Abstract

This study analyzes the effect of initial status and growth in Spanish pseudoword reading in kindergarten and first grade on reading comprehension in Spanish at the end of first grade. One hundred and sixty-eight Spanish-speaking English learners who were learning to read in Spanish and English in the United States participated in the study. Results of hierarchical linear modeling indicate that students grew, on average, by 95 letter-sounds in Spanish from the middle of kindergarten to the end of first grade. Structural equation modeling indicated that 53% of the variance in Spanish reading comprehension at the end of first grade was explained by Spanish initial status on pseudoword reading, Spanish kindergarten overall reading performance, and growth in Spanish pseudoword reading. Findings are important in a Response to Intervention approach where screening and progress monitoring of pseudoword reading helps educators determine the level of support beginning readers need to acquire the alphabetic principle, an important skill that contributes substantially to Spanish reading comprehension.