation in Lexical Quality: Implications for the phonological deficit hypothesis. (C. Perfetti)
4. Lessons from Special Populations: Unitary versus multiple sources of reading deficits. (M. Snowling)
5. Phonological and Other Language Deficits Associated with Reading Disabilities. (H. Catts)
6. How Might Phonological Theories Shed Light on the Phonological Deficit Hypothesis? (C. Fowler)
7. Research into Practice: Application of the PDH to assessment of reading differences. (H. Scarborough and N. Patton-Terry)
8. On the Role of Phonology in Reading Acquisition: The self-teaching hypothesis. (D. Share)
9. The Role of Genetic and Environmental Influences on Phonological Abilities and Reading Achievement. (D. Olson)
10. Can There Be a Phonological (Decoding) Deficit Without a Phonological Deficit? (B. Byrne)
11. What Evidence Does Neurobiological Research Provide for the PDH? (K. Pugh)

Concluding Remarks (S. Brady, D. Braze and C. Fowler)

Location: Crowne Plaza Hotel, Asheville, NC

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Registration at: www.triplesr.org/conference