

# Distinguishing Bilingual Children from Monolinguals with SLI: Profile Effects on the ENNI

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### Participants

- BLTD: 23 English L2 children (L1s = various)
  - Time 1: age = 66 months; 9 months of English
  - Time 2: age = 88 months; 34 months of English
- MTD: 43 English monolingual children with TLD
  - Time 1: age = 66 months (N = 23)
  - Time 2: age = 88 months (N = 20)
- MSLI: 43 English monolingual children with SLI
  - Time 1: age = 66 months (N = 23)
  - Time 2: age = 88 months (N = 20)

### Edmonton Narrative Norms instrument

- Story Grammar (SG) (e.g. setting, characters, events, internal plan, outcome)
- Mean Length of Communication Unit (MLCU)

(ENNI: Schneider et al. 2004, 2006)

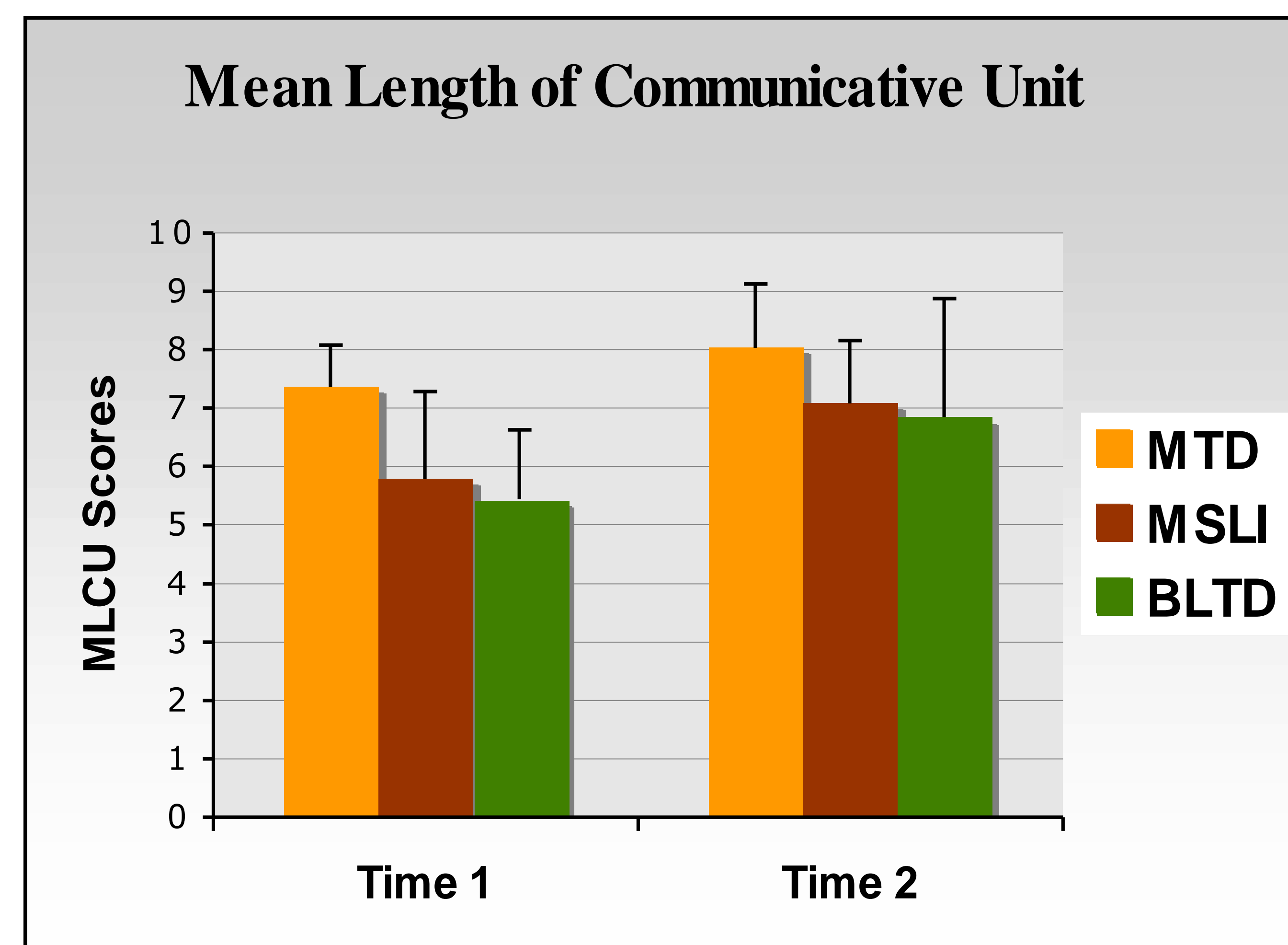
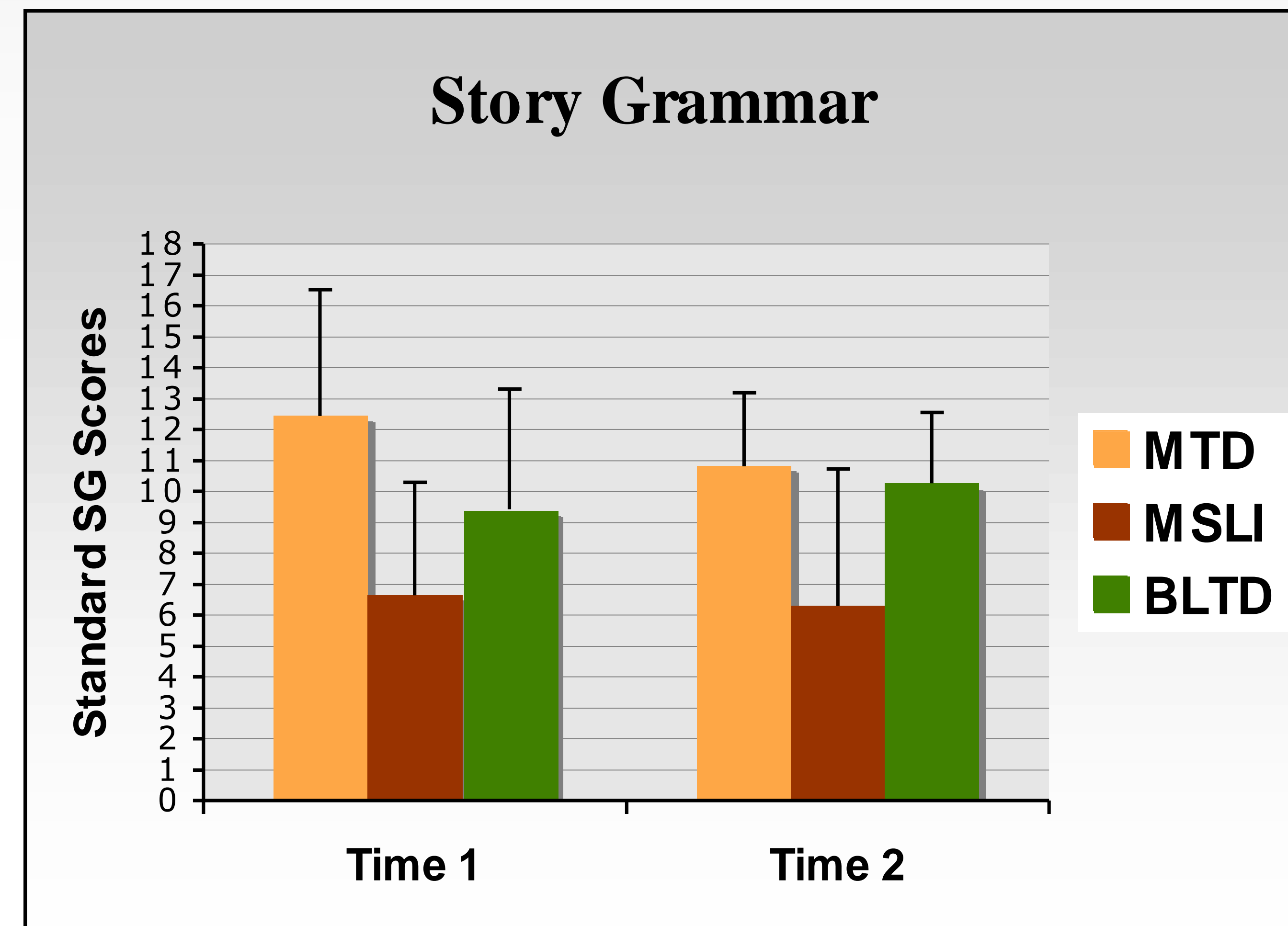
		Time 1			Time 2		
		Predicted Group%			Predicted Group%		
Group %	MTD	MSLI	BLTD	Group %	MTD	MSLI	BLTD
MTD	78	13	9	MTD	65	10	25
MSLI	21	48	30	MSLI	20	70	10
BLTD	23	9	68	BLTD	20	20	60

## Background

Bilingual children with TLD often perform below monolingual age peers on standardized tests, with **over-identification of SLI in bilinguals** a potential outcome (Crutchley et al, 1997; Oller & Eilers, 2002; Paradis, 2005; Thordardottir et al. 2006)

For basic reading skills and vocabulary size, bilinguals catch up asynchronously to monolingual peers: **'profile effects'** (Oller et al., 2007)

The purpose of this study was to investigate possible **profile effects** in bilingual children's oral **narrative abilities and mean length of utterance** as compared to monolinguals with TLD and with SLI



Group classification results from linear discriminant function analysis

## Summary and Conclusions

Both ANOVA and linear discriminant function analyses showed that the bilingual children had an **uneven profile** vis à vis monolinguals for narrative abilities and mean length of utterance, even after nearly 3 years' exposure to English

Bilingual children can catch up more quickly for **narrative abilities** (story grammar) possibly because this is a **cognitive/linguistic interface skill**, and can be shared with the L1; in contrast, **grammatical complexity** (MLCU) is more **English-language specific**

Over-identification of bilingual children with TLD as SLI is a potential risk, even after nearly 3 years' exposure to English

There is a need for **bilingual norms for standardized tests** because profile effects suggest that waiting for them to catch up in synchrony is not appropriate

## References

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## Research Questions

Would bilingual children approach monolingual norms asynchronously for narrative abilities and mean length of utterance?

Would bilingual children's performance patterns parallel monolingual children with TLD, parallel those with SLI, or be distinct from both?