“Development and Promotion of Early Literacy Skills for Preschoolers Who are Spanish-Speaking Language-Minority Youth”

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Harrington Tower 632

Abstract
Children exposed to Spanish as one of the primary languages spoken in the home constitute the largest and fastest growing group of language-minority youth (LMY) in public schools in the United States. These data on population growth, coupled with data on academic outcomes for children who are Spanish-speaking LMY indicate that this group represents a considerable and growing challenge for the United States educational system. Many of these children enter kindergarten with low levels of key early literacy skills. Evidence indicates that there is substantial developmental continuity in these early literacy skills from the preschool period into the elementary grades, suggesting that many young children who are Spanish-speaking LMY are at substantial risk of later problems in reading. This presentation will focus on several recent or ongoing large-scale longitudinal and intervention studies designed to understand the development of early literacy skills with preschoolers who are LMY and to identify effective methods of early educational interventions to reduce the risk of later problems in reading.

Biographical Note
Dr. Christopher J. Lonigan is a Distinguished Research Professor of Psychology and an associate director of the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University. Dr. Lonigan has authored or co-authored over 70 research publications. His research interests include the development, assessment, and promotion of preschool early literacy skills and self-regulation. His current research projects include early identification of reading disability, effectiveness of Response to Instruction models in preschool, assessments for Spanish-speaking English learners, preschool curriculum evaluation, the development of reading comprehension, and the interaction between the development of self-regulation and academic skills. His research has been funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the Department of Health and Human Services.