

Results: Language

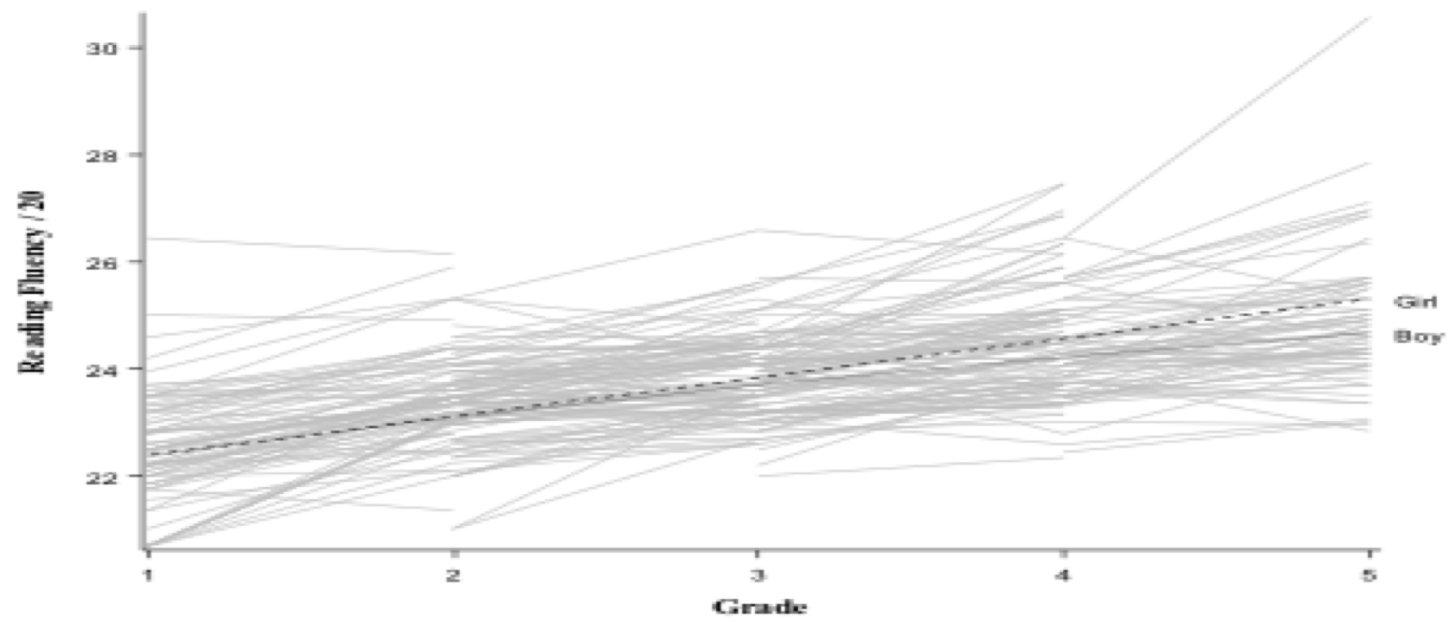
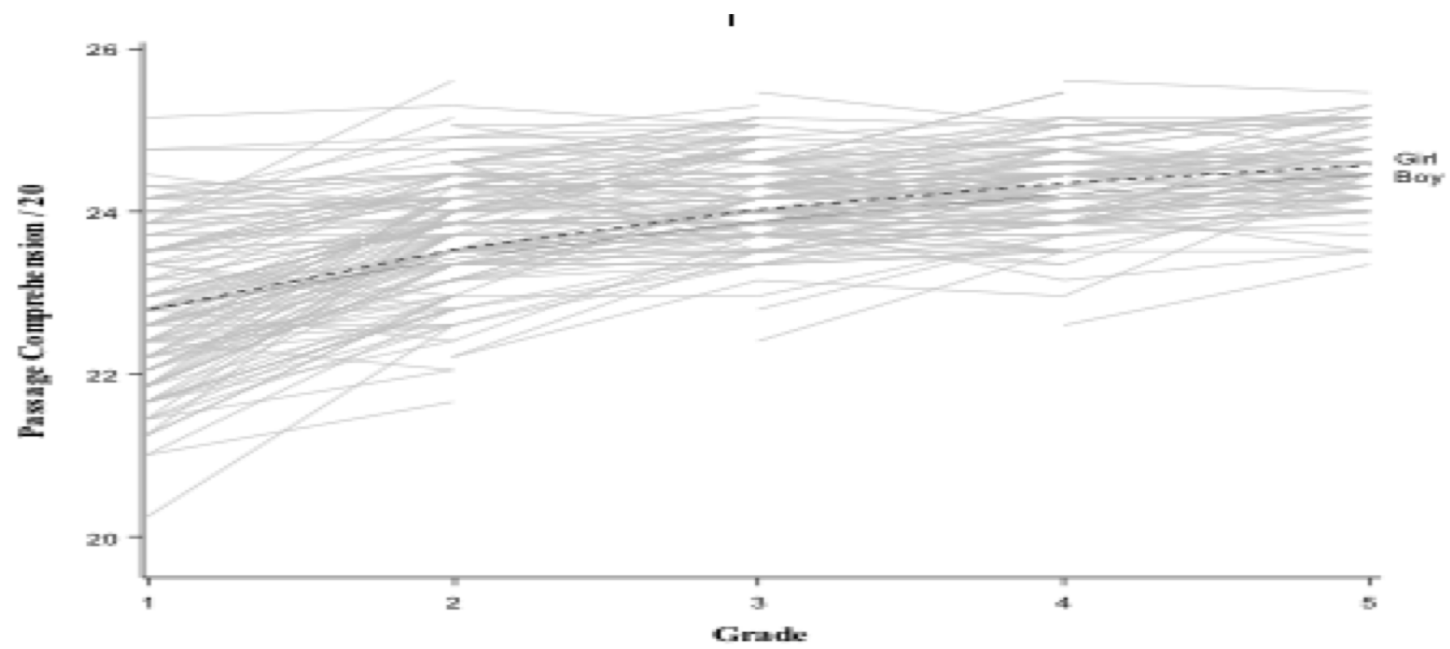
- There was no evidence of gender differences in language or cognition in first through fifth grade.
- Growth models indicated that African American boys and girls evidenced similar growth trajectories for language across these grades.

Results: Reading

- No gender differences were apparent on any of the five reading skills measured in grades 1 – 3.
- For reading comprehension and fluency, boys and girls performed equally in the early grades (i.e., first through third grade), but differences by gender emerged in fourth and/or fifth grade

Results: Reading

- Statistically significant differences were apparent in grades 4 and 5 for reading fluency and word attack, and in grade 5 only for letter-word identification, passage comprehension and reading vocabulary.
- In all cases girls outperformed boys.



But...

- Why are these differences apparent for African American boys but not girls?
- The boys and girls in this investigation were recruited from the same schools, neighborhoods and classrooms, and were exposed to similar teaching and classroom environments. The SES background of students was also similar.
- Boys appear to be having difficulty developing foundational skills, including word recognition and letter-word identification – still having difficulty as late as 5th grade
- Reading comprehension and fluency appear to become casualties of these weak, basic skills

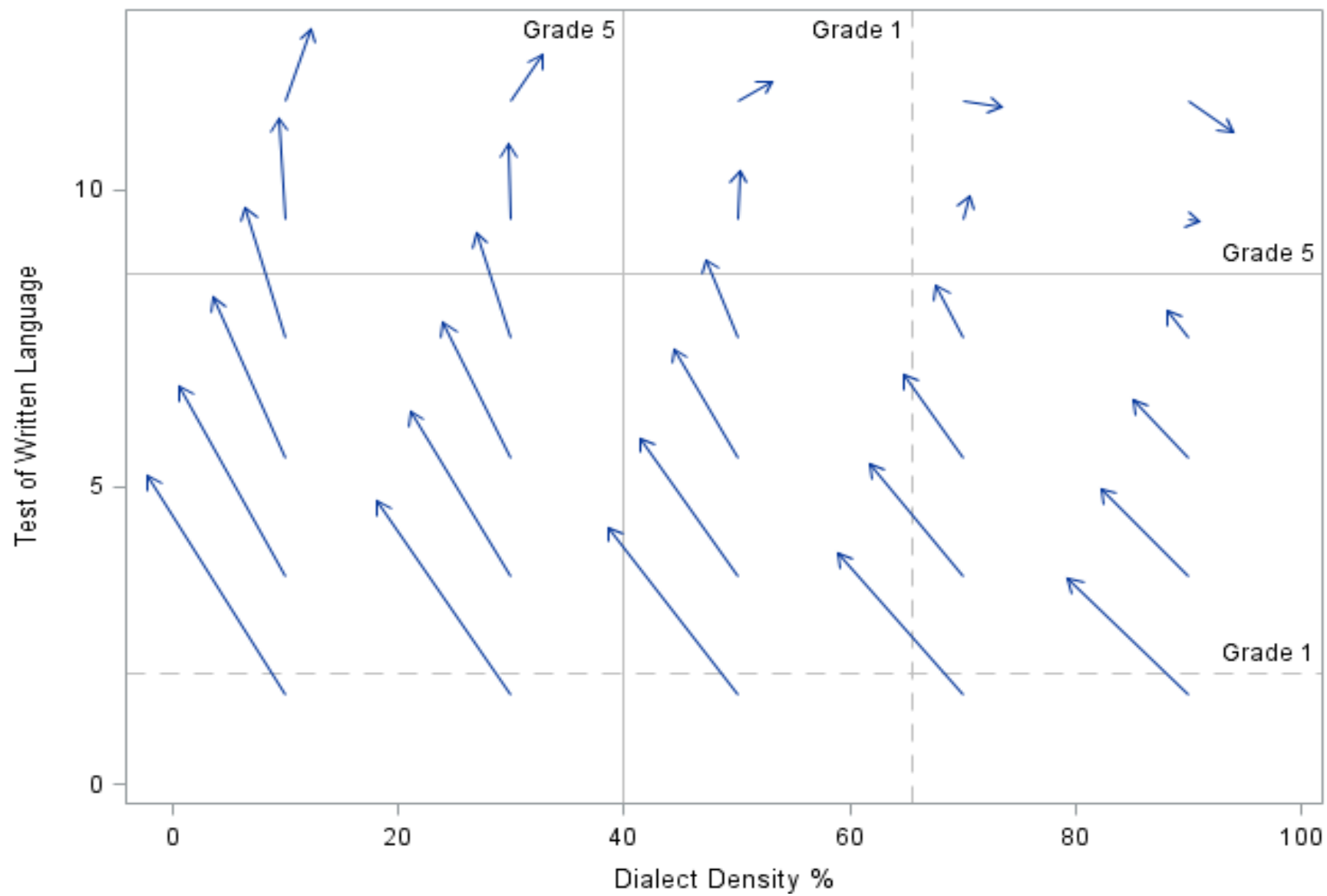
The background of the slide features a row of ten stylized, light blue silhouettes of women in various professional outfits, including blouses, jackets, and dresses, standing in a line. The entire scene is set against a solid, medium-blue background.

What about Writing?

Puranik, Branum-Martin & Washington, 2019

Results

- Writing showed a nonlinear growth trajectory from 1st through 5th grades.
- Students' scores increased from grades one through three and then slowed down in grades four and five.



Thus...

- High dialect density appears to have negative consequences for the acquisition of both reading ($r = 0.58$) and writing ($r = 0.82$).
- The impact of dialect on literacy skills was fairly direct: heavier dialect density slows growth in both reading and writing.
- However this effect appears to be moderated by the effects of reading and writing on each other.

Conclusions

- Whereas dialect has a negative relation with both reading and writing, the results of this study show that **reading appears to promote growth in writing but writing does not seem to have the same facilitative effect on reading** in this population.

Conclusions

- In order to improve literacy skills in African American children who used dialect, it may not be necessary to address children's use of spoken dialect directly, as suggested by some researchers
- Instead, it may be possible to impact dialect use indirectly by strengthening reading and writing skills



Our Current Challenges



Assessment

Can't tell the difference between poverty and disability



Identification

Can't tell the difference between poverty and disability



Intervention

Only Tier 1 classroom instruction unless you have a moderate to severe disability

Your Challenge

Lack of opportunity/poverty should not exclude children from an appropriate dx and access to intervention.

Instead...



Why can't we ask?

In the face of poverty and poor opportunity...

1. What distinguishes struggling readers from those who have dyslexia/reading disabilities?
2. Which assessments are we already using that will be effective for dx and identification?
3. What kind of assessments need to be developed to more accurately reflect knowledge of bidialectal children



Overall....

We need to challenge our current paradigms, both research and practice, to be more inclusive.

Couldn't Do This Work Without:

- Lee Branum-Martin
- Nicole Patton Terry
- Mark Seidenberg
- Mi-Young Webb
- Ryan Lee-James
- Congying Sun
- Lakeisha Johnson



Couldn't Do This Work Without:

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