

Table 3.4. Sensitivity and specificity levels by age for all ages tested by the TILLS

Age groups	Sensitivity	Specificity
6-year-olds	84%	82%
7-year-olds	84%	86%
8-year-olds	97%	100%
9-year-olds	83%	81%
10-year-olds	81%	81%
11-year-olds	86%	82%
12-year-olds	83%	100%
13-year-olds	84%	86%
14- to 18-year-olds	87%	87%

Sensitivity refers to the percentage of students with a known disorder who were identified by the TILLS as having the disorder. A high percentage for sensitivity means that the test is highly accurate for identifying the disorder (with low false negatives).

Specificity is the percentage of students in the normative sample (who had never been identified as either having a language or literacy disorder or needing reading remediation) who were identified by the TILLS as typically developing. A high percentage for specificity means that the test can rule out disorder among students for whom no other evidence suggests that they have a disorder (low false positives).

As a rule of thumb, language tests should reach at least 80% sensitivity and specificity at a particular cut score to be clinically useful (Plante & Vance, 1994). As shown in Table 3.4 the TILLS meets clinically useful sensitivity and specificity levels of a minimum of 80% accuracy (Plante & Vance, 1994) for all ages of the test.

Note the TILLS does not include separate age norms between the ages of 14 and 18 years. This is because the skills tapped by the TILLS no longer show age-related change after age 13 years.