

Wasatch Reading Summit Fall 2021 Virtual Conference



Typical and Atypical Development of Language and Literacy in ELs– From Research to Practice

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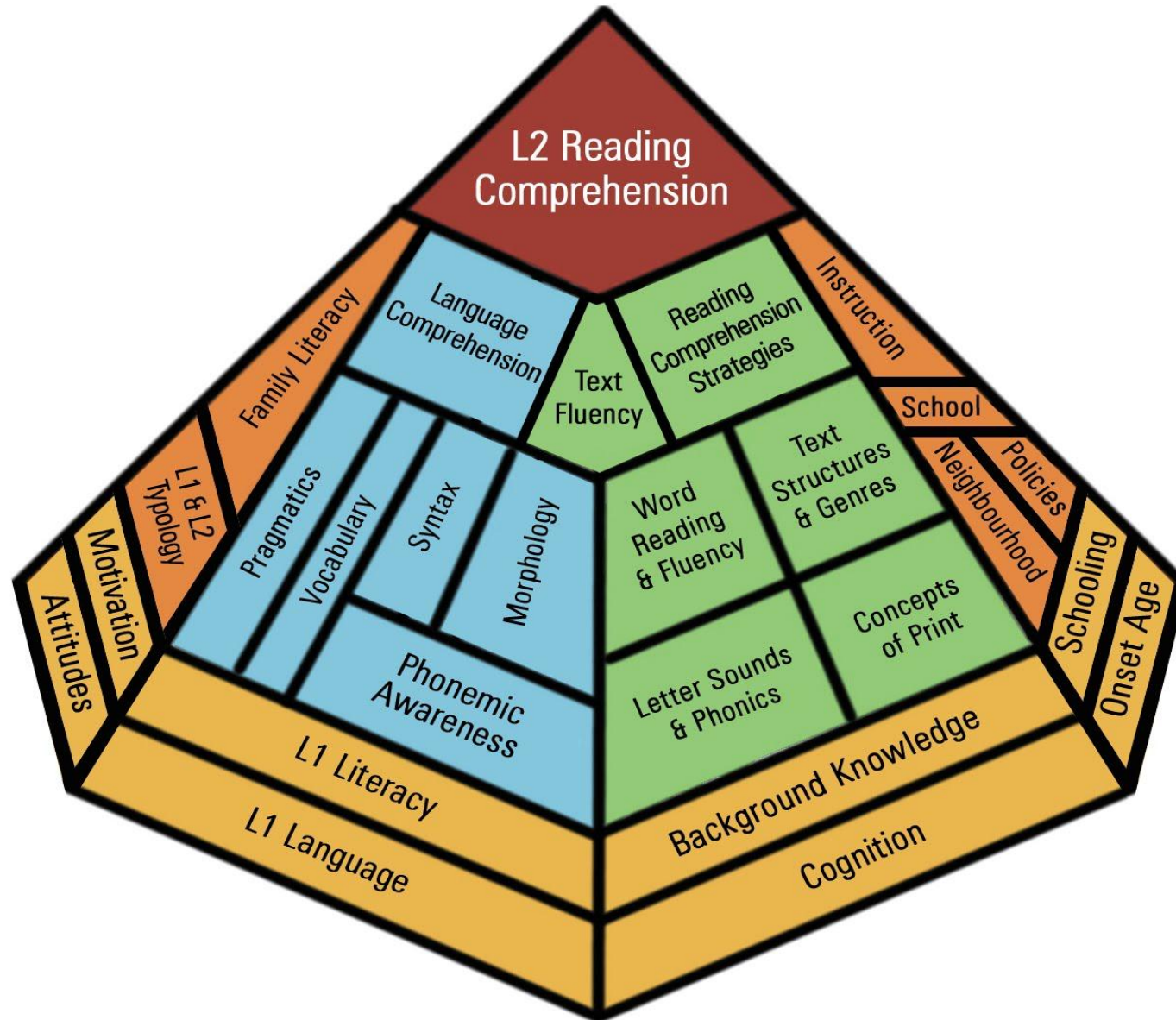
Dyslexia/word-based reading problems

- Dyslexia is the most well-known reading disorder (learning disability or LD).
- Individuals with dyslexia have normal intelligence, but they read at levels significantly below what is expected.

Common characteristics of dyslexia include struggles with:

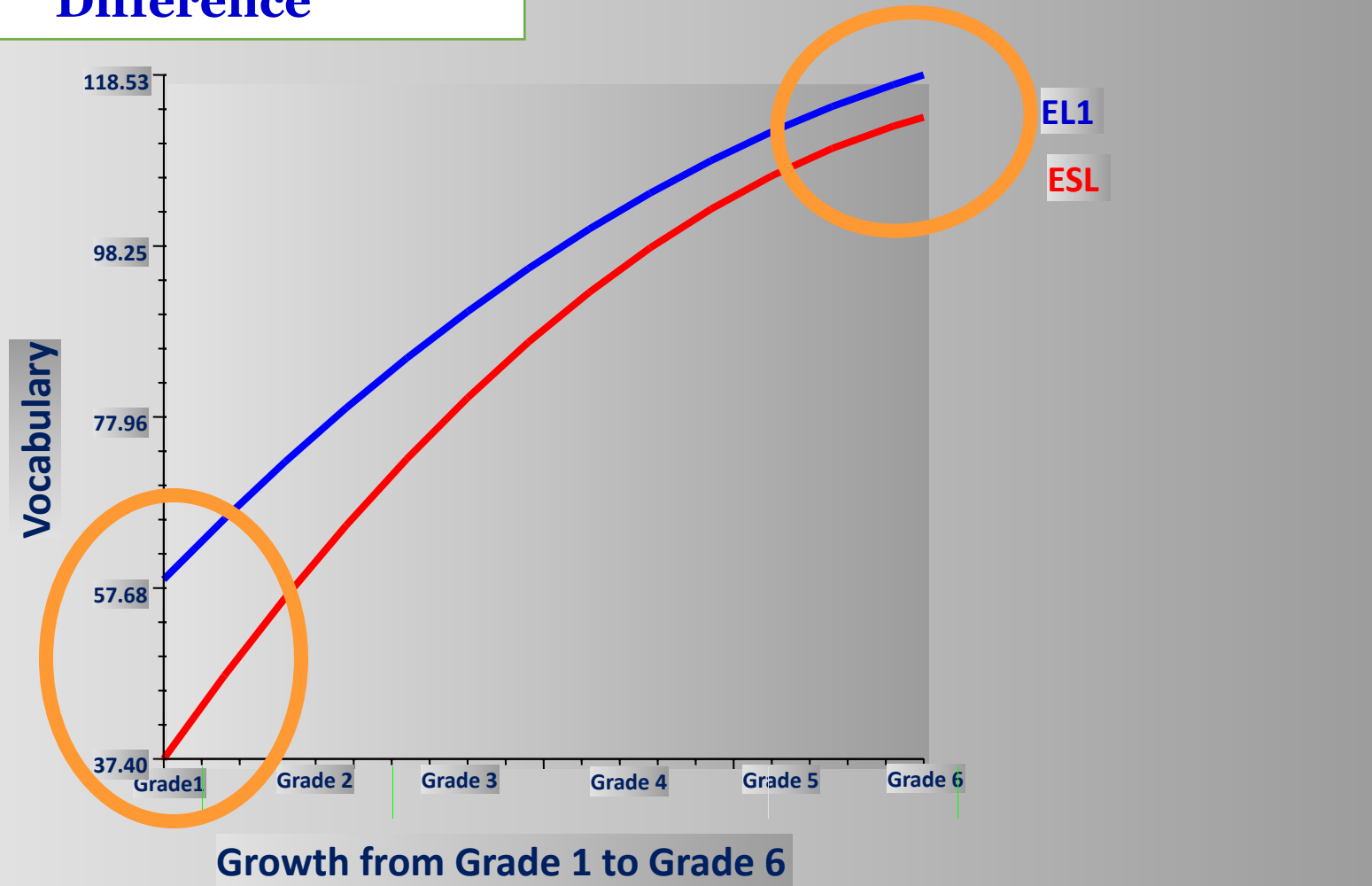
- Sounding out words and pseudowords
- Matching letters to their sounds
- Understanding written words
- Naming objects quickly
- Difficulty reading fluently, accurately, and with proper expression/intonation (when reading aloud).
- These difficulties lead to trouble in reading comprehension (but not in comprehending when listening).
- These difficulties are associated with difficulties in writing

A complex view of factors that contribute to L2 reading comprehension



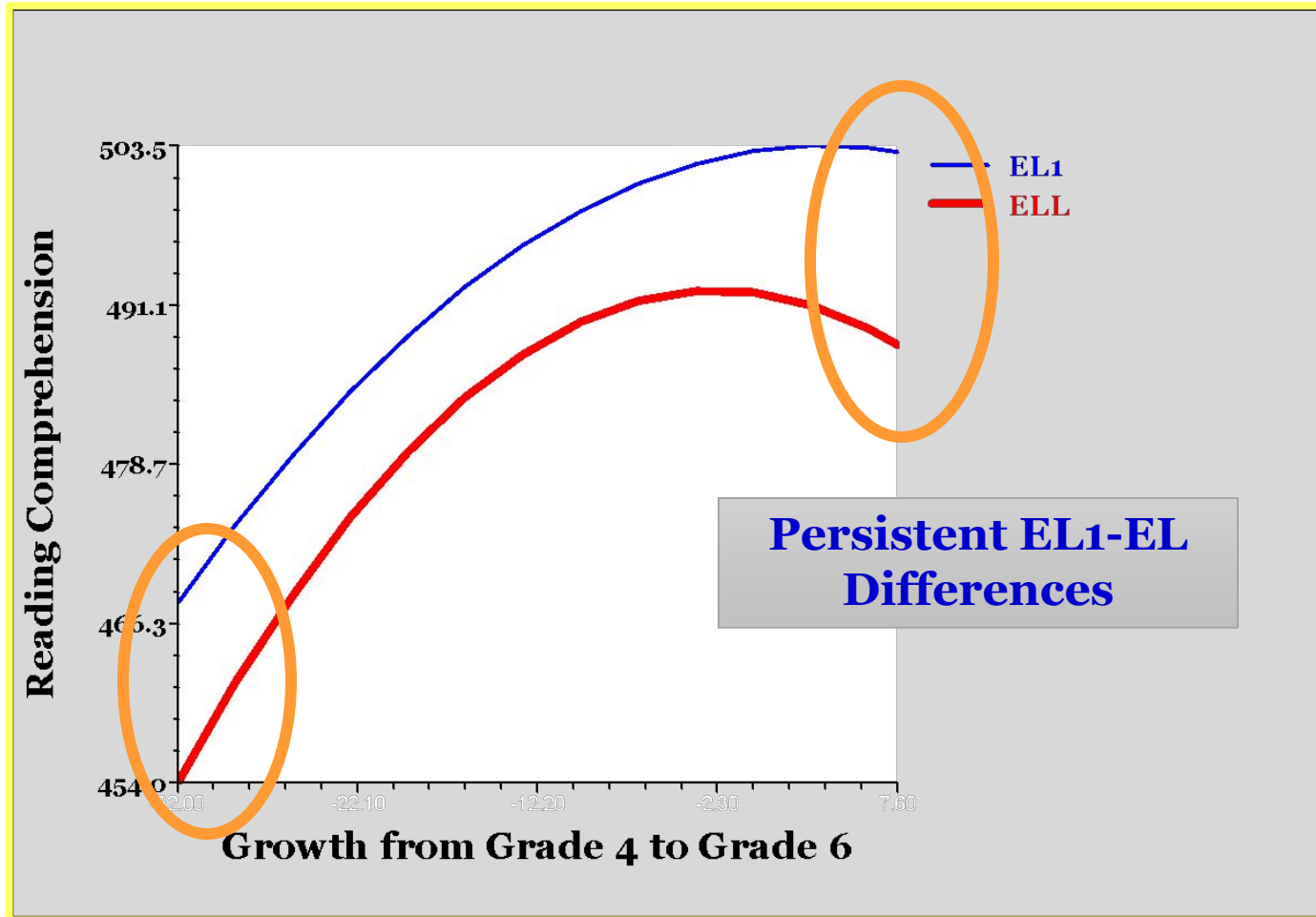
Development of Vocabulary in ELs and EL1s from Grade 1 to 6

**Persistent EL1-EL
Difference**



(Farnia & Geva, . 2011, Applied psycholing.)

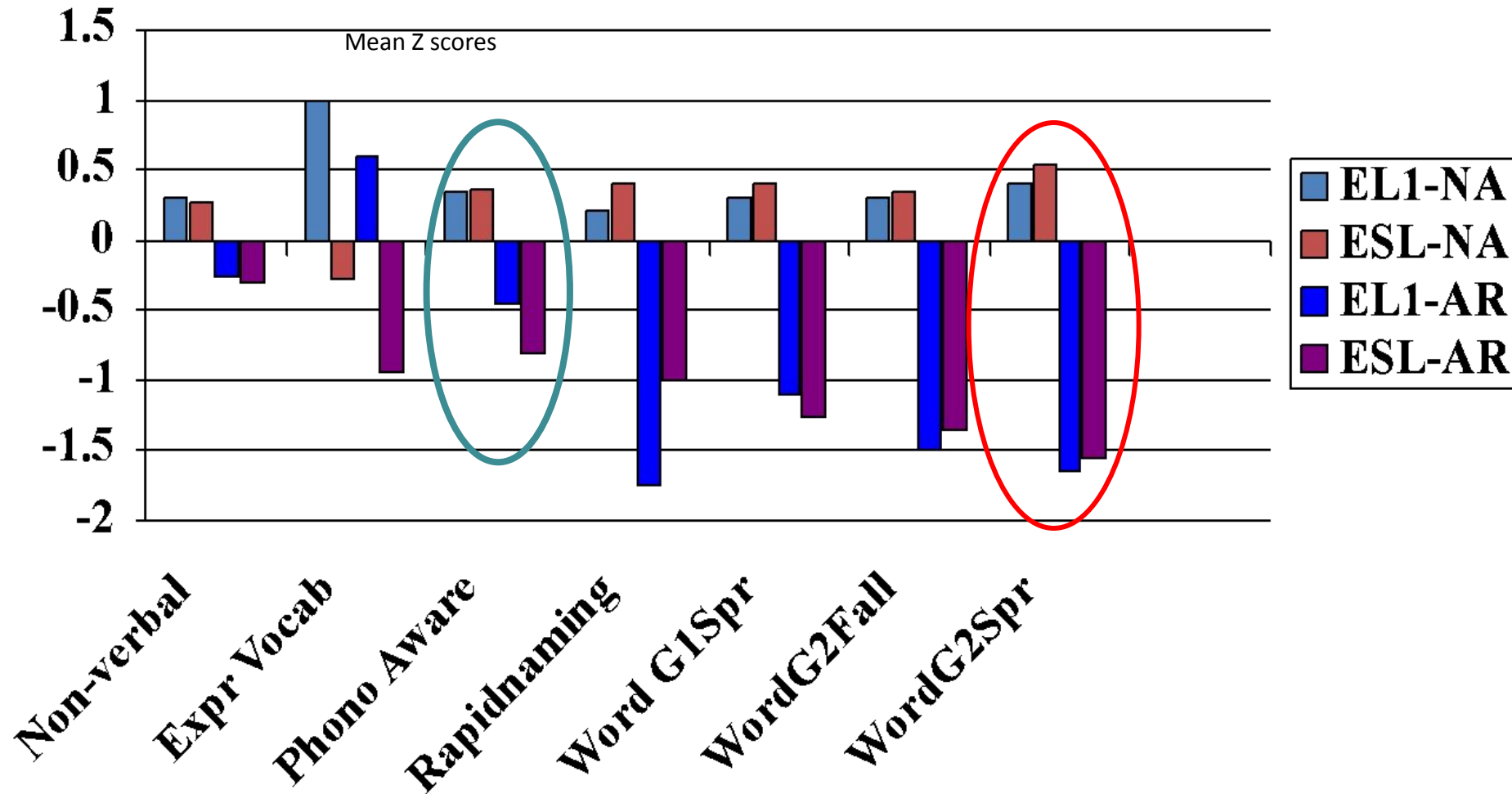
Development of Reading Comprehension* in ELs and EL1s



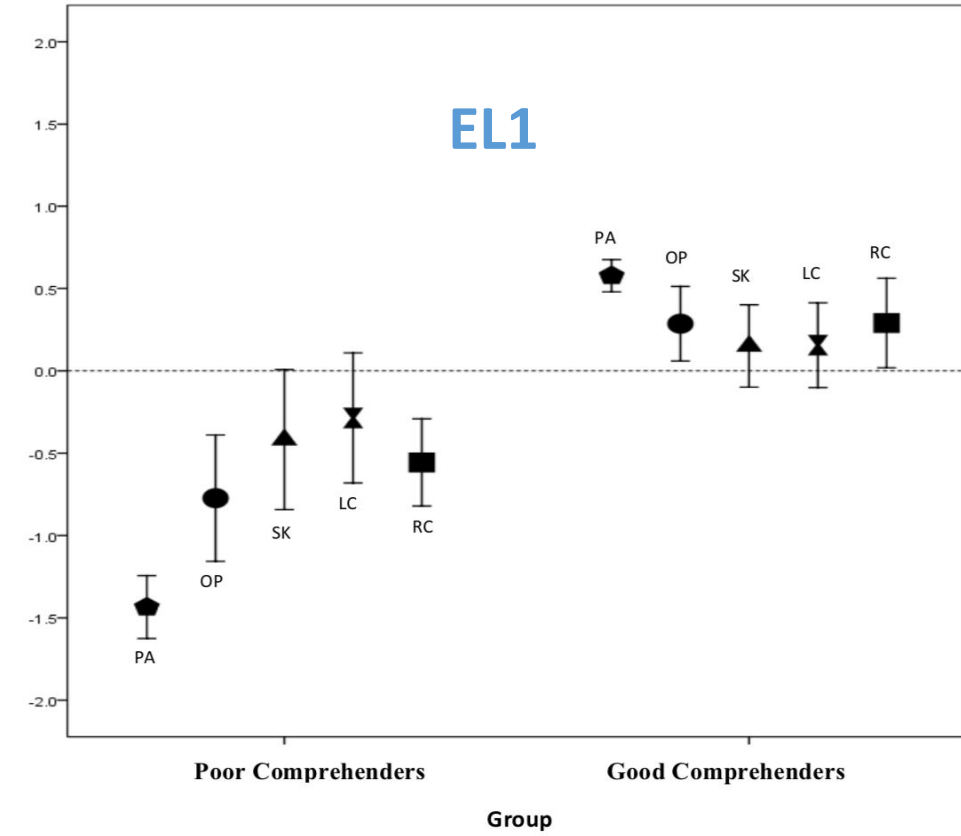
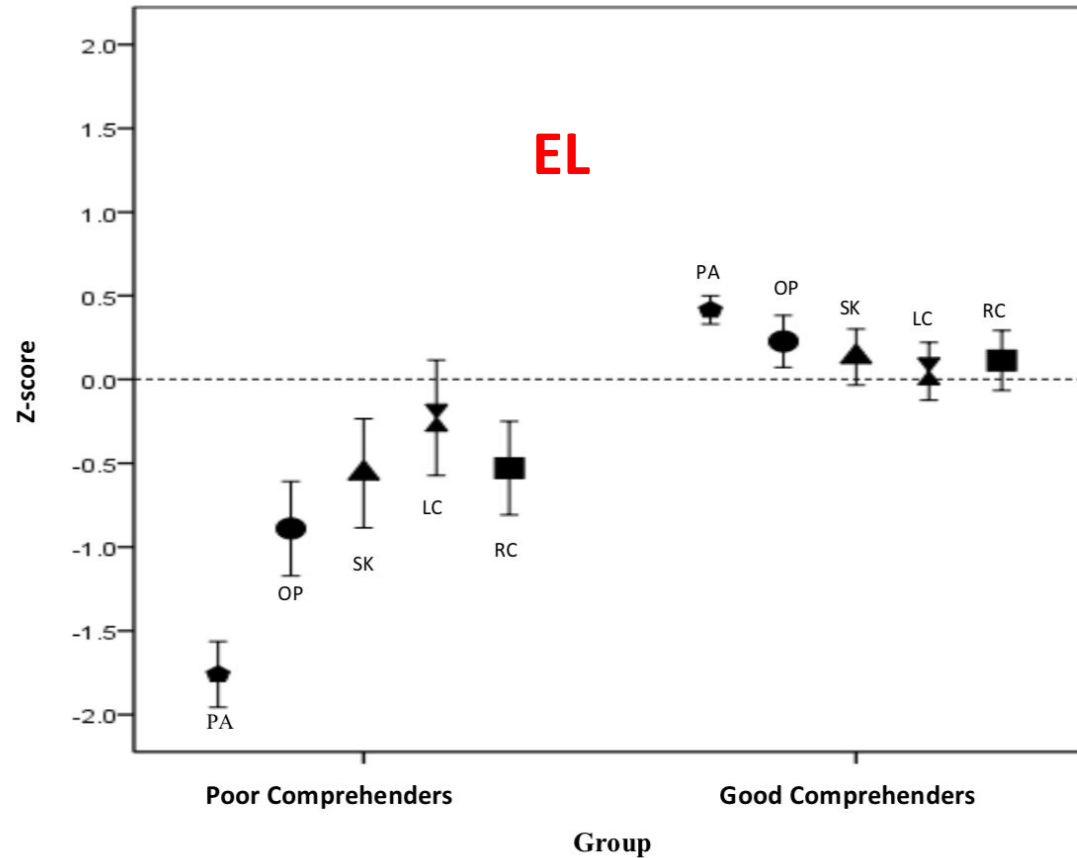
Farnia & Geva, J. of Res. In Reading, 2013

*Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test-ESS

Profiles of “at-risk” and “not at-risk” for dyslexia among EL1 and EL (end of Grade 2) are very similar



Grade 4 good and poor EL and EL1 comprehenders: Profiles on phonological awareness (PA), orthographic processing (OP), semantic knowledge (SK), listening comprehension (LC), and reading comprehension (RC).



What have we learned from the research that can inform teachers, researchers, clinicians, policy makers, and parents:

- It takes a long time to develop native-like language skills (vocabulary, grammar, metaphors) AND reading comprehension.
- Like EL1, some ELs may have a **developmental language disorder (DLD)**
- L2 Word reading and decoding skills are less dependent on L2 proficiency
- The **overall word reading and cognitive processing profiles** of ELs and EL1s who have dyslexia are **similar**, as are the profiles of ELs and EL1s typical decoders
- Like monolinguals, ELs with **persistent** difficulties in word level reading skills have difficulties with:
 - processing factors (e.g., phonological awareness, rapid automatized naming, memory, auditory discrimination)
 - accurate and fluent word reading and spelling
 - reading comprehension, writing

What have we learned from the research that can inform teachers, researchers, clinicians, policy makers, and parents (continued)

- **Compare performance to the reference group** (not the standardized test norm)
 - It is important to **consider developmental patterns**
 - We should expect the **same %** of EL1 and EL to have reading disability or a developmental language impairment (or to be identified as gifted...!)
 - We should aim to provide the same supports to EL1s and ELs
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- **Do not delay assessment and intervention** until L2 proficiency develops – it may be too late otherwise...
 - Do compare performance to **relevant (L1 or L2) reference group**
 - Do consider **developmental patterns**
 - Do be mindful of **over and under-identification**
 - Do be mindful of early, evidence-based **remediation and intervention**

A checklist to consider when considering dyslexia in ELs

- What components of literacy are less dependent on L2 proficiency?
- *Universal vs. language-specific characteristics*
- How might *features of the L1* be related to features in the L2
- *How might learning to read in L2 differ from reading in L1?*
- Similarity of cognitive and linguistic profiles of L1 and L2 learners with various LD
- *Dynamic assessment, response to intervention (RTI), curriculum based measurement (CBM) as options for assessment*
- Compare oral and written language samples
- *Ask yourself - How is the child learning in comparison to other children from similar backgrounds?*

Interventions for ELs with LD

What we already know:

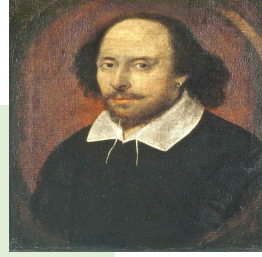
- LD interventions for monolinguals also work for ELs with LDs (e.g., Hall et al., 2019).
 - *Proactive Reading/Lectura Proactiva* multiple-component reading instruction (G1, Spanish) □ better at posttest, replicated, positive effects 3 years after treatment (Vaughn et al., 2006, 2008...)
 - Phonologically based remediation (G2-8) □ no differences in growth/outcomes between EFL and ELLs (Lovett et al., 2008)
 - Vocabulary intervention (G6) □ effects larger for ELLs and those with LDs (Lesaux et al., 2014)

What we still need to learn:

- Long-term effects of interventions with ELLs
- Linguistic/cultural discrepancies between ELLs based on L1
- How ELL demographics affect intervention efficacy (e.g., SES, home language, access to supports; age of L2 onset; etc.) (Hall et al., 2019)

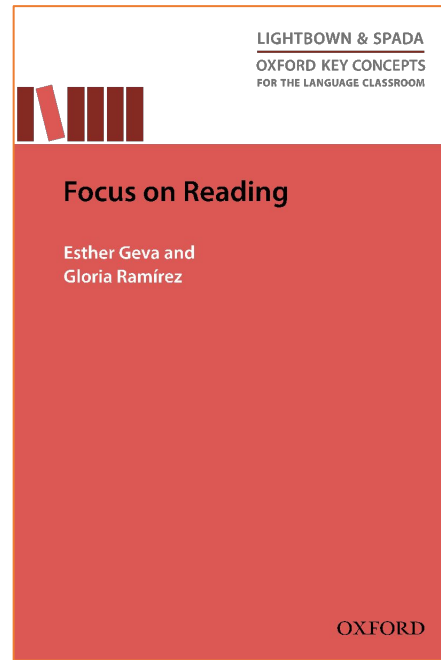
To Do

- Assess the known predictors.
- Consider family background.
- Consider development in siblings
- Assess the L1 and L2 when feasible.
- Monitor progress over time.
- Look beyond language proficiency.
- Provide direct reading skills instruction
- Have high expectations
- Provide language and cultural enrichment opportunities.
- Consider specific transfer from the L1 and analyze errors for patterns
- Use Assistive Technology tailored to the needs of the learners.
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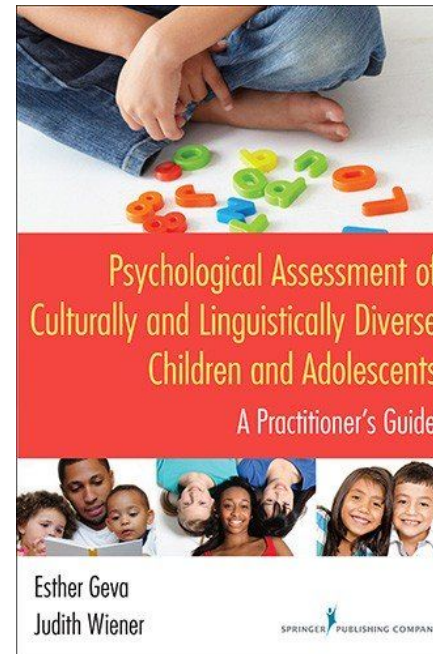


Not to Do

- Delay assessment until language proficiency is “adequate.”
- Minimize the importance of basic word recognition skills.
- Assume persistent difficulties will “catch up” over time.
- Assume that all new words can be learned from context
- Use texts that contain more than 3% unfamiliar words
- Rely on IQ to define learning disabilities among ELs.
- Assume that persistent difficulties reflect merely “negative” transfer from the L1.
- Use L1-based test norms.
- Point a finger at bilingualism.



(Geva & Ramirez, 2015)



(Geva & Wiener, 2015)



Suggested Additional Reading:

Geva, E. & Kilpatrick, D. (2021). Diagnosing and providing intervention for children with dyslexia. Chapter 8 in E. Cole & M. Kokai (Eds). *Consultation and Mental Health Interventions in School Settings: A Scientist -Practitioner's Guide*. Hogrefe Publishing, 173-198.

Geva, E., Xi, Y., Garrison-Massey, A., & Mak, J. (2019). Issues in the assessment of children and adolescents who come from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. In Kilpatrick, D., Moates, L., & Joshi, M. (Eds.), *Reading problems at school*, New York: Springer, 117-155.

Rojas, R., Hiebert, L., Gusewski, S., & Francis, D. J. (2019). Moving Forward by Looking Back: Understanding Why Some Spanish-Speaking English Learners Fall Behind. In D. J.

Francis (Ed.), *Identification, Classification, and Treatment of Reading and Language Disabilities in Spanish-speaking EL Students. New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 166, 43–77.