

Writing Proficiency of Chinese, Korean, and Spanish Heritage Learners

Alberta Gatti⁺, Cynthia Martin[‡], Elvira Swender^{*}
Teresa O'Neill⁺, Inés Vañó García⁺

⁺The Graduate Center, CUNY // [‡]U of Maryland // ^{*}ACTFL Professional Programs



A US Department of Education Title VI Language Resource Center

WRITING PROFICIENCY OF HERITAGE LEARNERS

- Two-part study of college-level heritage language learners
 - Mandarin Chinese, Korean, and Spanish
 - Who is a heritage language learner?
 - Heritage language spoken in the home
 - Bilingual to some degree in English and heritage language
 - Engaged in heritage language instruction
- (Valdés 2000)

WRITING PROFICIENCY OF HERITAGE LEARNERS

➤ Part I

- Aim: To provide information about student backgrounds heritage language instructors
 - Biographical data & educational experiences
 - Language practices
 - Self-ratings of language skills

➤ Part II

- Aim: To provide recommendations for instructors teaching **writing** to heritage language learners, based on learner profiles
 - Profiles of learners at Intermediate and Advanced proficiency levels
 - Strengths and gaps

INSTRUMENTS



WRITING PROFICIENCY OF HERITAGE LEARNERS

➤ Instrument I: Biographical Questionnaire

- USA-born (except PR) vs. born outside USA
- Age of arrival (if born outside USA)
- Language acquisition history (English and heritage language)
- Educational experiences of parents
- Educational experiences in heritage language
- Contexts of use of English and heritage language
- Literacy practices in English and heritage language
- Self-ratings of heritage language proficiency

WRITING PROFICIENCY OF HERITAGE LEARNERS

- Instrument II: Writing Proficiency Test (WPT)
 - Test developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
 - Writing proficiency counterpart of widely used Oral Proficiency Interview
 - Advantages:
 - Often used in academia for certification of teacher candidates
 - Proficiency levels (Novice Low – Superior) used for placement and curriculum design
 - High inter-rater reliability
 - Criterion-referenced
 - No monolingual “controls”

WRITING PROFICIENCY OF HERITAGE LEARNERS

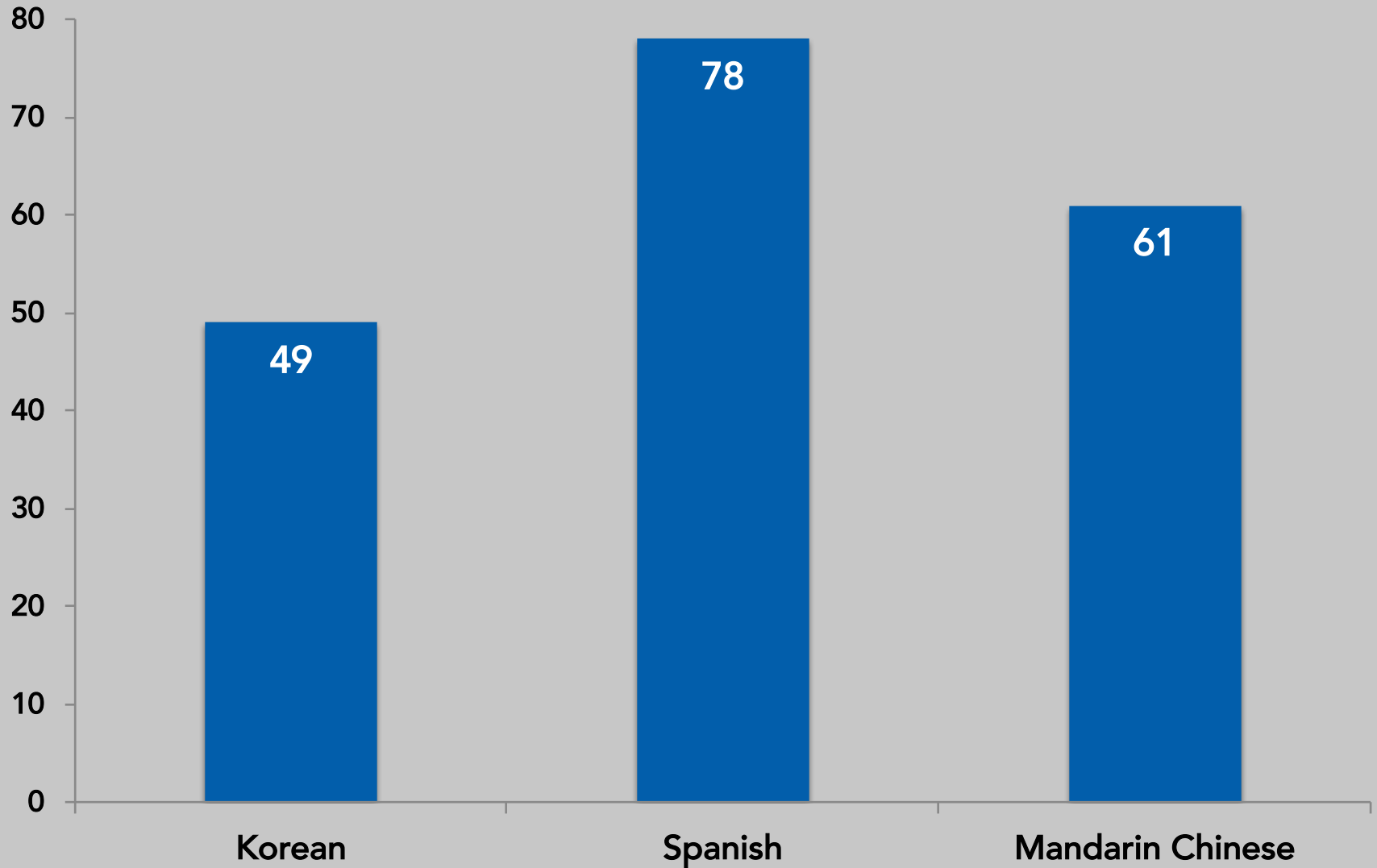
- Instrument III: WPT Raters Review Form
 - Provides detailed information about each specific sample
 - Documents evidence of the Floor and Ceiling
 - Documents main features of Assessment Criteria
 - Functions
 - Content/Context
 - Accuracy
 - Text Type

PARTICIPANTS: BACKGROUND

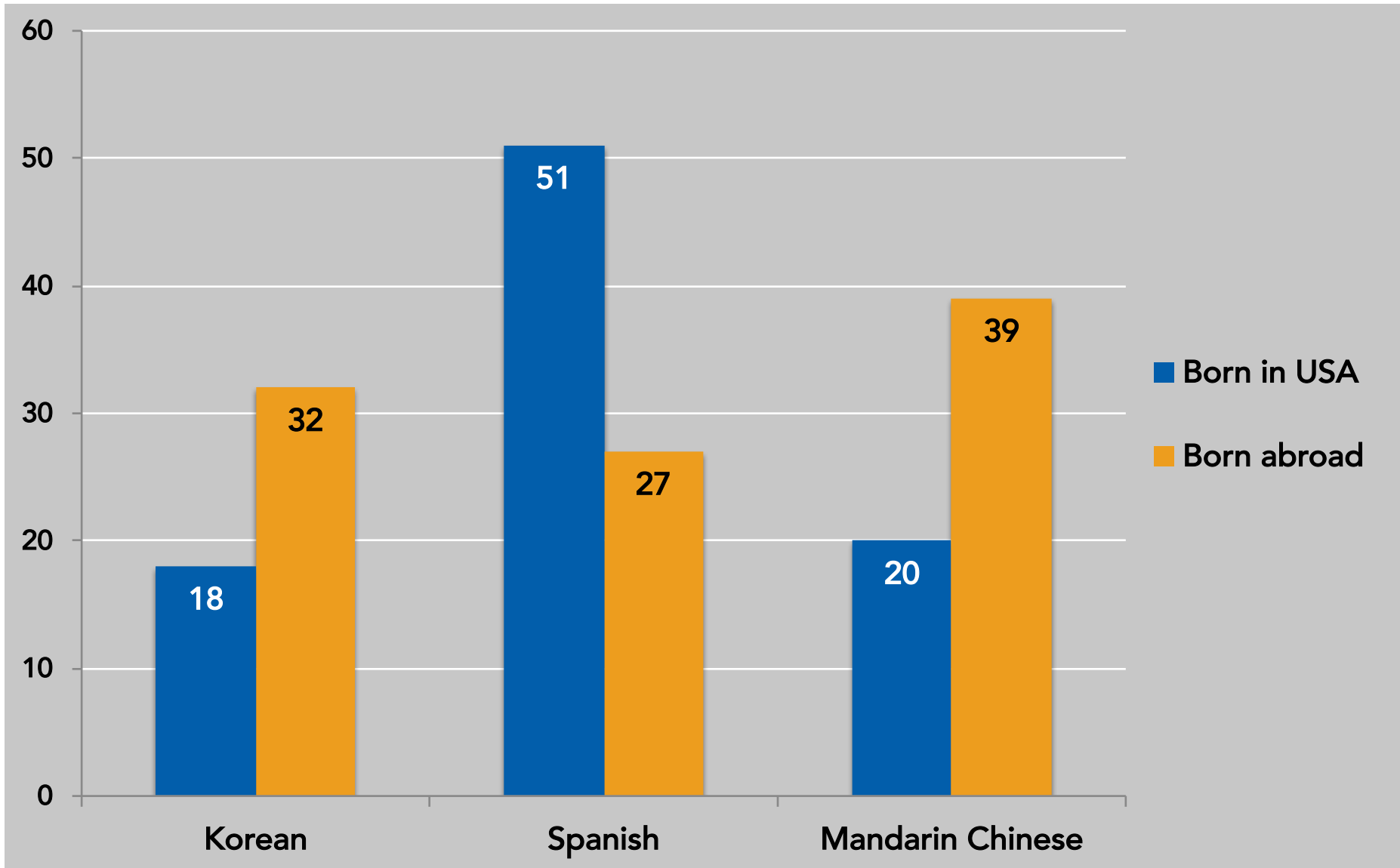
Results



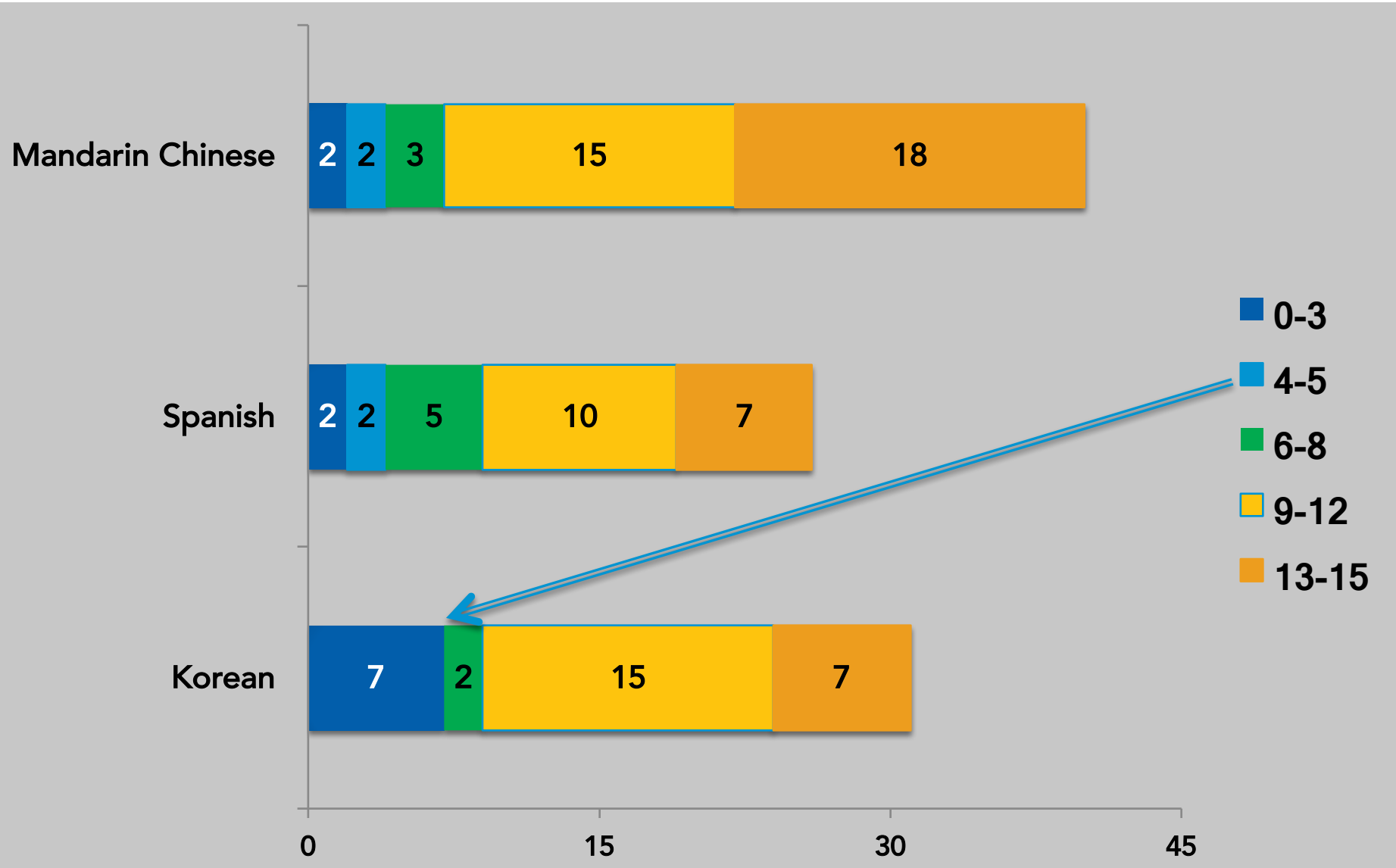
PARTICIPANTS BY LANGUAGE



CONTEXT OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION



AGE OF ARRIVAL



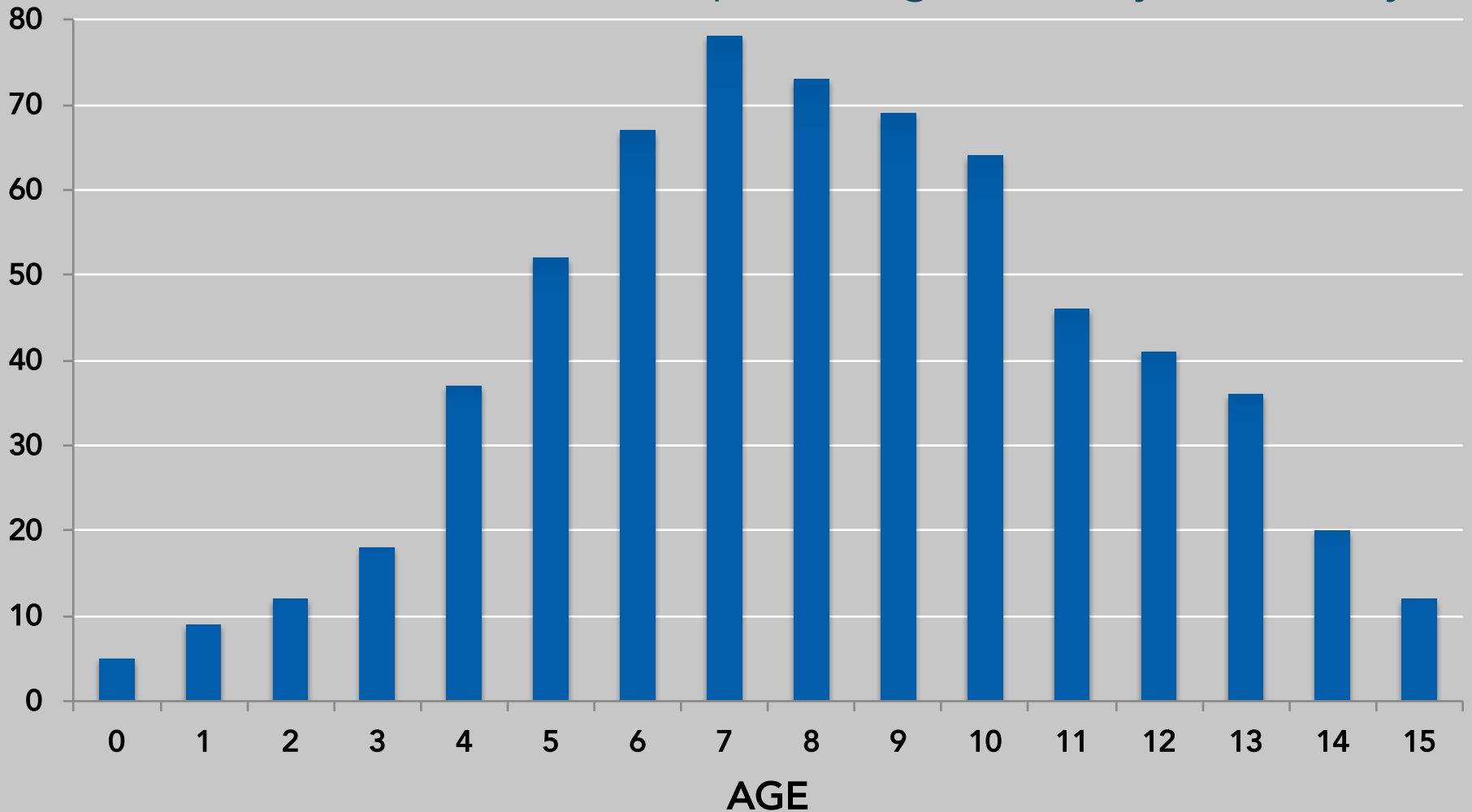
EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Results



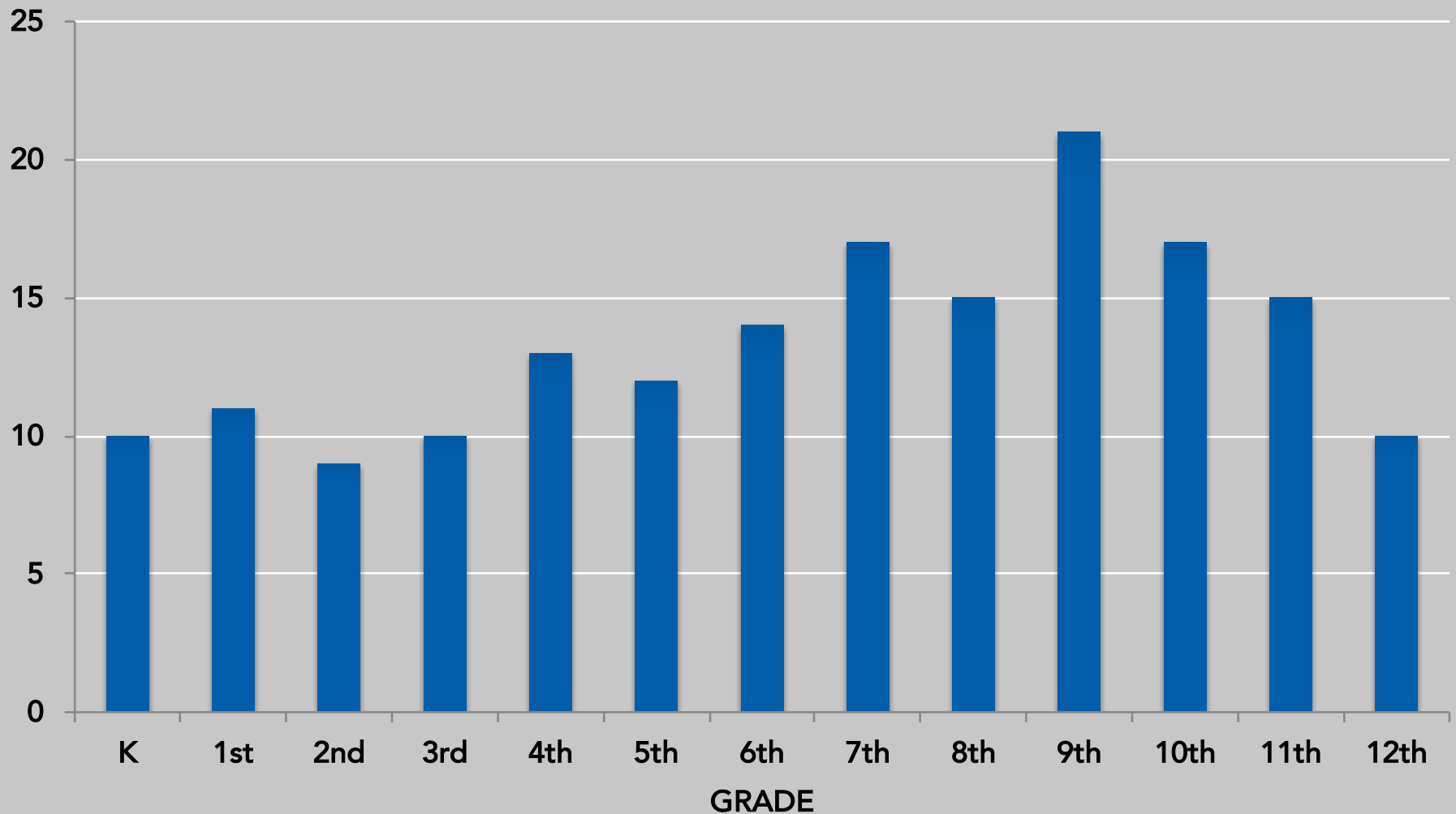
EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

■ HL instruction in HL-speaking country/territory



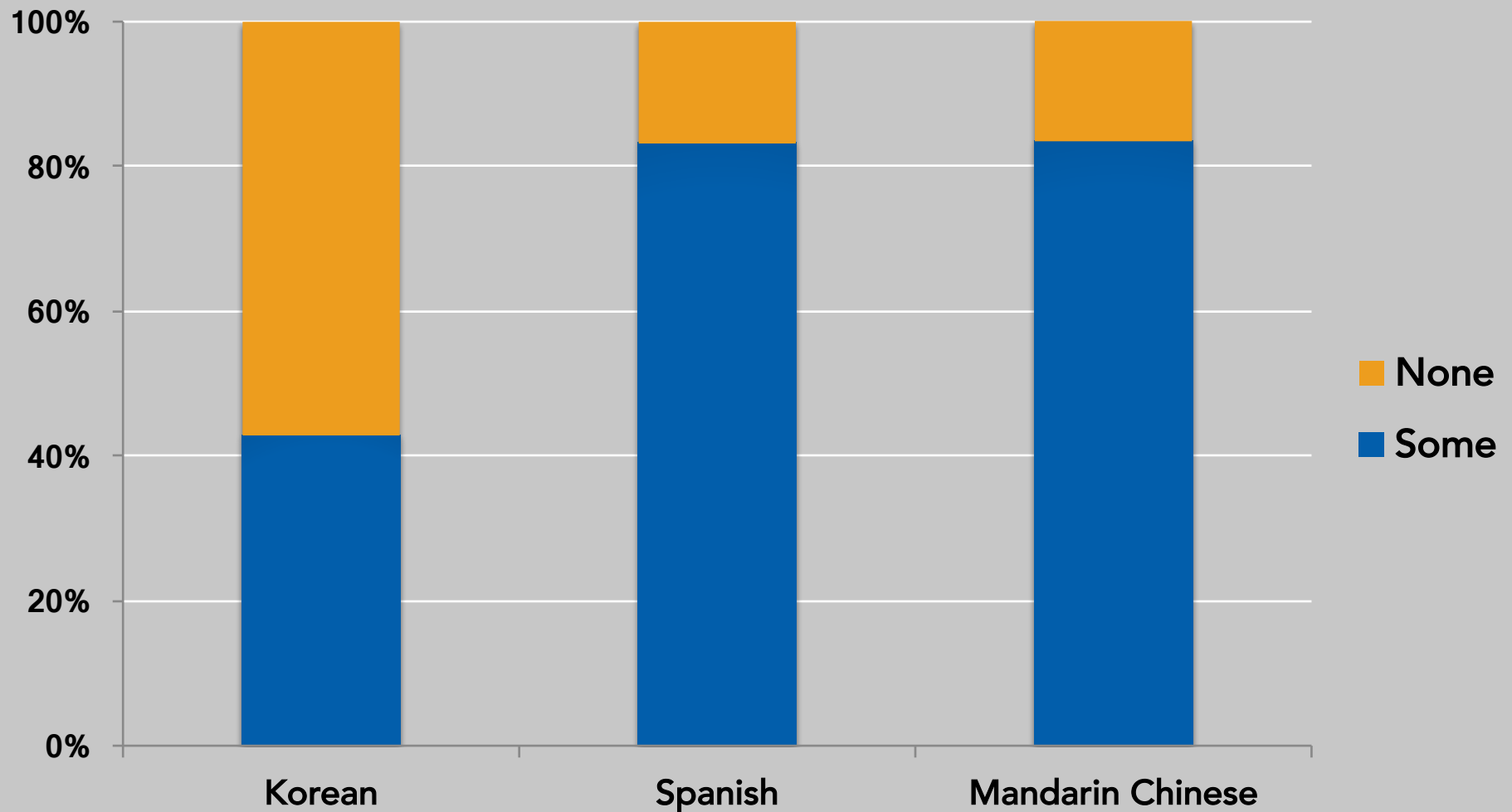
EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

■ HL instruction in USA



EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

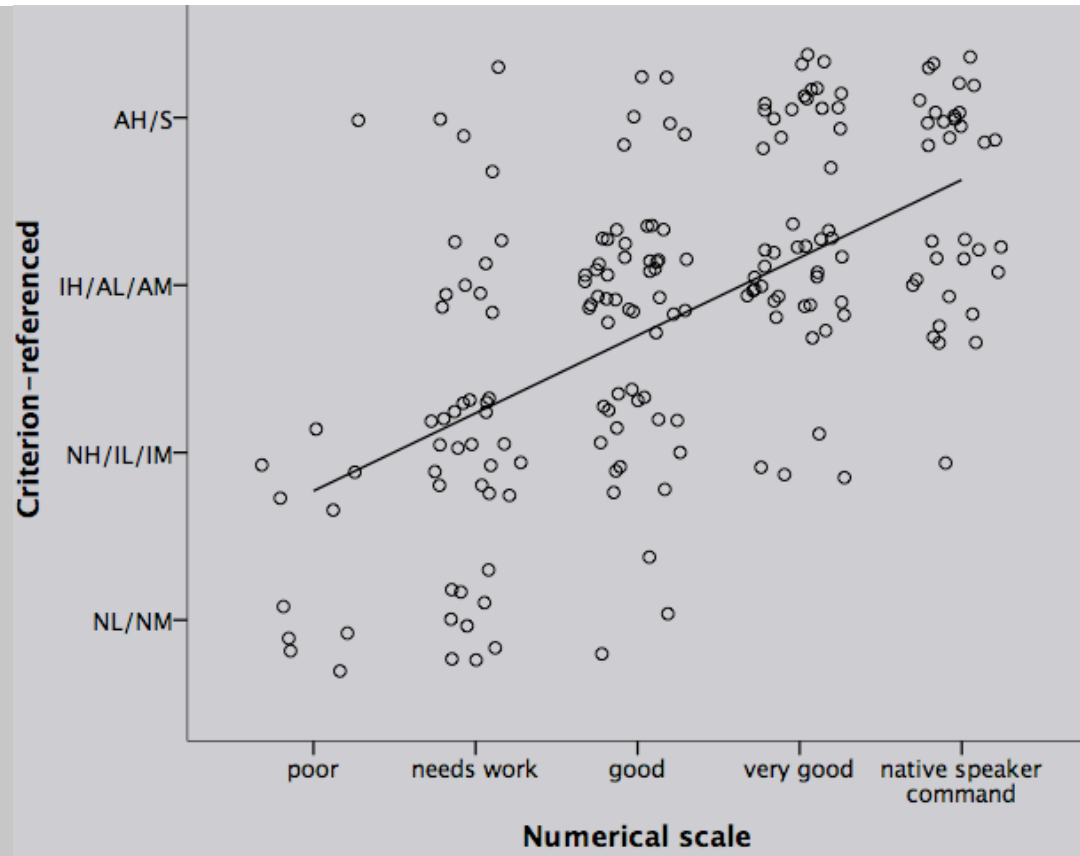
■ College-level HL instruction by language



SELF-RATING OF WRITING PROFICIENCY

2 self-rating measures:

- Criterion-referenced "can-do" self-rating
- Likert self-rating



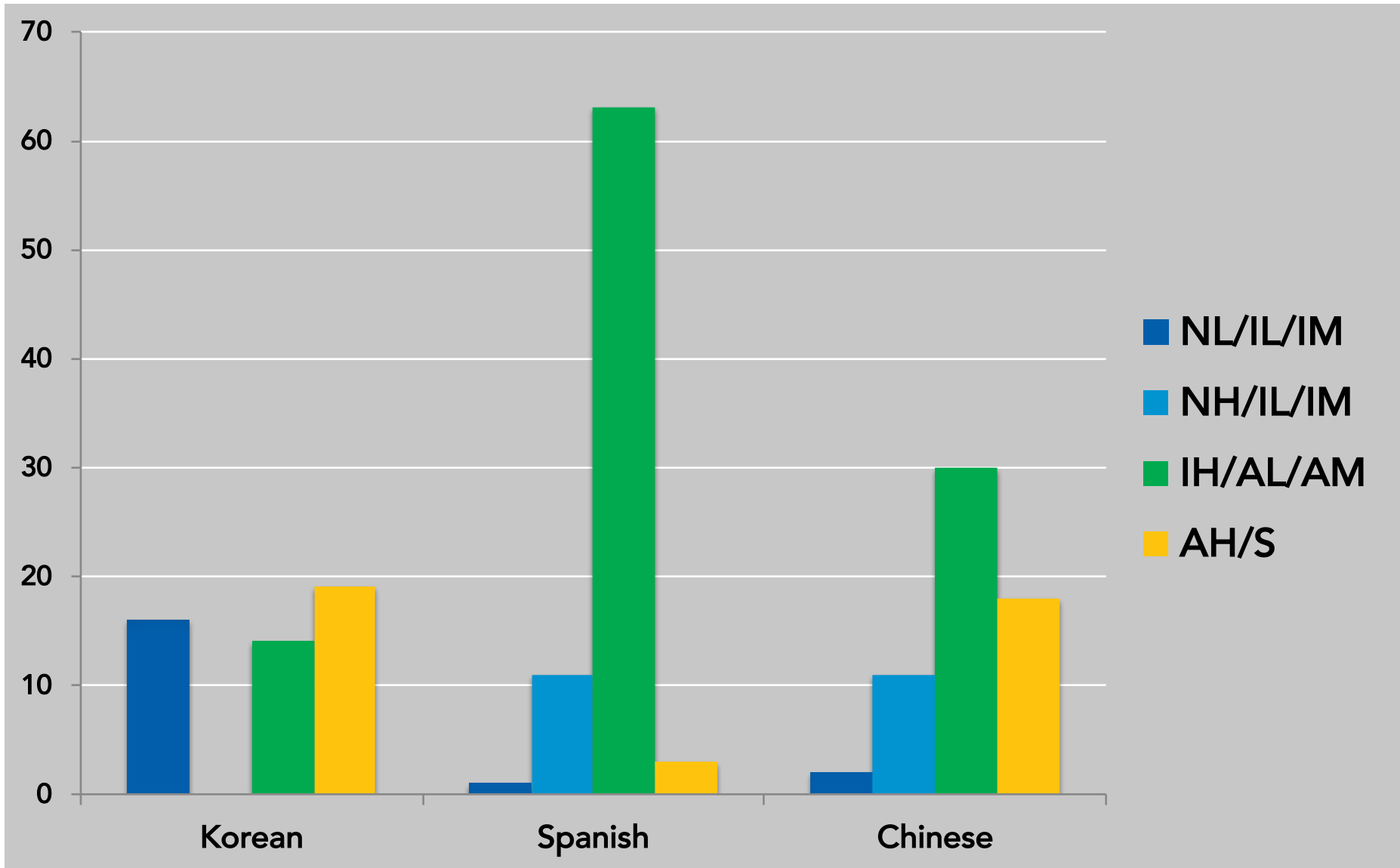
Pearson Correlation: 0.594**

WRITING PROFICIENCY

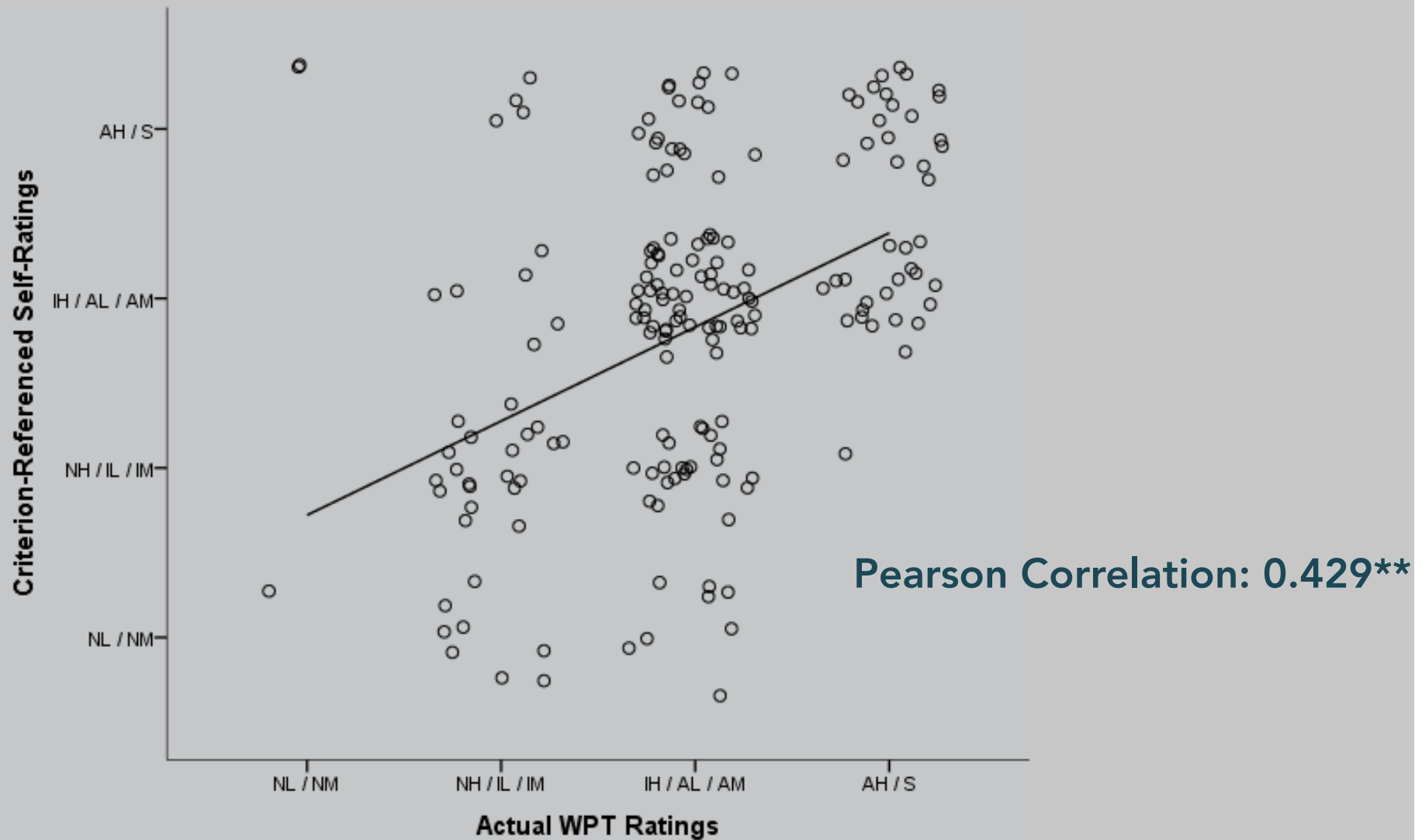
Results



RESULTS: WPT RATINGS

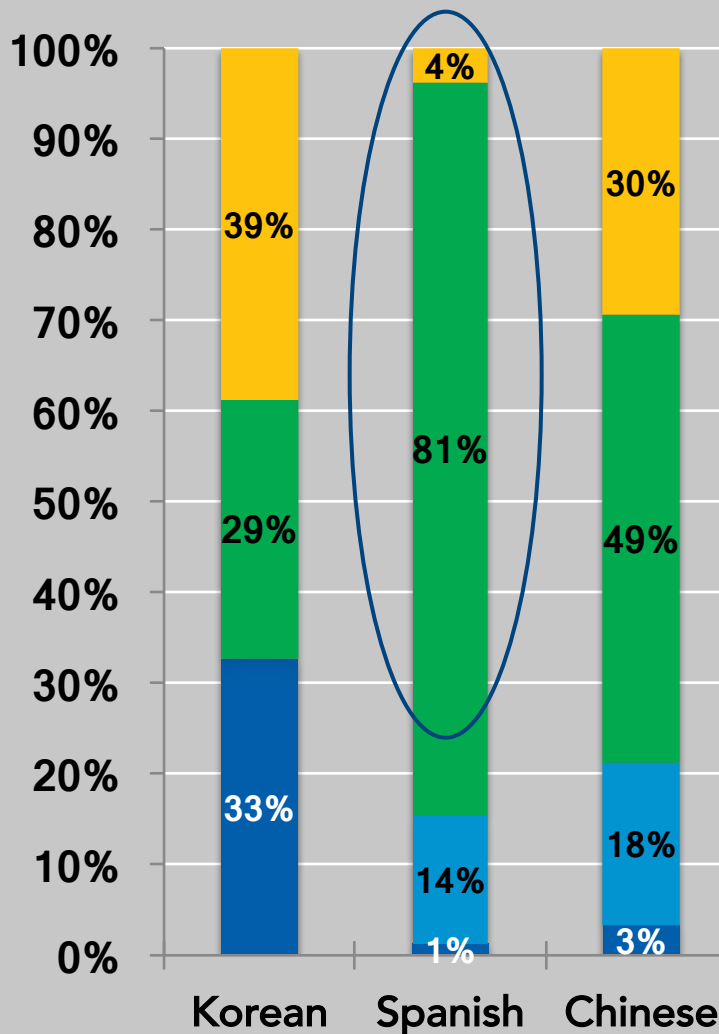


ACCURACY OF SELF-RATINGS

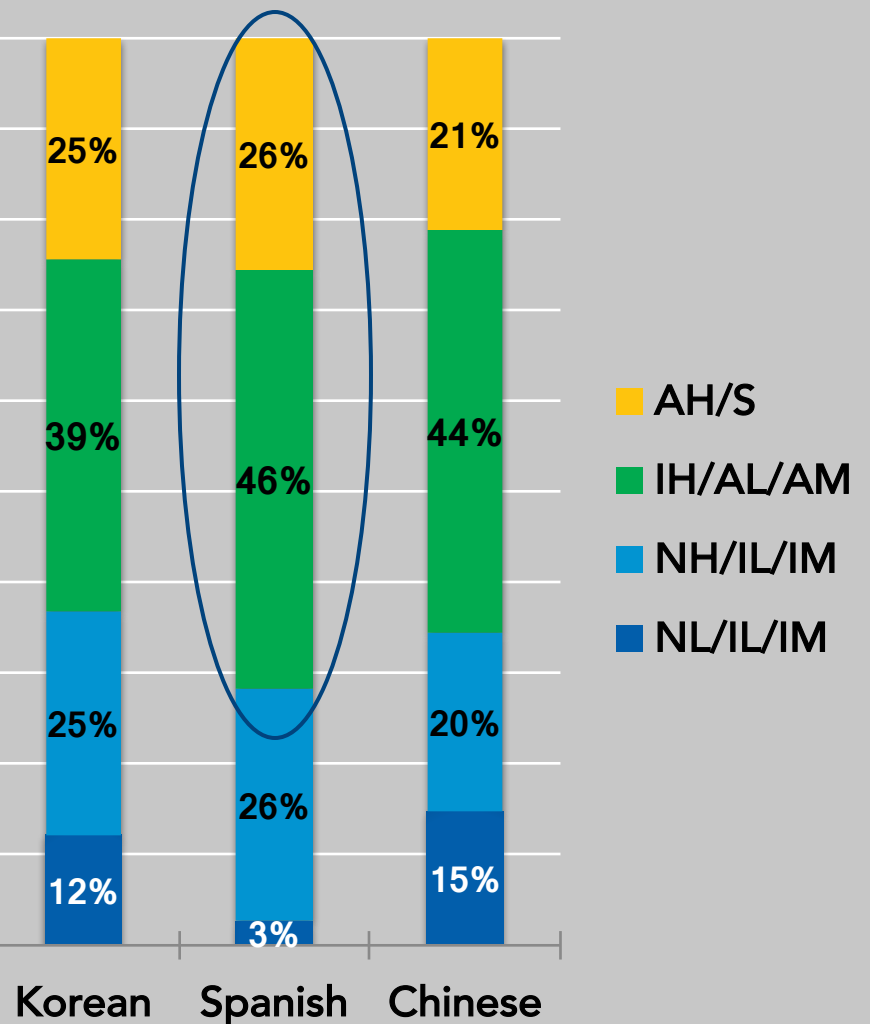


PROFICIENCY RATINGS

WPT RATING



"CAN-DO" SELF-RATING

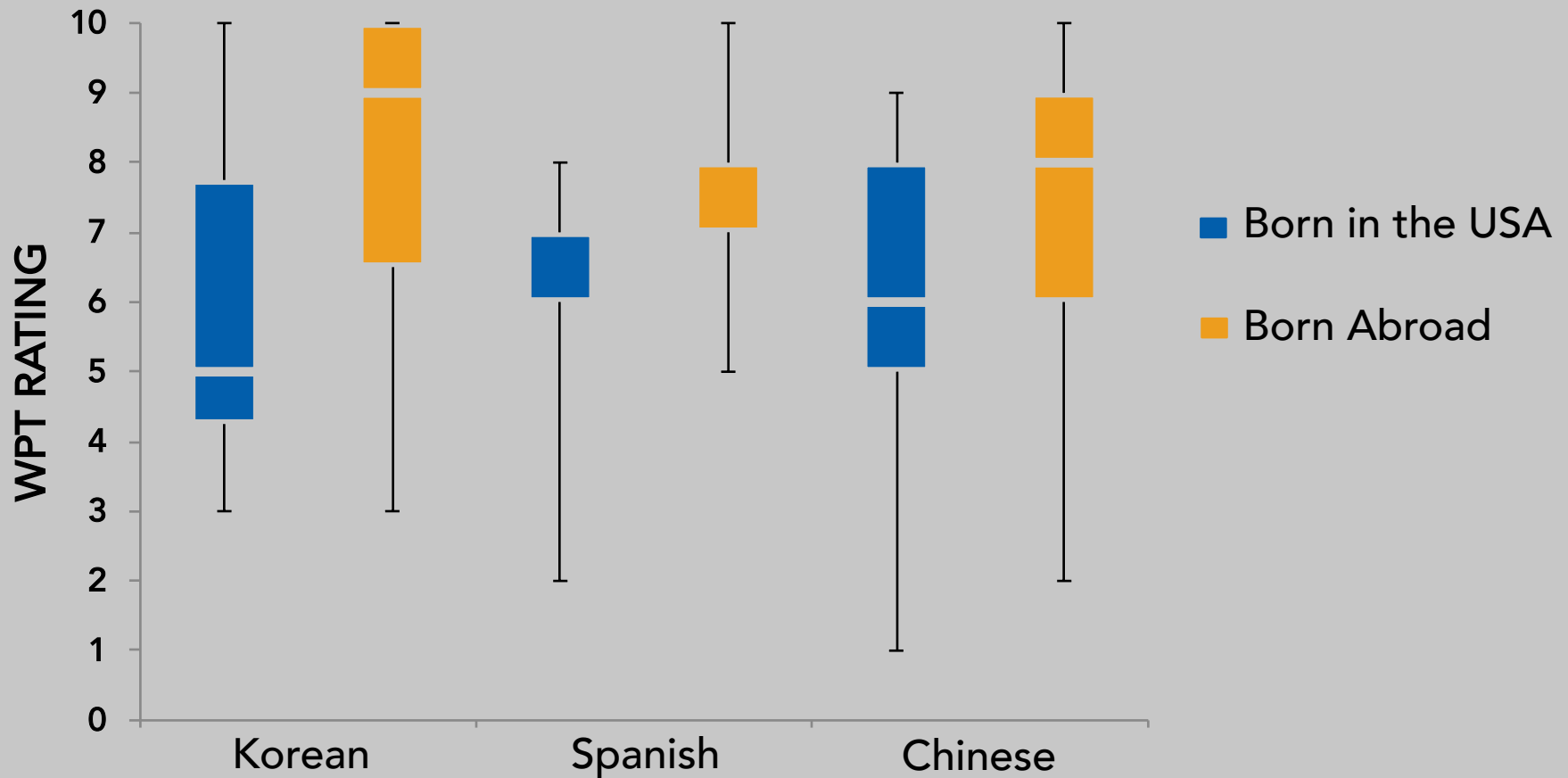


BIOGRAPHICAL FACTORS & WRITING PROFICIENCY

Analysis



CONTEXT OF ACQUISITION



- Korean and Spanish $p < 0.01^{**}$
- Mandarin Chinese $p < 0.05^{*}$

AGE OF ARRIVAL

- Age of arrival is positively correlated with WPT score
- Strength and significance of correlation:

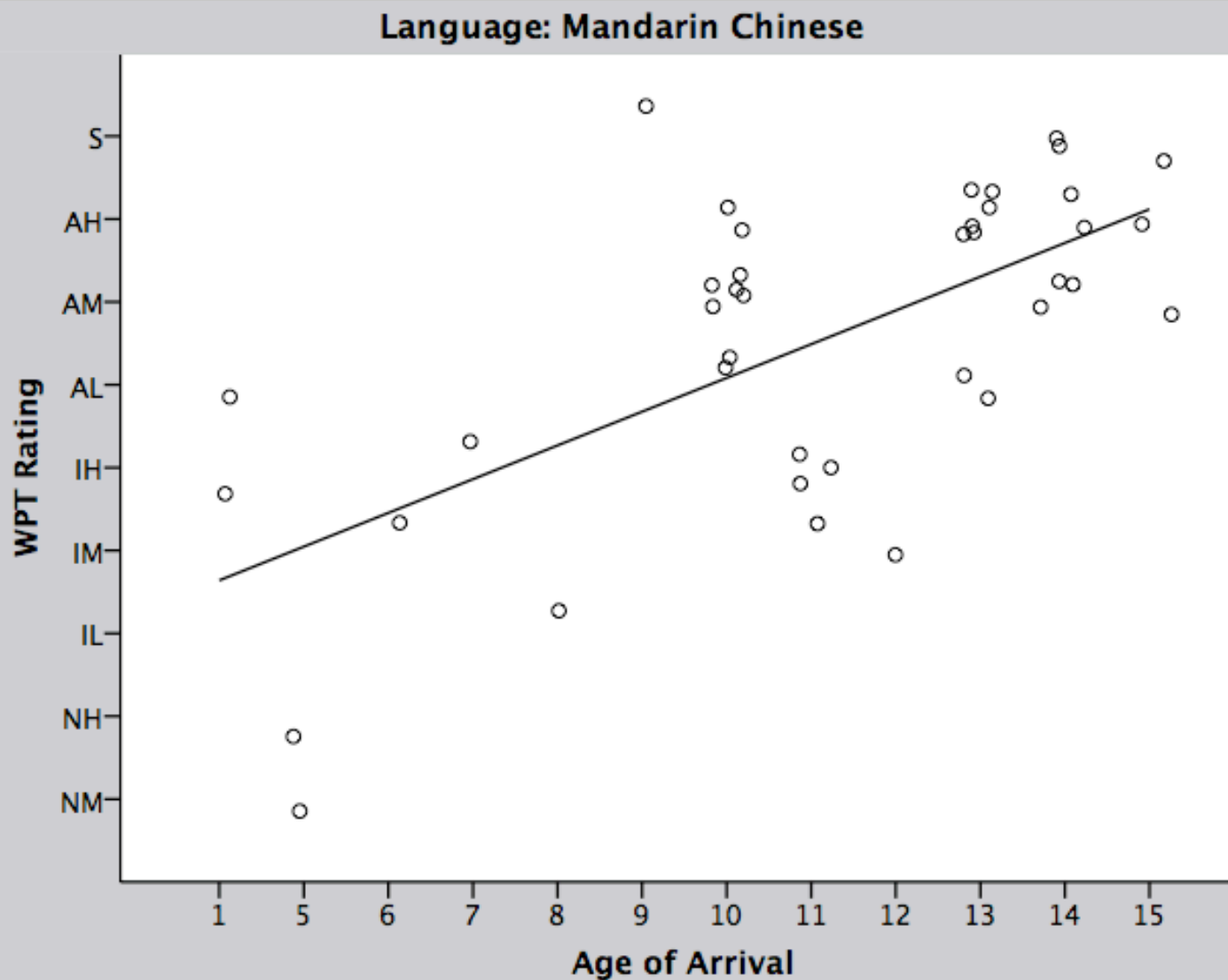
Chinese > Korean > Spanish

Correlations			Age of Arrival	WPT Rating
Language				
Korean	Age of Arrival	Pearson Correlation	1	.590**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	31	31
	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	.590**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	31	31
Spanish	Age of Arrival	Pearson Correlation	1	.386*
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.047
		N	27	27
	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	.386*	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.047	
		N	27	27
Mandarin Chinese	Age of Arrival	Pearson Correlation	1	.604**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	40	40
	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	.604**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	40	40

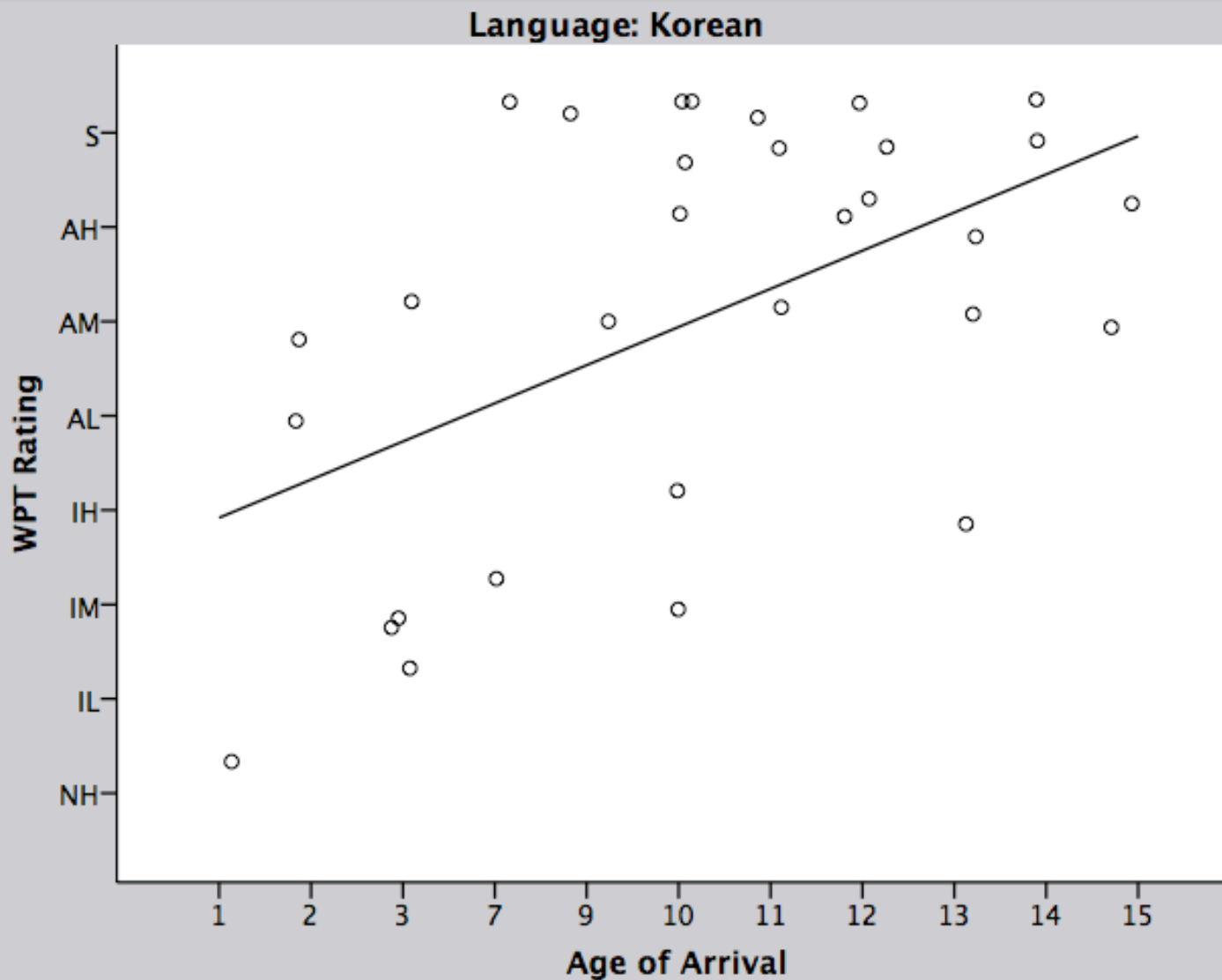
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

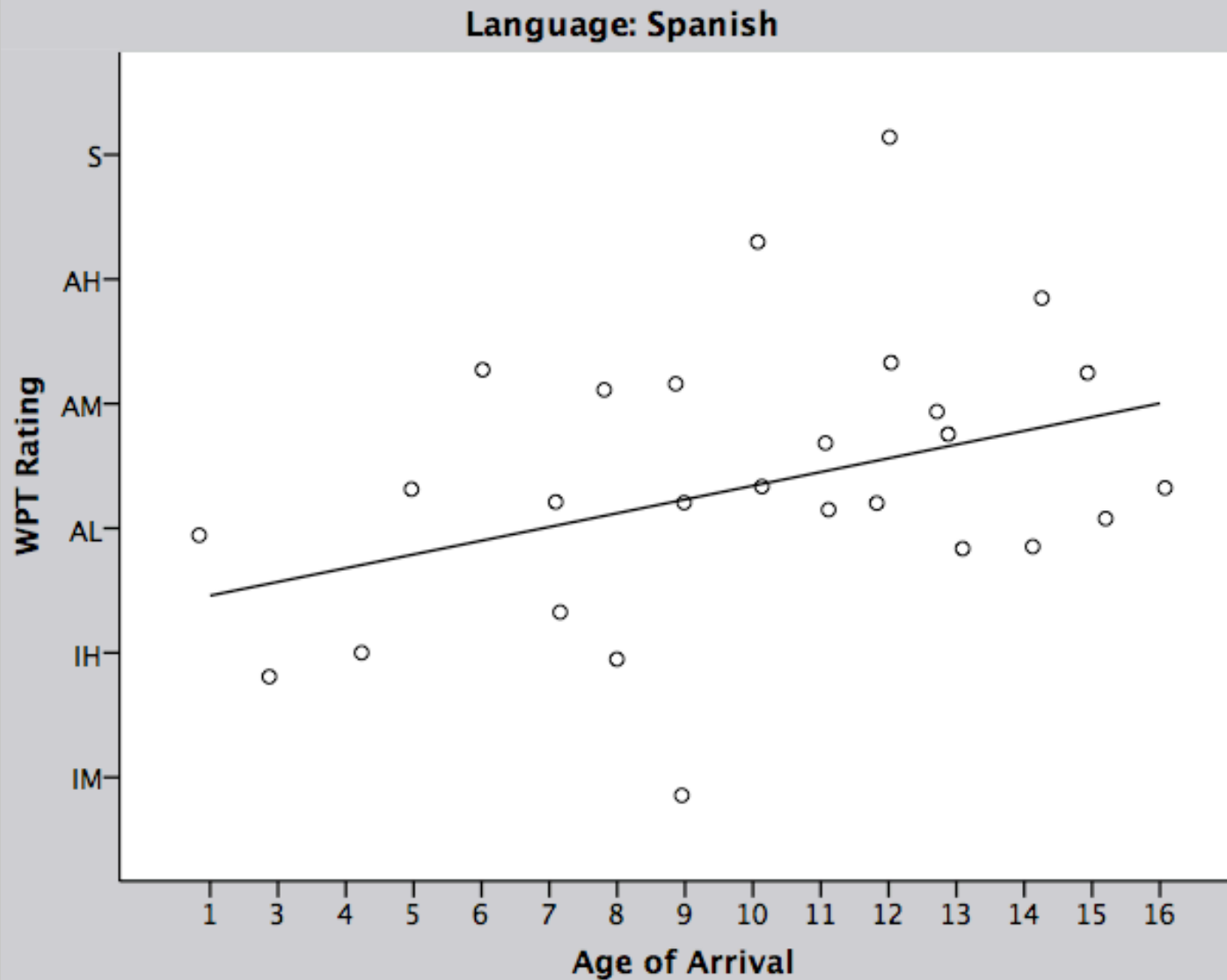
CONTEXT OF ACQUISITION



CONTEXT OF ACQUISITION



CONTEXT OF ACQUISITION



PARENTS' EDUCATION

Correlations

Language			Mother's Level of Education	WPT Rating
Korean	Mother's Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.232
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.109
		N	49	49
	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	.232	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.109	
		N	49	49
Spanish	Mother's Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.302**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.007
		N	78	78
	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	.302**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	
		N	78	78
Mandarin Chinese	Mother's Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	1	-.022
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.868
		N	60	60
	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	-.022	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.868	
		N	60	60

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations

Language			Father's Level of Education	WPT Rating
Korean	Father's Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.328*
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.021
		N	49	49
	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	.328*	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	
		N	49	49
Spanish	Father's Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.203
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.075
		N	78	78
	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	.203	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.075	
		N	78	78
Mandarin Chinese	Father's Level of Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.113
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.384
		N	61	61
	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	.113	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.384	
		N	61	61

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Spanish: mother's education**

Korean: father's education*

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Spanish Heritage Learners**

- # of semesters of college-level heritage language instruction is significantly, albeit weakly correlated with WPT rating

Correlations			WPT Rating	Semesters of College HL Instruction
Language				
Korean	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	.262
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.436
		N	11	11
	Semesters of College HL Instruction	Pearson Correlation	.262	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.436	
		N	11	11
Spanish	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	.395**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.009
		N	43	43
	Semesters of College HL Instruction	Pearson Correlation	.395**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	
		N	43	43
Mandarin Chinese	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	.130
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.487
		N	31	31
	Semesters of College HL Instruction	Pearson Correlation	.130	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.487	
		N	31	31

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

LANGUAGE PRACTICES: READING

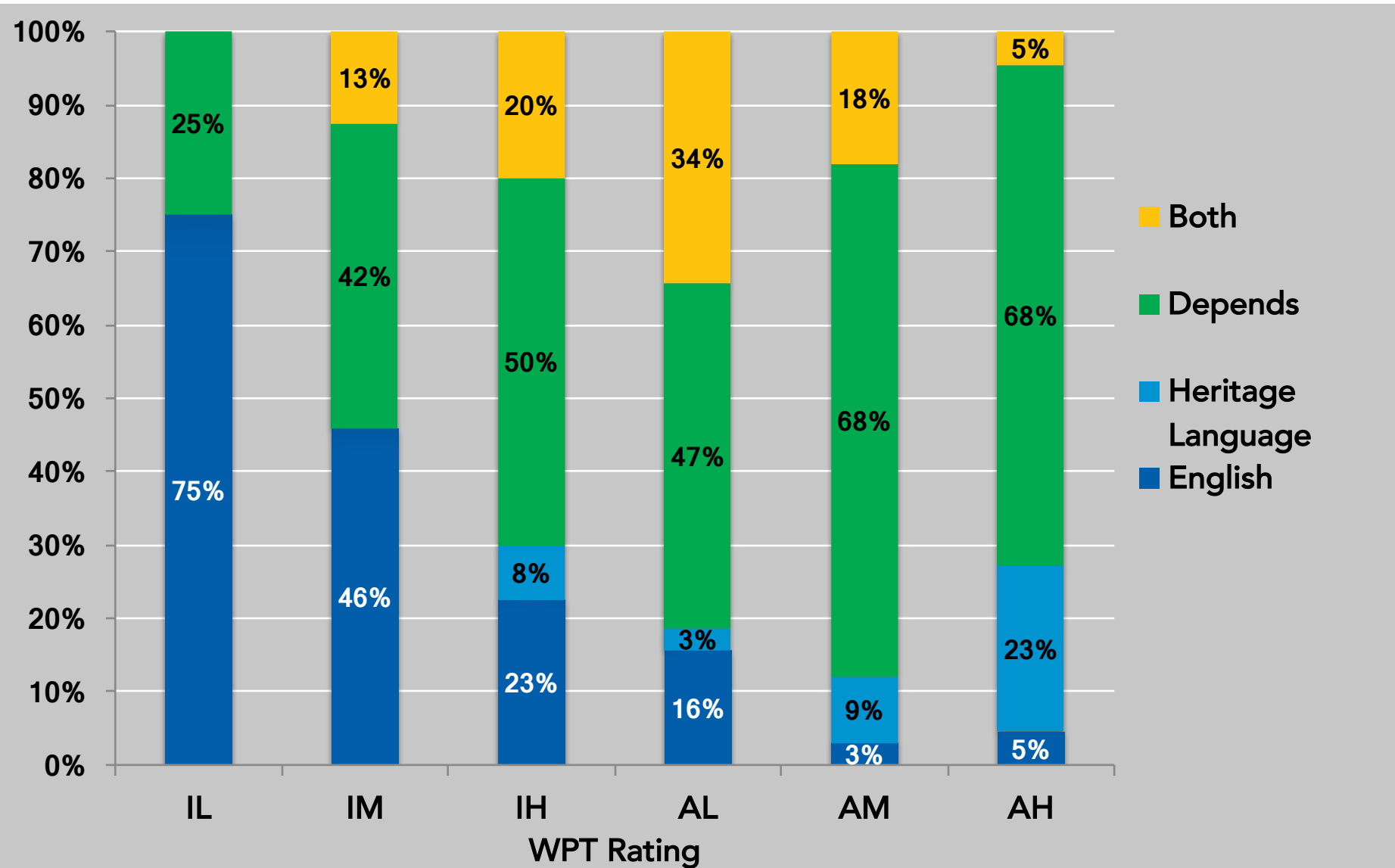
All three groups**

- Frequency of reading (books, magazines, and articles) is significantly correlated with WPT rating

Correlations			WPT Rating	Reading in HL
Language				
Korean	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	.523**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	49	49
	Reading in HL	Pearson Correlation	.523**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	49	49
Spanish	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	.421**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	77	77
	Reading in HL	Pearson Correlation	.421**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	77	77
Mandarin Chinese	WPT Rating	Pearson Correlation	1	.564**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	61	61
	Reading in HL	Pearson Correlation	.564**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	61	61

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

PREFERRED LANGUAGE

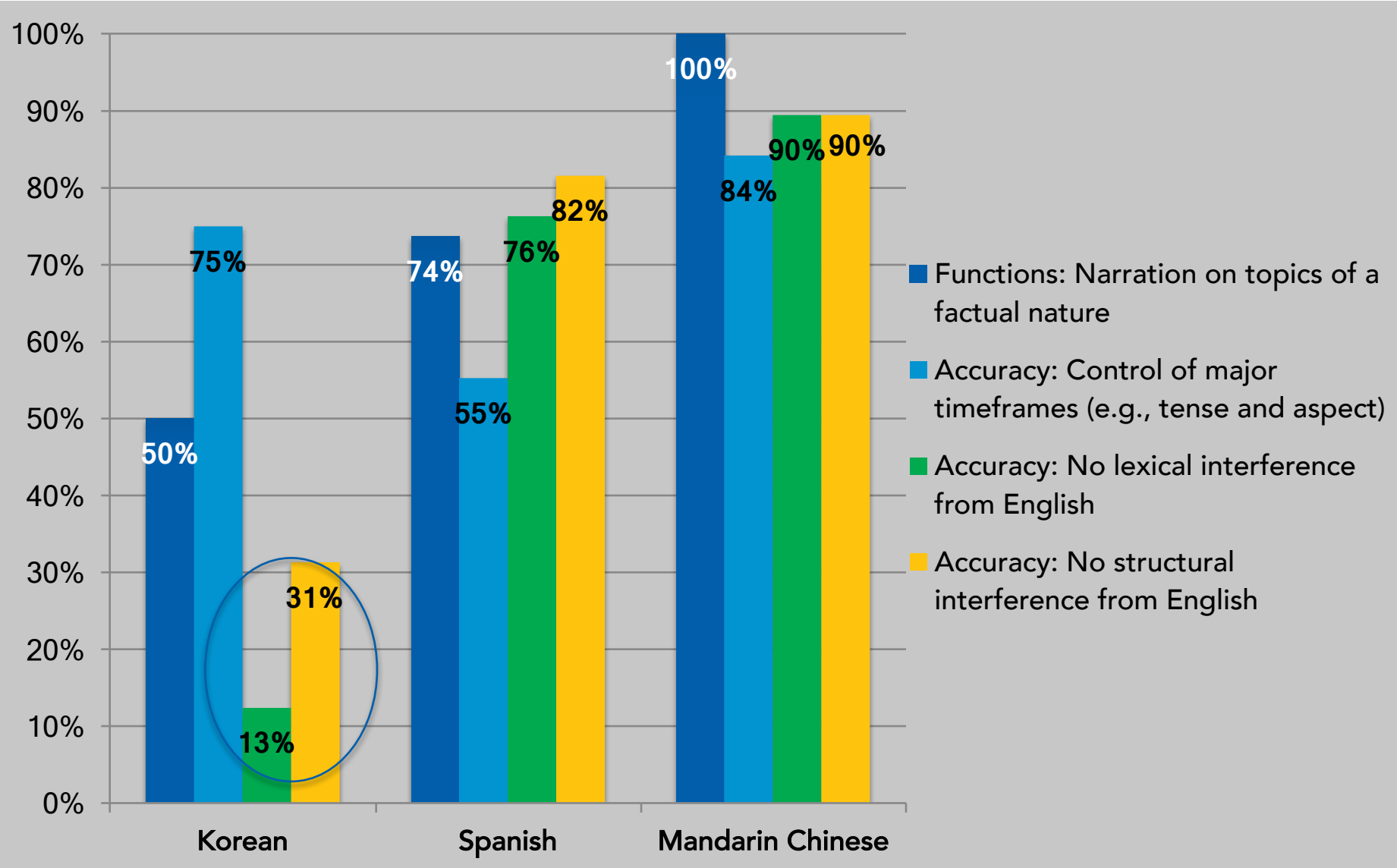


WRITING PROFICIENCY PROFILES: INTERMEDIATE

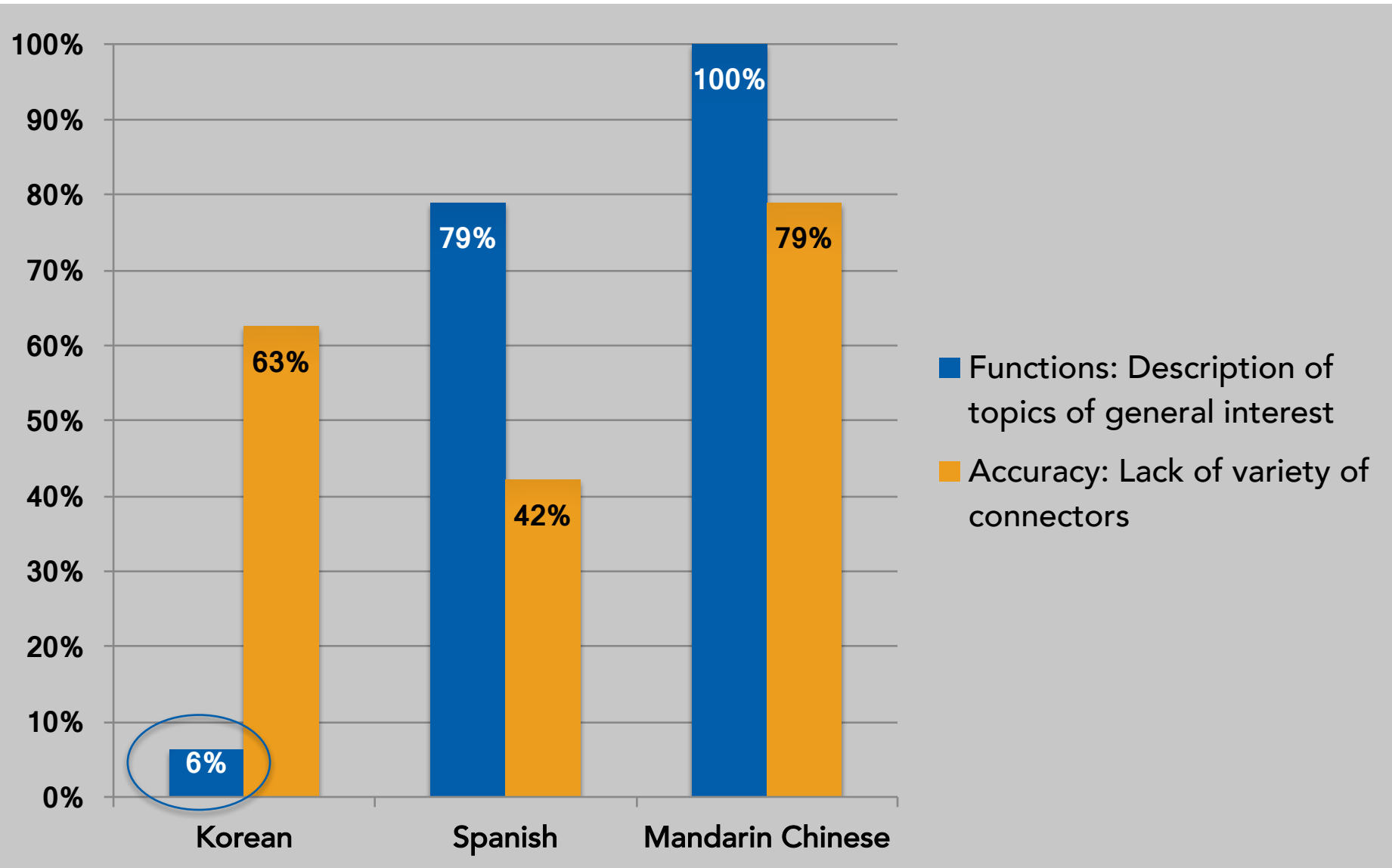
Analysis



INTERMEDIATE: STRENGTHS



INTERMEDIATE: WEAKNESSES

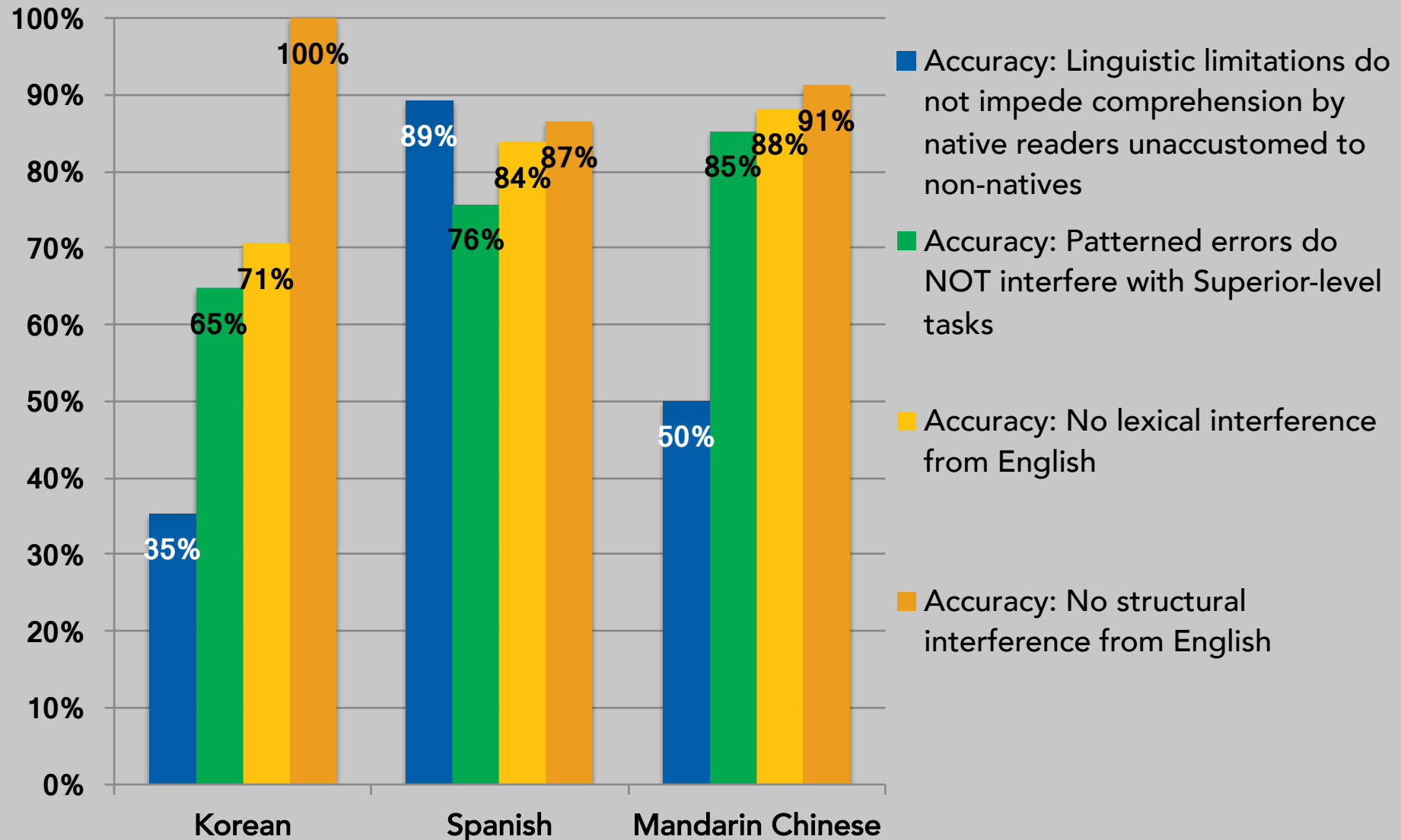


WRITING PROFICIENCY PROFILES: ADVANCED

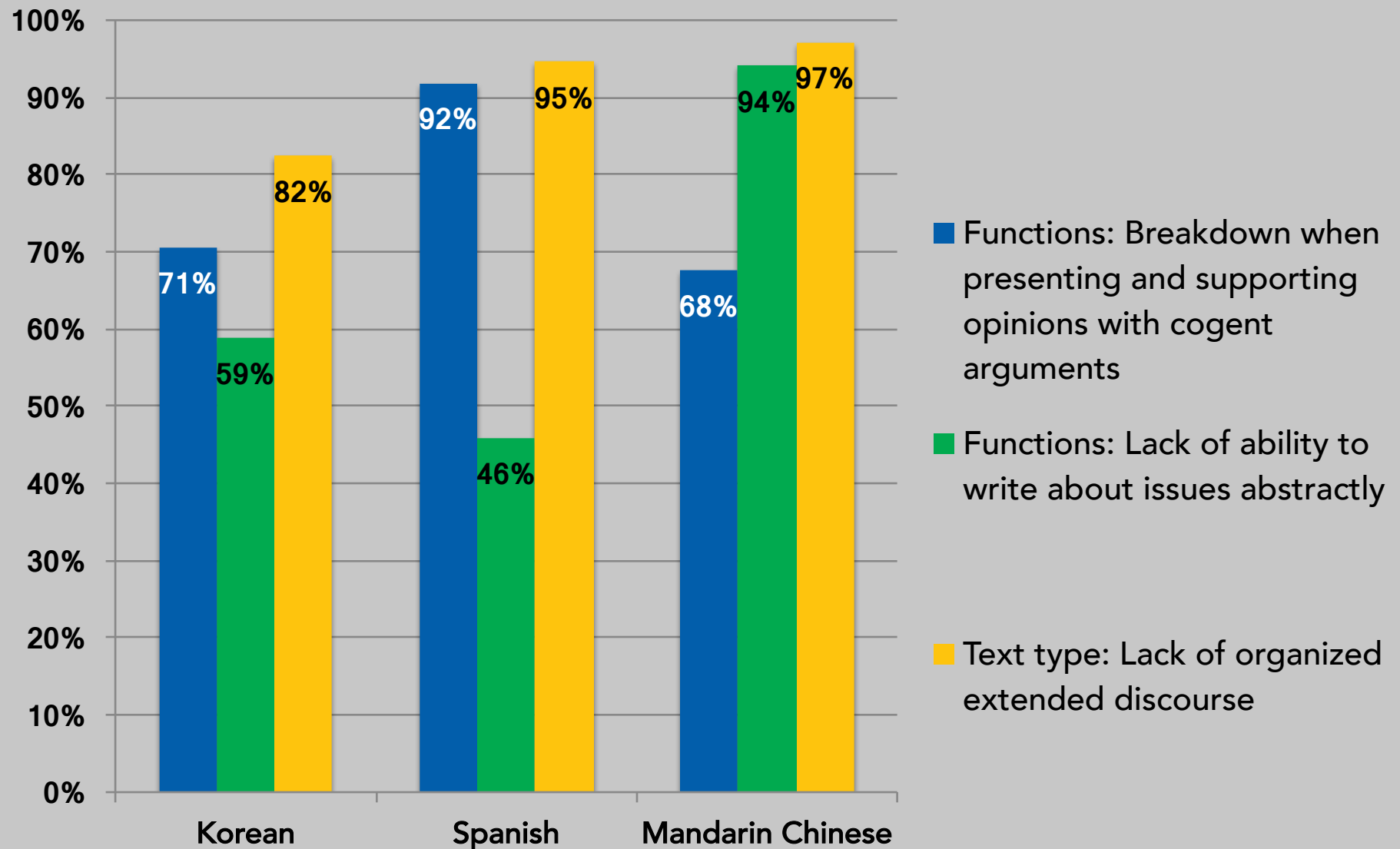
Analysis



ADVANCED: STRENGTHS



ADVANCED: WEAKNESSES



FINDINGS: BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILES

- Some hypotheses borne out
 - Later arrivals have higher proficiency
 - Participants who study HL in college have higher proficiency—unclear whether causal
 - Measures of language use and preference correlate with proficiency
- Some less expected findings
 - Participants accurately self-rate writing proficiency; unlike self-rating of oral proficiency (Swender et al. 2014; Spanish & Russian)
 - Parents' level of education, a proxy for SES, fails to predict proficiency across all subgroups

FINDINGS: WRITING PROFILES

- Functions:
 - Narration >> description
- Context/Content:
 - Variation among groups—for future work
- Accuracy:
 - HLs at both Intermediate and Advanced levels do not display lexical and structural interference from English when attempting functions at the next level
 - Challenges assumptions about **transfer**
- Text type:
 - Weaknesses in extended discourse
- Future work: closer look at each subgroup

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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