

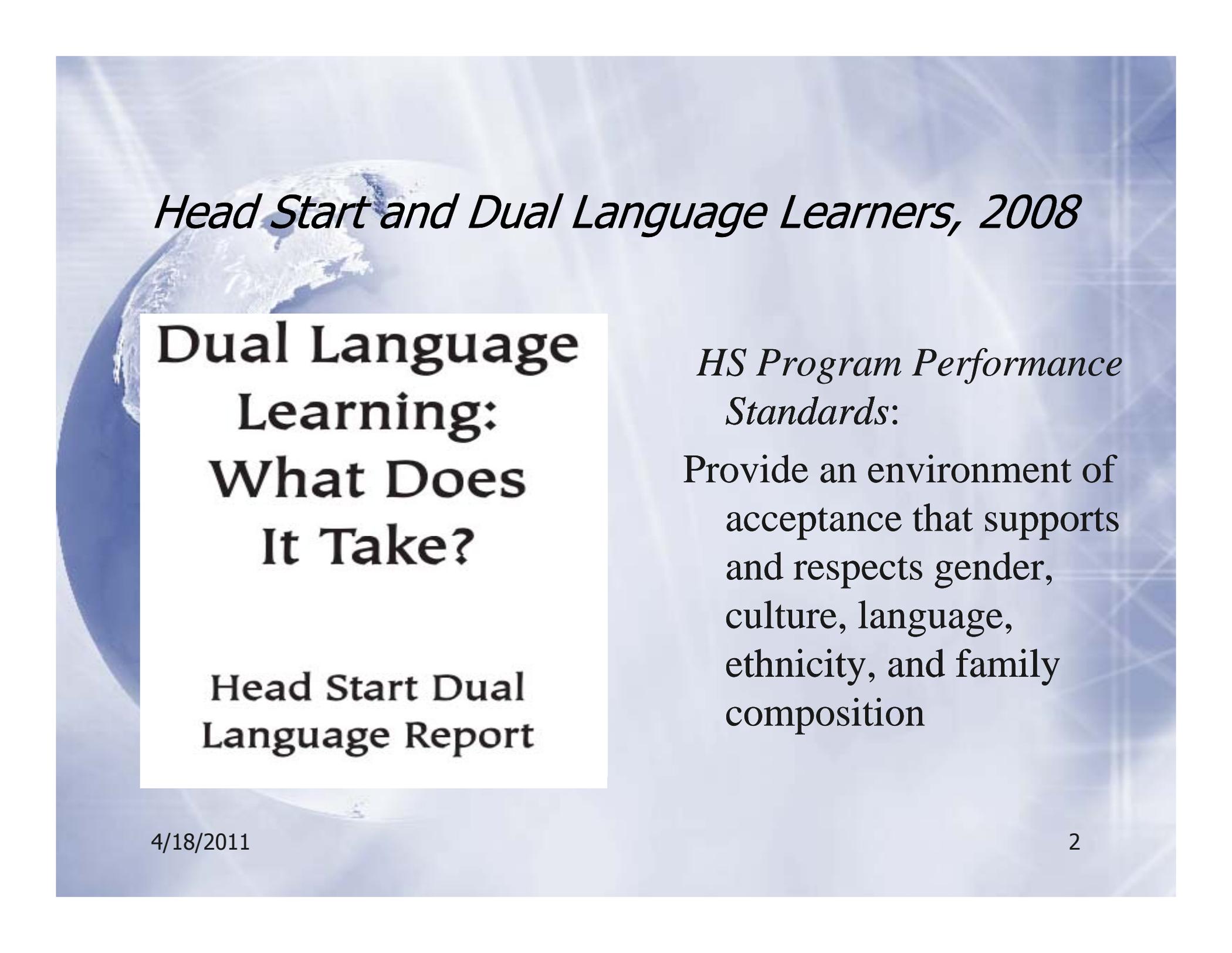
Improving Instruction for Young Dual Language Learners: Strengths and Limitations of Current Research



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Head Start Research and Evaluation Advisory Committee
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4/18/2011

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Head Start and Dual Language Learners, 2008

**Dual Language
Learning:
What Does
It Take?**

**Head Start Dual
Language Report**

*HS Program Performance
Standards:*

Provide an environment of acceptance that supports and respects gender, culture, language, ethnicity, and family composition

Definition of DLLs

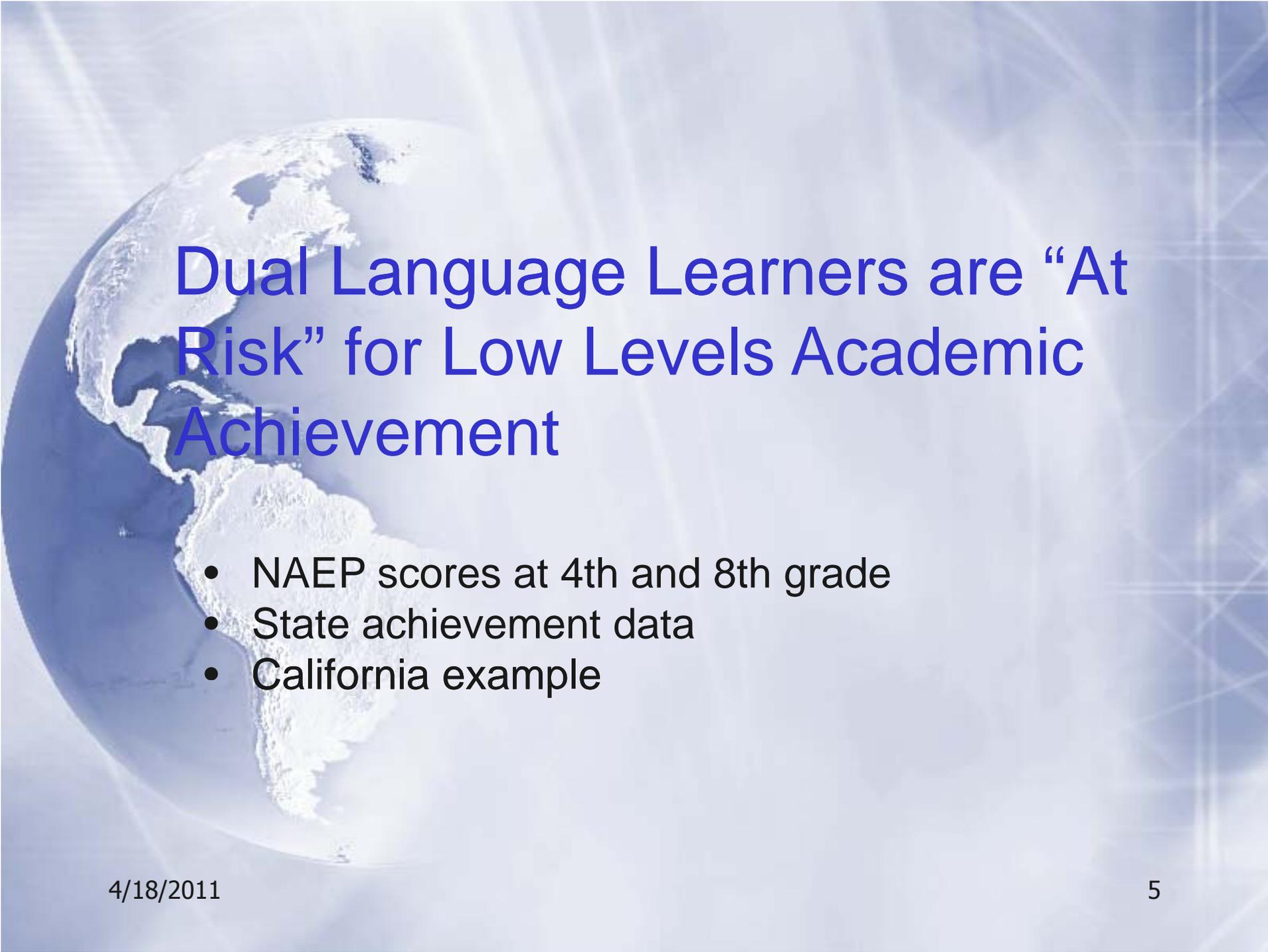
“Dual language learners are children learning two or more languages at the same time, as well as those learning a second language while continuing to develop their first (or home) language.” (p.1)

Definition includes *simultaneous* and *sequential* second language learners

Distinctions are usually made in literature

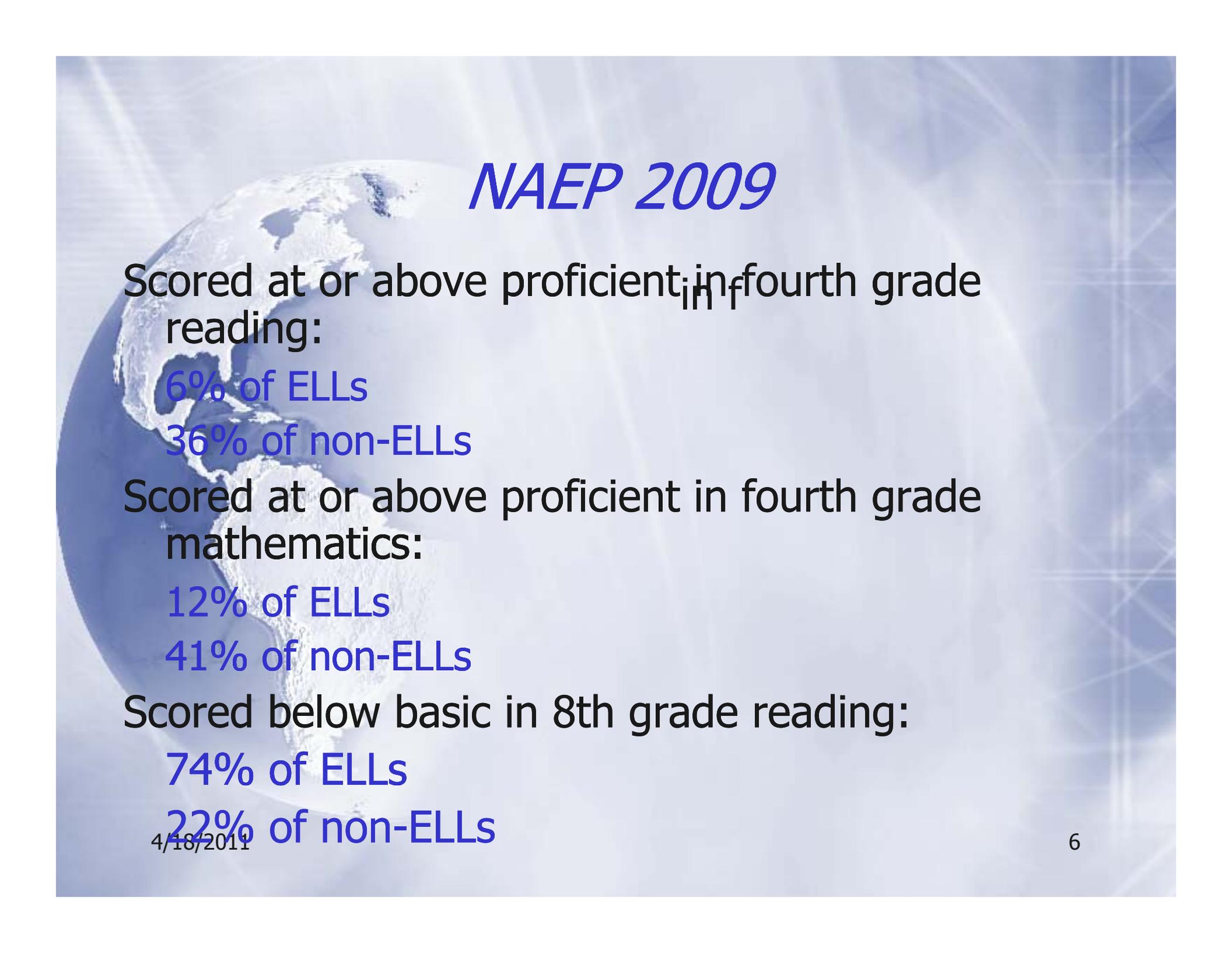
Young Dual Language Population is Diverse and Growing

- About 30-32% of all children in Head Start are Dual Language Learners (OHS, 2009)
 - More than 140 different languages in Head Start; more than 400 languages in U.S.;
 - Spanish is most common home language (~80%)
 - Less than 16% of H.S. programs do not serve DLL
- In California 42% of all kindergarten children identified as DLL (2006)
 - In LAUSD 59% of all K children identified as EL
 - More than 80 different languages spoken in LAUSD
 - In LAUSD TK program 82% Latino; 65% are EL (CELDT)



Dual Language Learners are “At Risk” for Low Levels Academic Achievement

- NAEP scores at 4th and 8th grade
- State achievement data
- California example



NAEP 2009

Scored at or above proficient in fourth grade reading:

6% of ELLs

36% of non-ELLs

Scored at or above proficient in fourth grade mathematics:

12% of ELLs

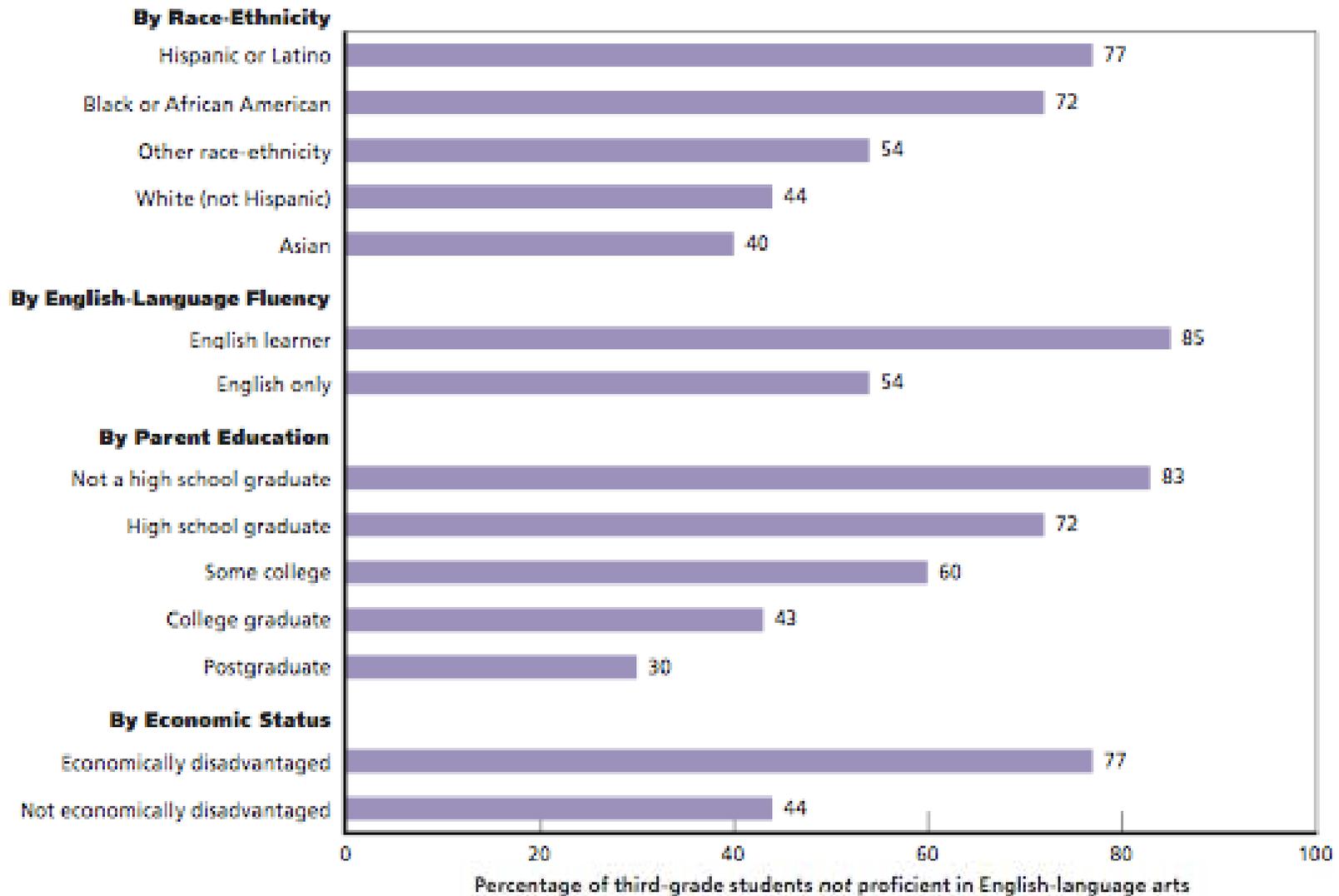
41% of non-ELLs

Scored below basic in 8th grade reading:

74% of ELLs

22% of non-ELLs

Figure 2
Different Groups of Students Miss Achieving Proficiency by Widely Varying Amounts



SOURCE: Authors' calculations using 2007 California Standards Test data.



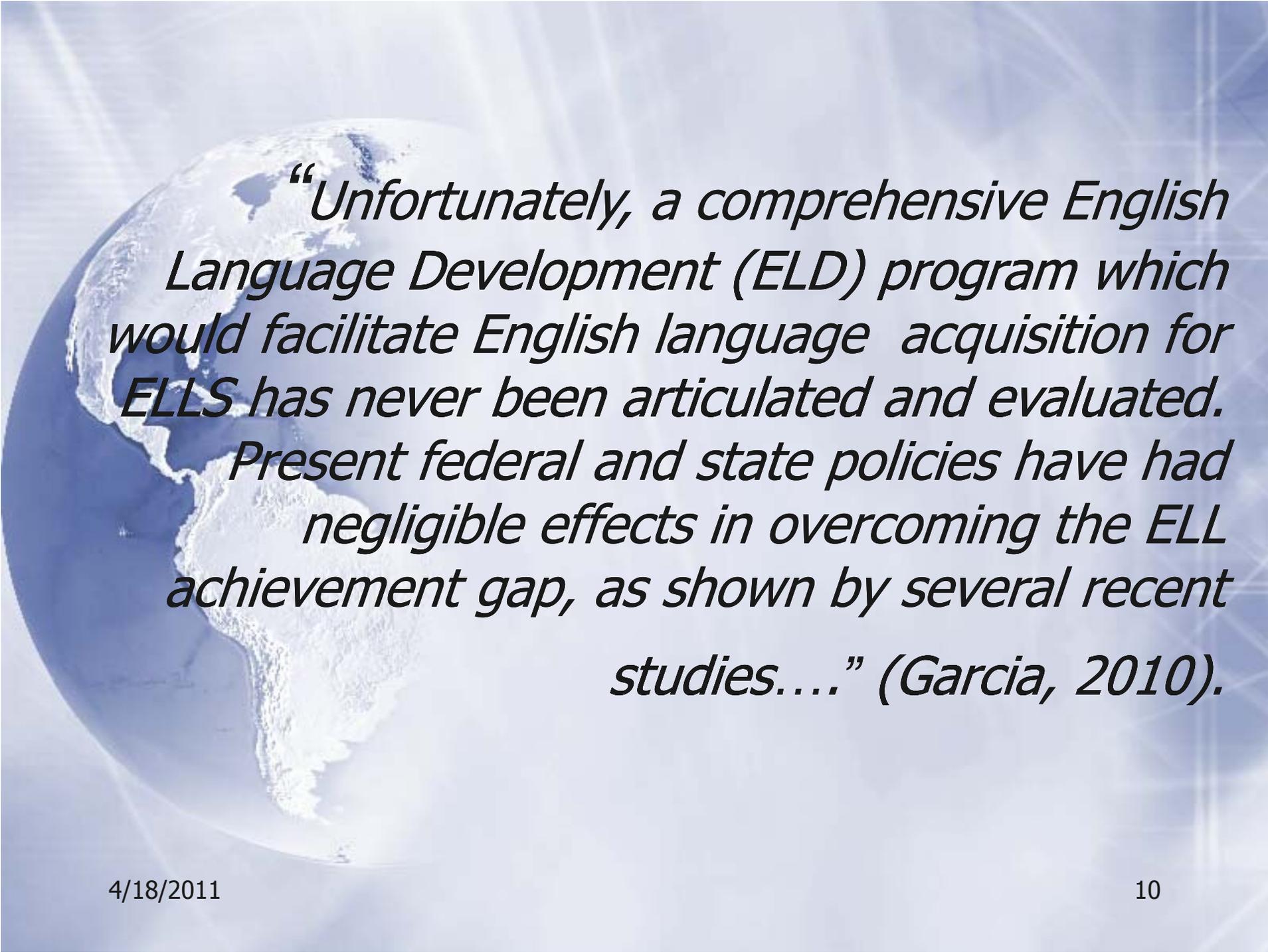
*Research Base for Improving
Development and Learning for
Young Dual Language Learners*

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Research for DLL Children

- ✓ Recent Area of Concern: NCLB, Demographics, Impact of Preschool, **Importance of Early years!!**
- ✓ Dozens of studies---at best (recent research syntheses, meta-analyses)
- ✓ Measurement Issues
- ✓ Debate on Goals & Terms
- ✓ Must consider research from many disciplines
- ✓ Exciting New Infant Research
- ✓ Most rigorous reach similar conclusions



“Unfortunately, a comprehensive English Language Development (ELD) program which would facilitate English language acquisition for ELLS has never been articulated and evaluated. Present federal and state policies have had negligible effects in overcoming the ELL achievement gap, as shown by several recent studies....” (Garcia, 2010).

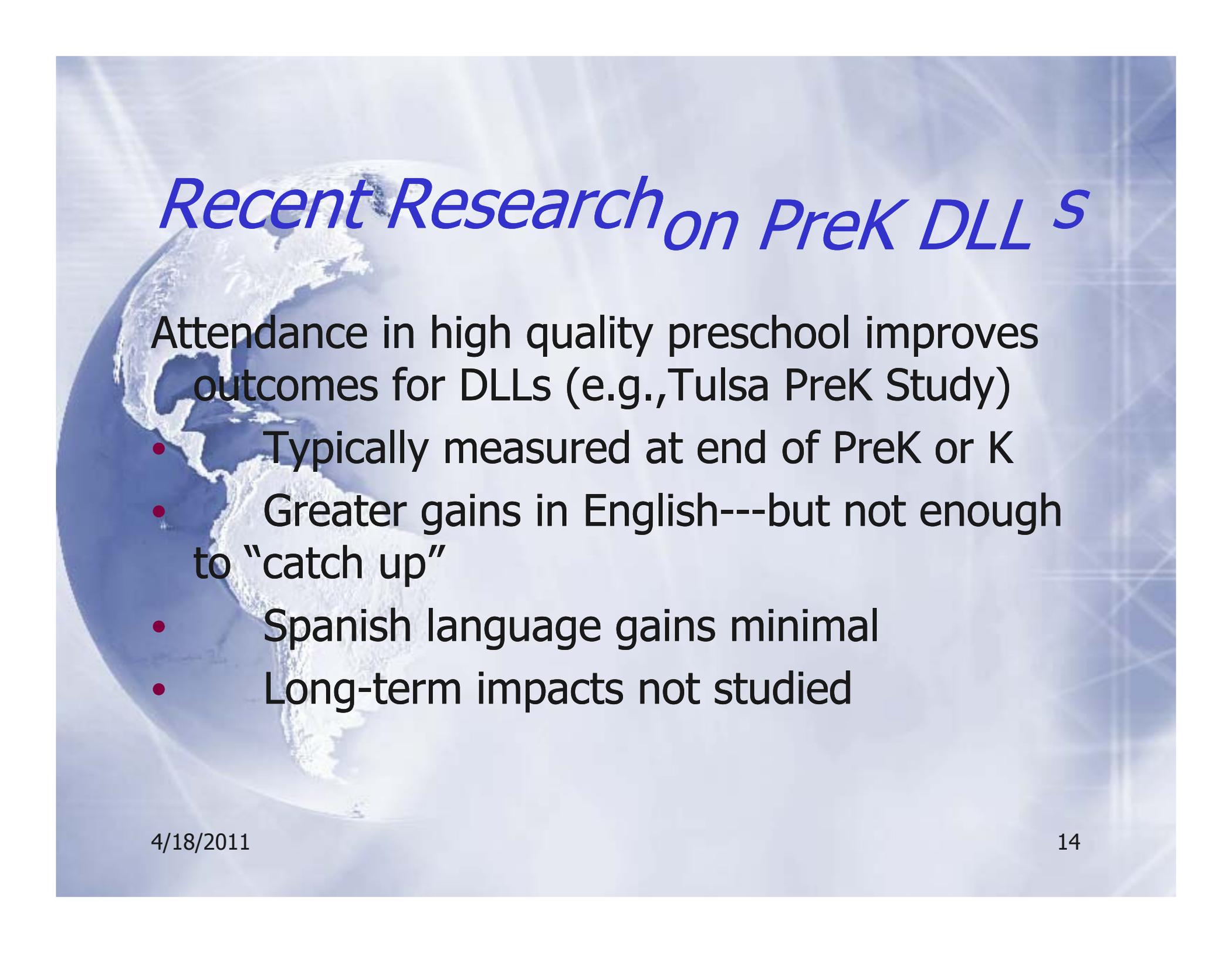
Conclusions of “Best” Scientific Studies:

(LM Literacy Panel, August & Shanahan, 2006; 2007; Genesee et al., 2006; Goldenberg, 2011)

- ✓ Using child’s primary language or L1 promotes achievement in English, L2 (.2-.3 standard deviation in test performance)
- ✓ High Quality literacy practices benefit DLLs--but effect sizes are lower
- ✓ Instructional Adjustments are needed---few details

Early Achievement Gains in English

- ✓ Young DLLs learn early literacy skills, e.g., decoding, phonemic awareness at age-appropriate levels (Espinosa & Zepeda, 2010)
- ✓ Vocabulary and comprehension significantly below national norms by 4th grade (Lesaux, et al., 2010)
- ✓ DLLs can read English words but don't have linguistic background to understand text



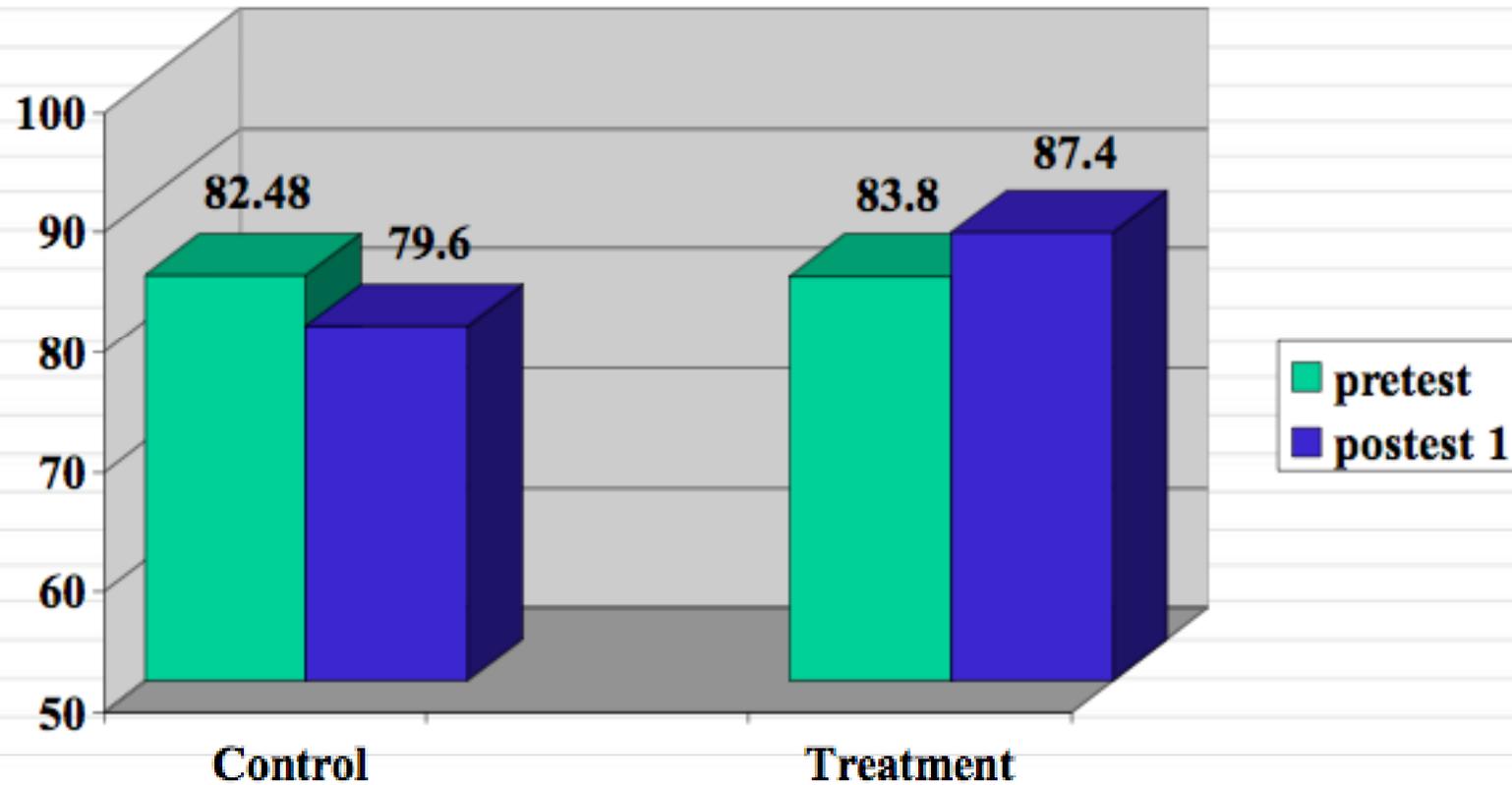
Recent Research on PreK DLLs

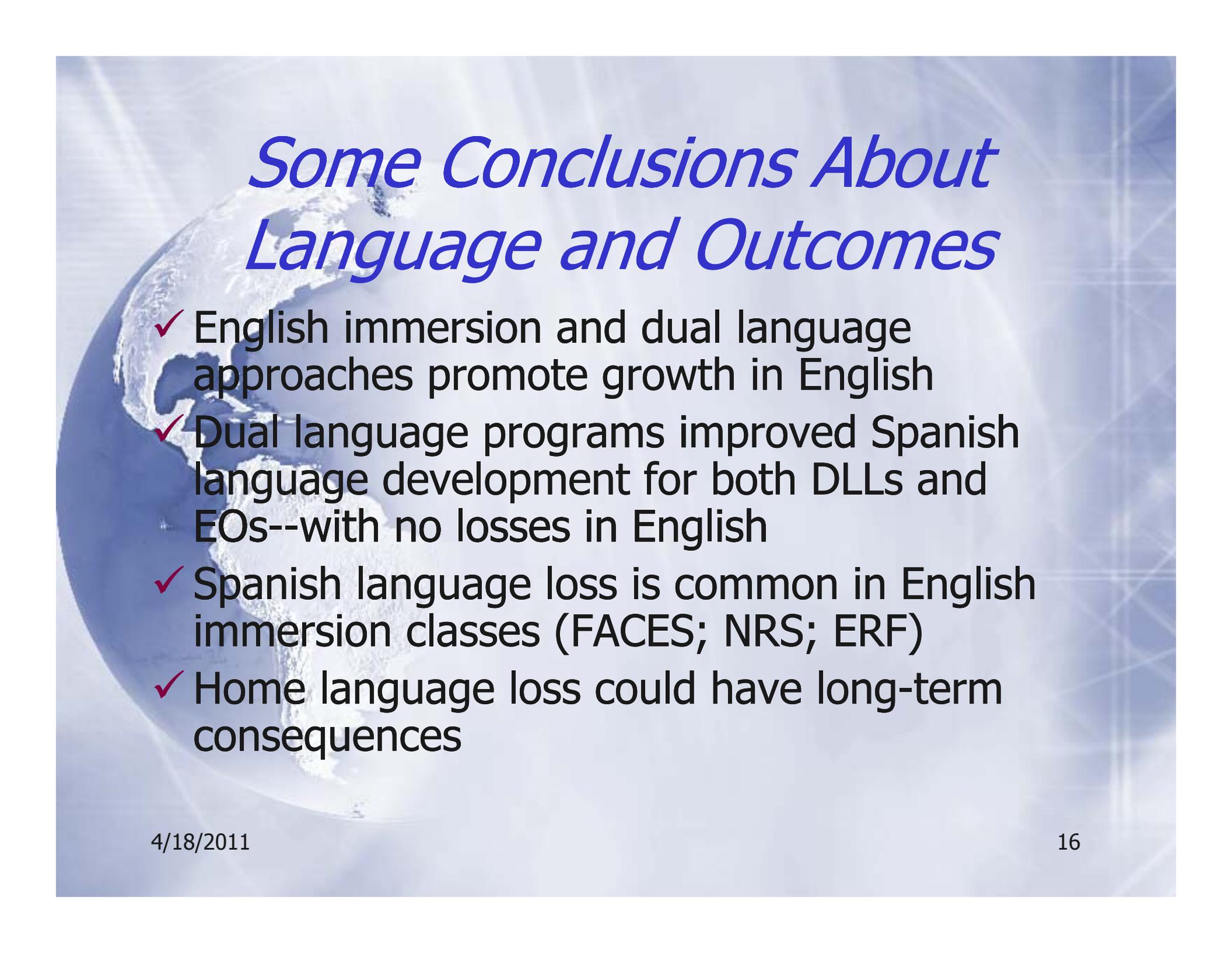
Attendance in high quality preschool improves outcomes for DLLs (e.g., Tulsa PreK Study)

- Typically measured at end of PreK or K
- Greater gains in English---but not enough to “catch up”
- Spanish language gains minimal
- Long-term impacts not studied

Two Way Immersion Vs English Immersion Programs: TVIP Scores

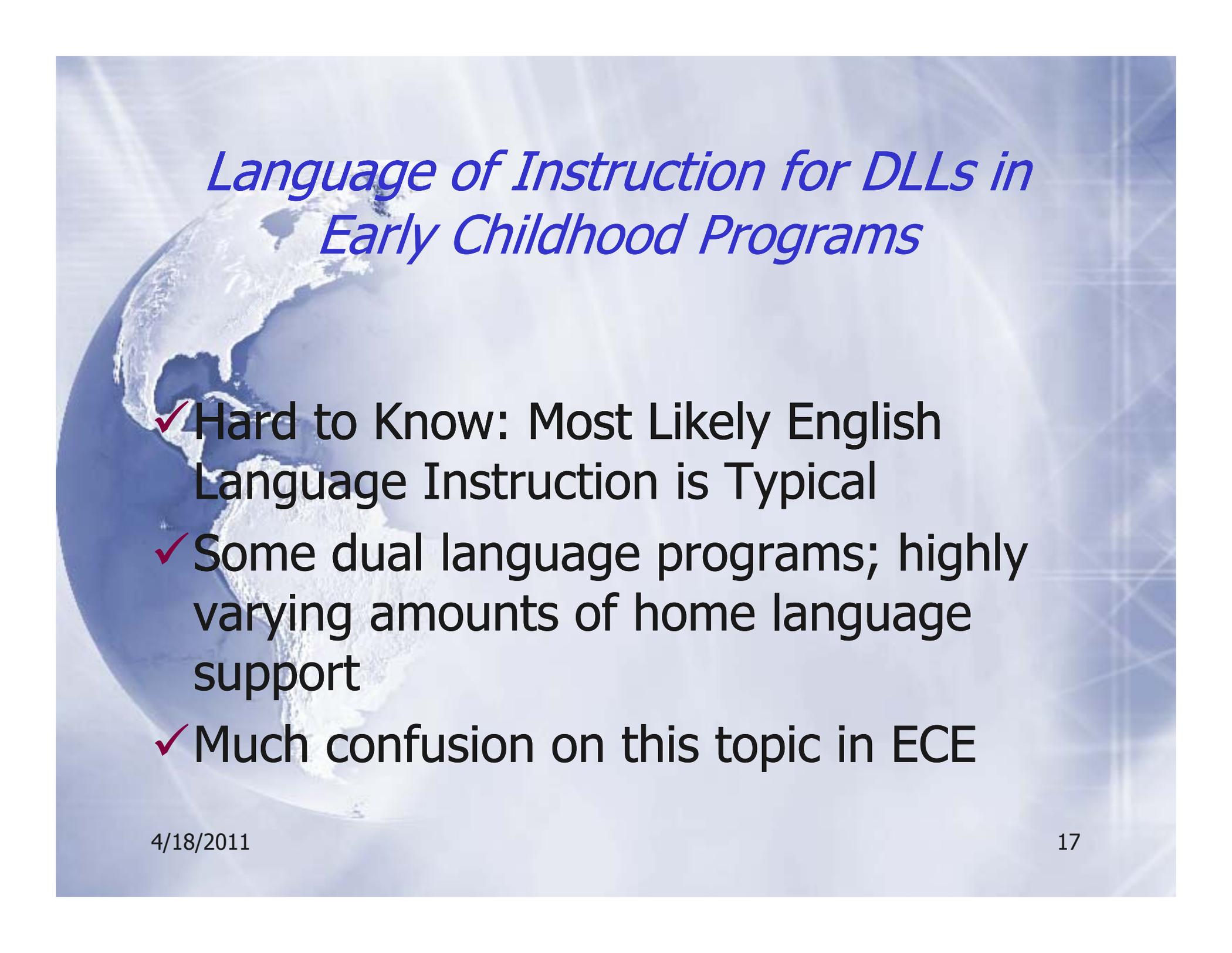
(Barnett, Yarosz, Thomas, Jung, & Blanco, 2007)





Some Conclusions About Language and Outcomes

- ✓ English immersion and dual language approaches promote growth in English
- ✓ Dual language programs improved Spanish language development for both DLLs and EOs--with no losses in English
- ✓ Spanish language loss is common in English immersion classes (FACES; NRS; ERF)
- ✓ Home language loss could have long-term consequences



Language of Instruction for DLLs in Early Childhood Programs

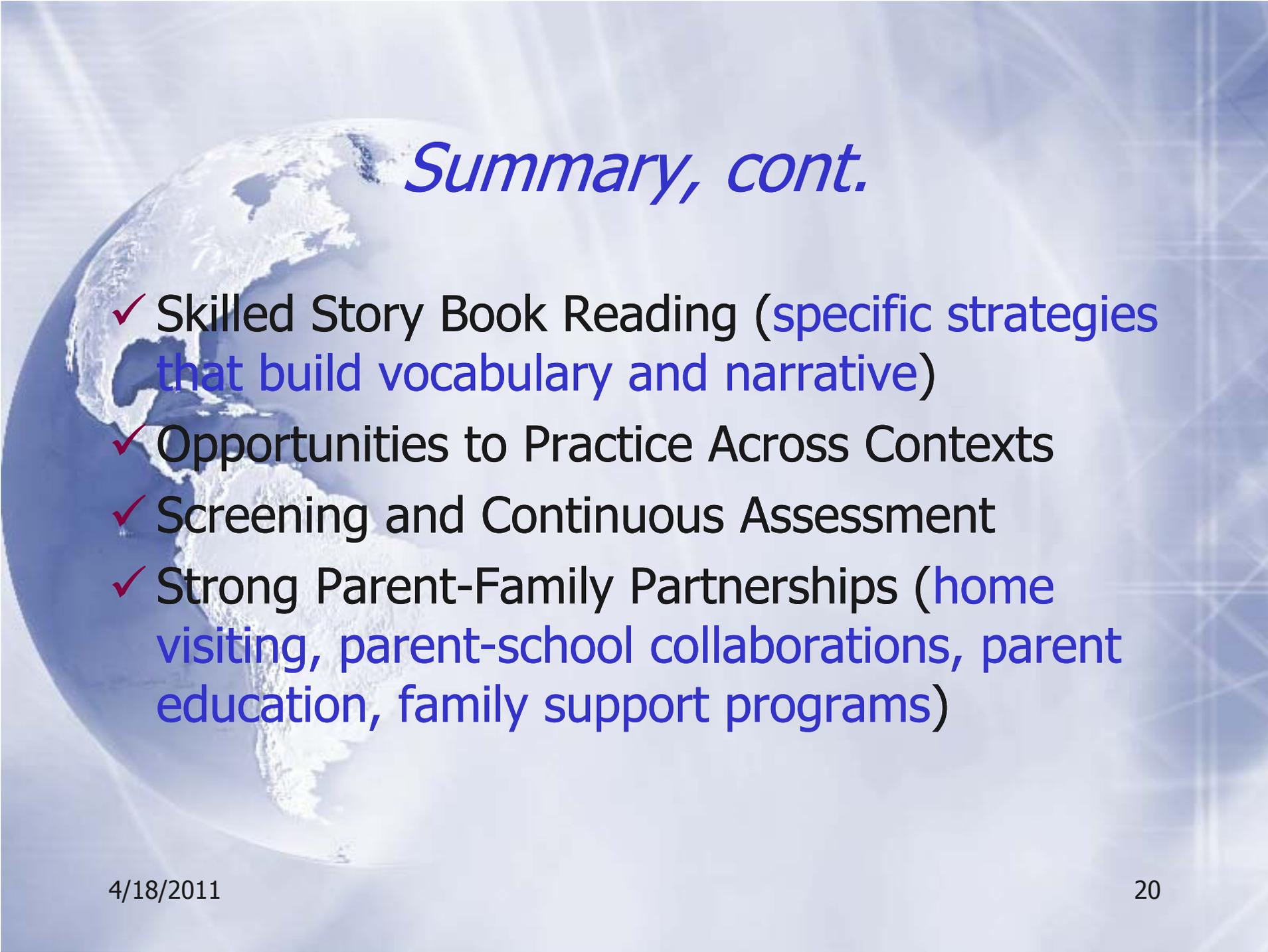
- ✓ Hard to Know: Most Likely English Language Instruction is Typical
- ✓ Some dual language programs; highly varying amounts of home language support
- ✓ Much confusion on this topic in ECE

Summary of Current Knowledge

- ✓ Early Intervention has High Potency
- ✓ Good ECE Practices benefit all, but not sufficient for DLLs
- ✓ Strong L1 skills facilitate English learning
- ✓ Identify and Activate Knowledge in L1
 - * Linguistic and background knowledge and interests
 - * Explicit bridging of two languages
- ✓ Evidence of Skill Transfer Between 2 languages (PA, syntax, decoding, narrative, etc.)

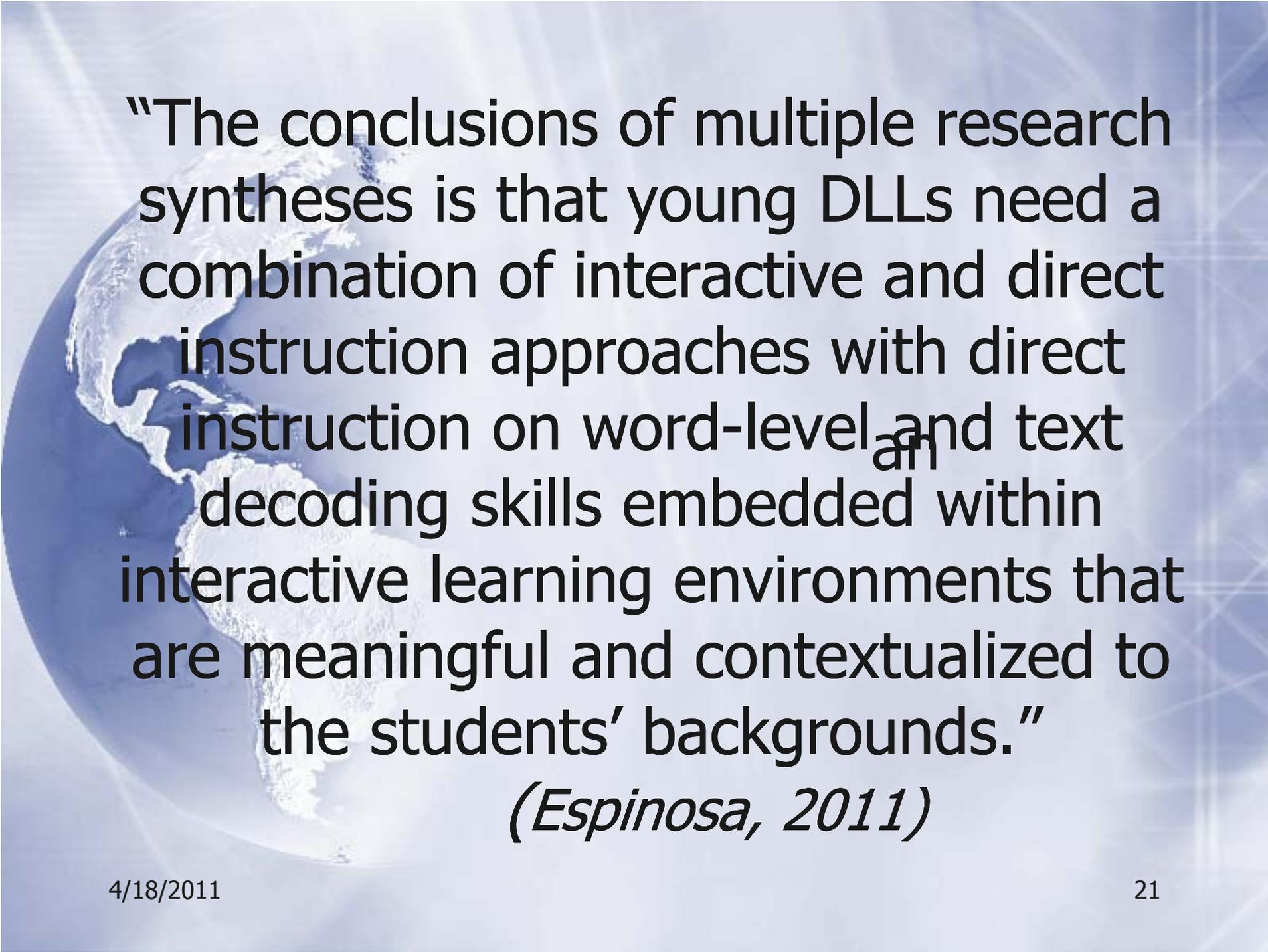
Summary, cont.

- ✓ Focus on oral language (extended vocabulary, grammar, narratives, listening comprehension, academic language)
- ✓ Explicit/intentional teaching of some language and literacy skills (phonemic awareness, vocabulary)
- ✓ Grouping practices important (small, instructional groups, structured pairings)



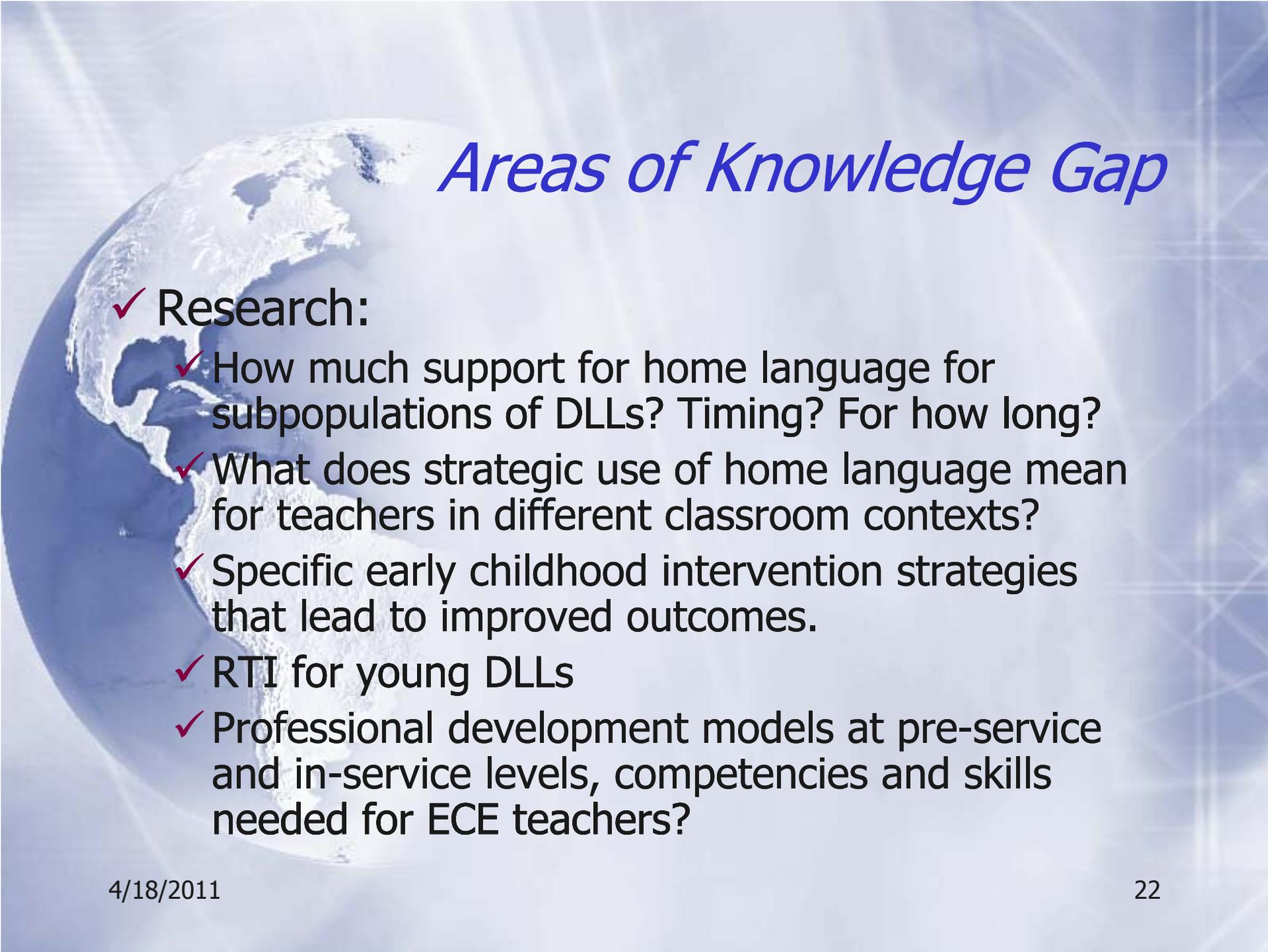
Summary, cont.

- ✓ Skilled Story Book Reading (specific strategies that build vocabulary and narrative)
- ✓ Opportunities to Practice Across Contexts
- ✓ Screening and Continuous Assessment
- ✓ Strong Parent-Family Partnerships (home visiting, parent-school collaborations, parent education, family support programs)



“The conclusions of multiple research syntheses is that young DLLs need a combination of interactive and direct instruction approaches with direct instruction on word-level and text decoding skills embedded within interactive learning environments that are meaningful and contextualized to the students’ backgrounds.”

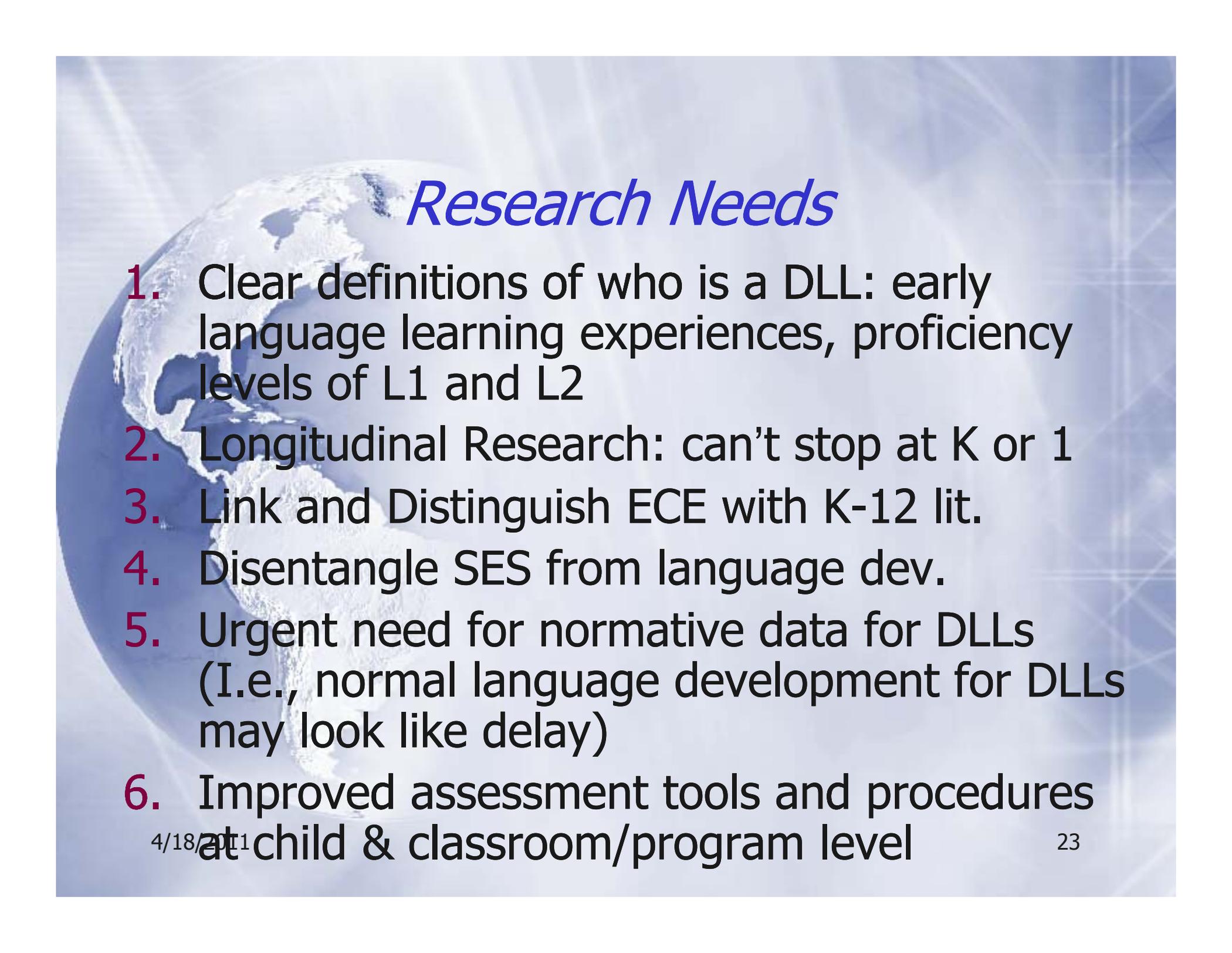
(Espinosa, 2011)



Areas of Knowledge Gap

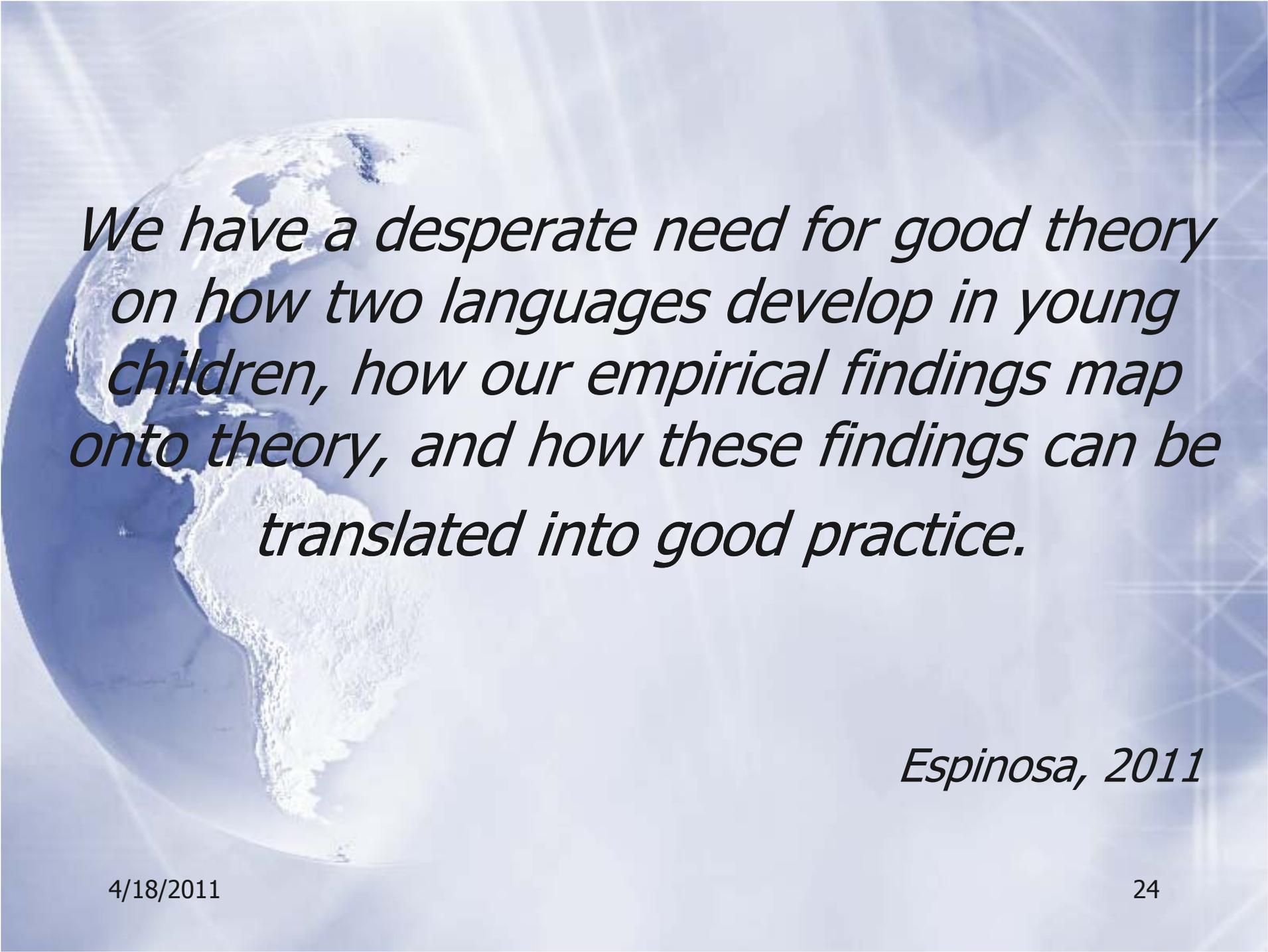
✓ Research:

- ✓ How much support for home language for subpopulations of DLLs? Timing? For how long?
- ✓ What does strategic use of home language mean for teachers in different classroom contexts?
- ✓ Specific early childhood intervention strategies that lead to improved outcomes.
- ✓ RTI for young DLLs
- ✓ Professional development models at pre-service and in-service levels, competencies and skills needed for ECE teachers?



Research Needs

1. Clear definitions of who is a DLL: early language learning experiences, proficiency levels of L1 and L2
2. Longitudinal Research: can't stop at K or 1
3. Link and Distinguish ECE with K-12 lit.
4. Disentangle SES from language dev.
5. Urgent need for normative data for DLLs (I.e., normal language development for DLLs may look like delay)
6. Improved assessment tools and procedures at child & classroom/program level



We have a desperate need for good theory on how two languages develop in young children, how our empirical findings map onto theory, and how these findings can be translated into good practice.

Espinosa, 2011

LAUSD Transitional Kindergarten: A Continuum of Support for DLLs

- ❖ 36 classrooms for young K (fall birthdays)
- ❖ 70-80% DLLs
- ❖ ***Personalized Oral Language(s) Learning (POLL)***
- ❖ Family Languages and Interests Interview
- ❖ Environmental Supports
- ❖ Instructional Supports: Intentional messages, songs, chants, vocabulary imprinting, visual cues/gestures, anchor books for vocabulary
- ❖ Formative and summative evaluation of program