



Reading Skills Acquisition in English: A Comparison of Monolingualism and Bilingualism in Foundation Phase

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ABSTRACT This study is based on the findings from a study conducted to examine acquisition of reading skills of monolingual English and bilingual Sesotho-English third grade learners by evaluating their phonological and reading skills. The sample consisted of 80 monolingual English and 80 bilingual Sesotho-English pupils in Motheo District, Free State. Tasks of Phonological Awareness (PA) were correlated with reading measures in English as an L1 and L2, but significant differences were found on all of the measures; implying overall support for use of PA measures for reading achievement in L1-English monolinguals and in the English (L2) of bilingual children, but with the understanding that L1 Sesotho spoken proficiency and L2 English-only instruction influences the underlying repertoire of PA skills used for L2 English reading acquisition, different from that of the L1 English reading acquisition process. The educational implications of these observations are discussed.