

The effects of vocabulary, morphosyntax and home literacy activities on Greek-English bilingual children's reading comprehension

Background/Aims: The present study aimed at investigating the performance of bilingual and biliterate children on language and literacy measures. Specifically, we measured the relationship between oral language skills (i.e., vocabulary, morphosyntax) and reading comprehension performance in bilinguals (Peets et al., 2022). Additionally, we investigated whether home literacy activities contribute to primary school Greek-English bilingual children's performance on reading comprehension (De Houwer, 2007). Moreover, we hypothesized that the amount of home literacy activities would benefit children's reading performance in each language separately (Scheele et al., 2010).

Methodology: Forty children attending Years 1 and 3 of English primary school in the UK were assessed in language and decoding skills. After one school year, they were assessed in oral language skills, decoding and reading comprehension Year 2 and 4. The PABIQ questionnaire (Tuller, 2015) was used to obtain data on the children's language history, quantity and quality of input, and use.

Results/Conclusion: The results showed that the children performed better on all tasks in Time 2 than Time 1 and the older children performed better than the younger ones. Their performance was also better in English than in Greek tasks. This demonstrates that children were English-dominant. The results also showed that Greek morphosyntax and home literacy activities were significant predictors of Greek reading comprehension, suggesting that bilinguals may use their morphosyntactic knowledge to support their reading comprehension in their minority language. Moreover, minority language exposure through home literacy activities may benefit reading comprehension of that language.

References

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