

# ER AND FLUENCY



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Although methodological concerns have limited generalizability and strength of some claims, research on ER in an L2 confirms the common-sense expectation that more easy self-selected reading leads to

- **GREATER MOTIVATION** (Cheetham et al., 2016; Demirci, 2019; Freiermuth & Ito, 2021; Hardy, 2016; Jun, 2018; Mikami, 2020, Philpott, 2015; Paripuyavanid, 2021; Takahashi, 2018; Taylor, 2022; van Amelsvoort, 2017; Yang et al., 2022).
- **BETTER COMPREHENSION** (Ewert, 2012; Huffman, 2021; Mermelstein, 2014; Robb & Kamiya, 2020; Robb & Kano, 2013; Suk, 2017; Taylor, 2014).
- **MORE VOCABULARY** (Bautorwick et al., 2019; Day et al., 1991; Horst, 2019; Horst et al., 1998; Lao & Krashen, 2000; Lee & Pulido, 2017; Pulido, 2004; Waring & Takase, 2003; Webb & Chang, 2015a; Webb & Change 2015b; Webb & Chang, 2020).
- **FASTER READING RATE (FLUENCY)** (Al-Homoud & Schmitt, 2009; Ateek, 2021; Beglar, Hunt, & Kite, 2012; Bell, 2001; Bui & Macalister, 2021; Iahori, 2008; Sheu, 2003; Shiki, 2011; Shiki & Hase, 2011; Suk, 2017).

**THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF ER (OR EL)  
THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT ER (OR EL) IMPLEMENTATION**

**THIS IS A TALK ABOUT FLUENCY**

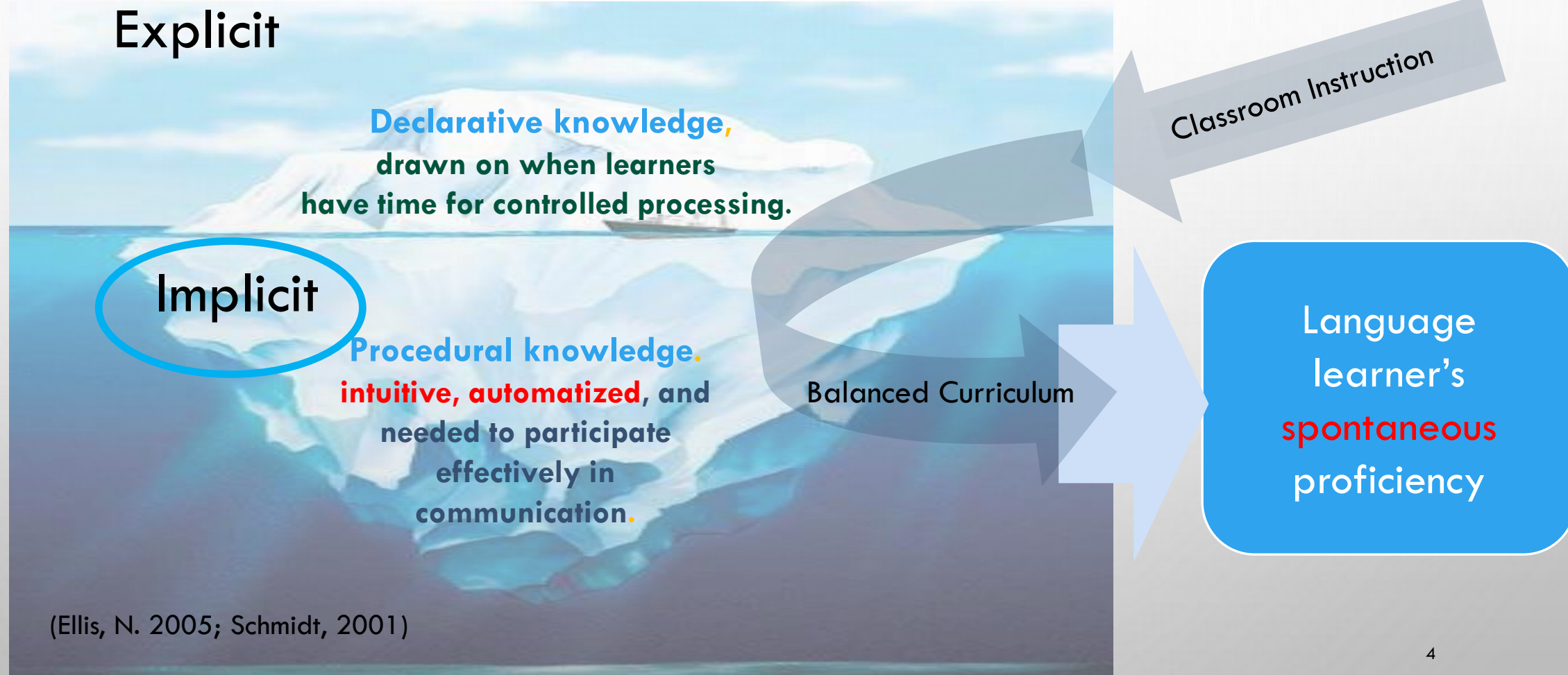
**FRAMEWORK FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING:**

- **USAGE-BASED LANGUAGE ACQUISITION** (ELLIS, N. 2019; SCHMIDT, 2001, SEIDENBERG, 2017)

**FRAMEWORK FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING:**

- **BALANCED CURRICULUM** (NATION, 2007; NATION & WARING, 2020)

# USAGE-BASED LANGUAGE LEARNING





# STATISTICAL LEARNING

- *“Humans are data hunters and gatherers. We respond to patterns in the environment. We register repetitions and novelties, similarities and differences, the way things vary and covary, and then how things that covary covary....*
- *Every time we use language, we also update our statistical representation of it....This continual learning and updating occurs in the background as we pursue our main goals, producing and comprehending language for various purposes....*
- *Statistical learning takes place without conscious awareness or intention“*  
*(Seidenberg, 2017).*

# THE TYPICAL LANGUAGE LEARNING CURRICULUM

(NATION & WARING, 2020)

## Listening

Listen and answer questions;  
Focus on words and comprehension

## Speaking

Speak to communicate;  
Focus on pronunciation and **fluency**

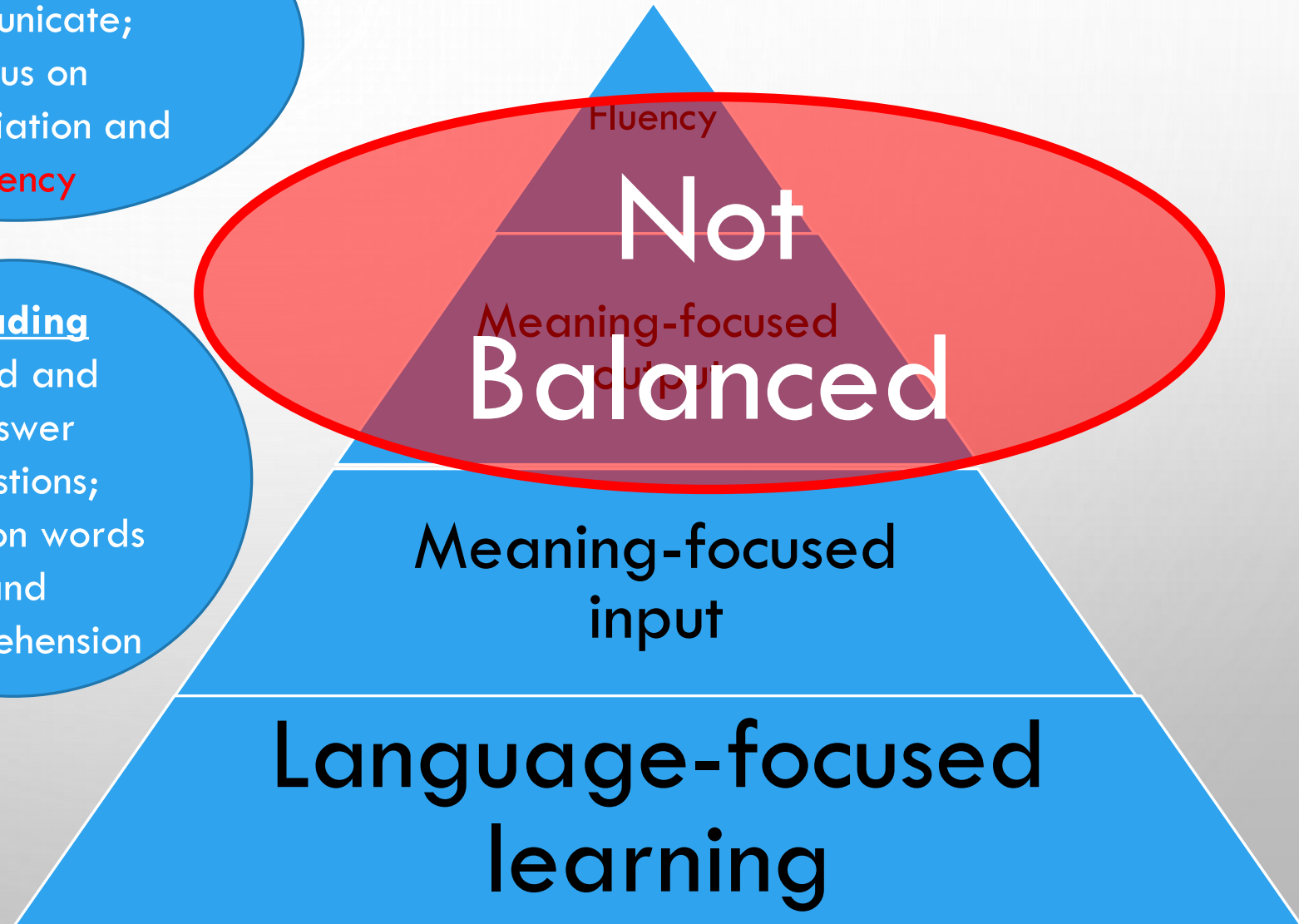
## Reading

Read and answer questions;  
Focus on words and comprehension

## Writing

Write to communicate;  
Display knowledge of grammar and vocabulary

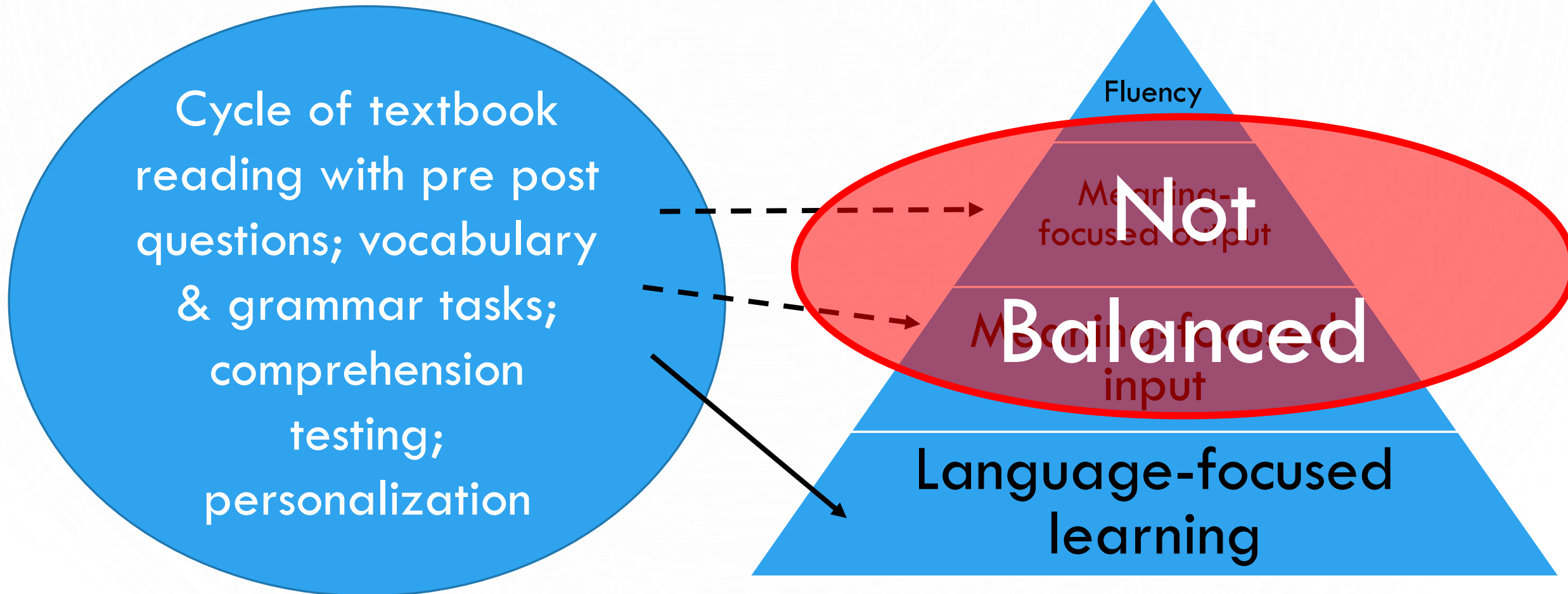
**Where is fluency activity?**



# THE TYPICAL L2 READING CURRICULUM

(STOLLER ET AL. 2013)

Where is fluency activity?



# COMPREHENSIVE (BALANCED) L2 READING CURRICULUM

(STOLLER, ET AL. 2013)

## Instructional Enhancements:

1. EXTENSIVE PRACTICE AND EXPOSURE TO PRINT
2. COMMITMENT TO BUILDING STUDENT MOTIVATION
3. ATTENTION TO READING FLUENCY
4. VOCABULARY BUILDING
5. COMPREHENSION SKILLS PRACTICE AND DISCUSSION

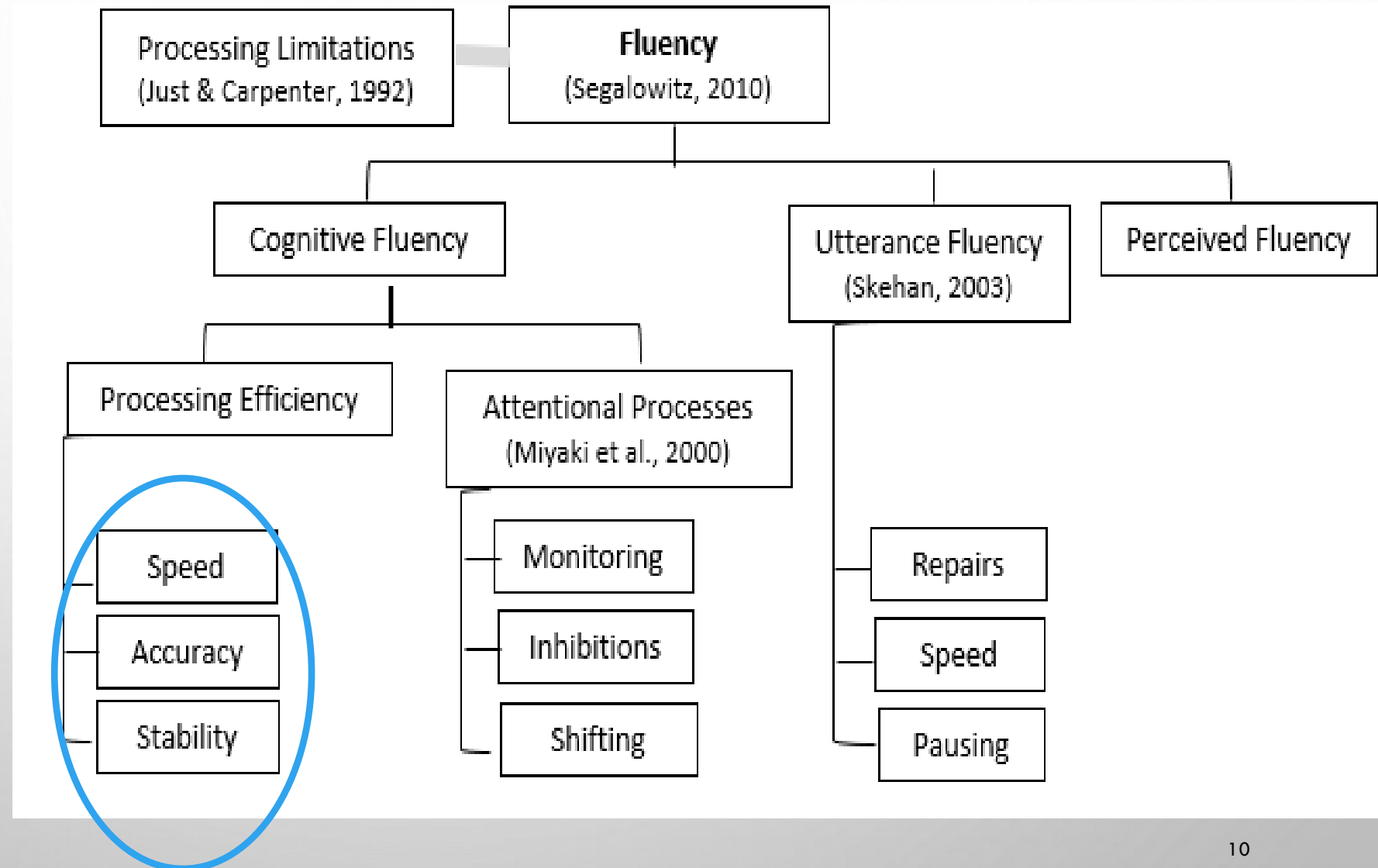


# ATTENTION TO FLUENCY

*“Comprehensive reading curricula recognize the importance of reading fluency. A slow reader, who reads one word at a time, simply cannot be a good reader. A commitment to reading-fluency practice— at word, phrase, and passage levels—is the hallmark of curricula that reflect not only the nature of good reading but also respond to the needs of developing readers”* (Stoller et al., p. 6).

# MODEL OF FLUENCY

**Fluency in all the skills requires efficient processing of low-level processes, which are unconscious, unintentional, and involuntary**  
...(Grabe, 2010).



(Olkkonen, 2017, cited in Olkkonen & Mutta, 2020, p.35)

# PROCESSING EFFICIENCY

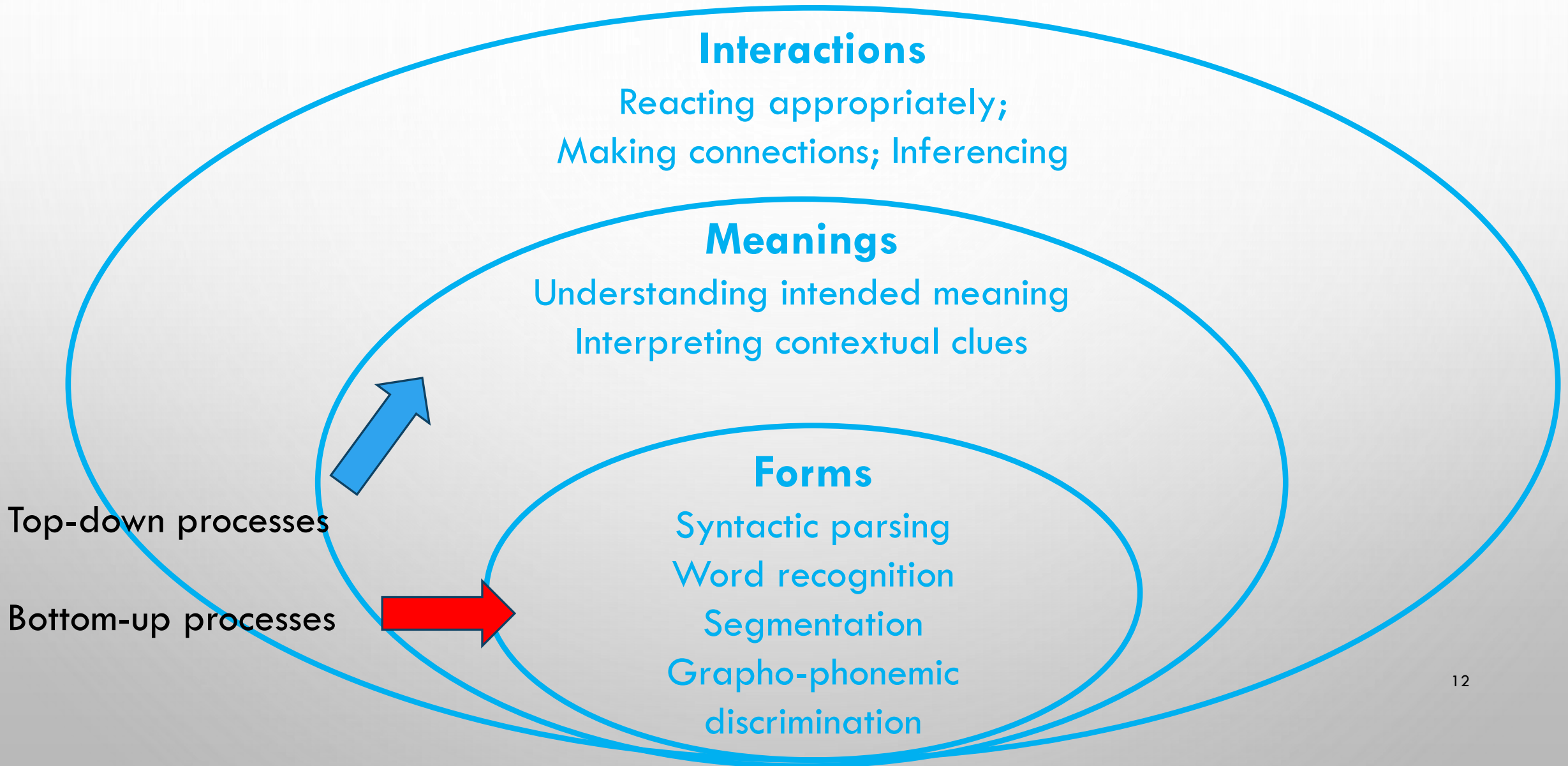
Speed

Accuracy (mental restructuring)

Stability (low variability in reaction times)

Automaticity

# TOP AND BOTTOM-UP PROCESSES OF MEANING-MAKING



# THE BALANCED LANGUAGE LEARNING CURRICULUM

(NATION AND WARING, 2020)

## Meaning-focused Input

- “texts” with fewer than 2% unknown vocab;
- mostly familiar grammar;
- focus on comprehension;
- incidental language learning;
- large quantities of reading/writing;
- support for unknown features

**Extensive Reading and Listening;**

Conversation

## Language-focused Learning

- deliberate intentional learning
- focus on language features or strategies

Course book exercises

Grammar practice

Intentional vocab work

## Meaning-focused Output

- output that requires little unfamiliar language and content;
- focus on communicating messages;
- incidental language learning;
- large quantities of speaking/listening;
- support for unknown features;

Presenting a talk

Conversation

Writing emails

## Fluency Development





# Fluency Development

Focus on  
meaning

easy, familiar  
material focused  
on meaning rather  
than language  
features

Use  
repetition

quantity of  
practice across  
all skills

Use familiar  
content

NO unknown  
vocabulary or  
grammatical features

Use time  
constraints

pressure to  
perform at a  
faster speed

Such as:

**10-minute writing; Easy extensive reading; Speed reading;  
Quick listening; Spontaneous speeches or conversations**

# READING FLUENCY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

1. RAPID WORD RECOGNITION
2. REREADING
3. SPEED READING
4. PACED READING
5. ORAL-PAIRED READING
6. ECHO READING
7. BUDDY READING
8. TEACHER READ ALOUD
9. RADIO READING
10. ONE-MINUTE READING

Linking classroom tasks to increase opportunities for fluency building  
See Nation (2014) in Muller et al. (Eds), *Exploring EFL Fluency in Asia* (pp. 11-25).

# RAPID WORD RECOGNITION

1. CHOOSE 15-25 TARGET WORDS, THAT IS, NEW WORDS THAT THE CLASS HAS COME ACROSS RECENTLY.
2. FOR EACH TARGET WORD, FIND A NUMBER OF DISTRACTORS (WORDS THAT ARE SIMILAR, BUT NOT IDENTICAL; IF A NOUN, INCLUDE A PLURAL; IF A VERB, INCLUDE AN INFLECTED FORM; INCLUDE WORDS THAT MAY BE AURALLY OR VISUALLY CONFUSED WITH THE TARGET WORD)
3. TYPE EACH TARGET WORD ON A SEPARATE LINE. NEXT TO IT TYPE THE DISTRACTORS AND THE TARGET WORD. IN EACH LINE, THE TARGET WORD SHOULD BE IN A DIFFERENT POSITION.
4. DISTRIBUTE A COPY TO EACH STUDENT AND ALLOW A VERY SHORT TIME FOR STUDENTS TO CIRCLE THE IDENTICAL TARGET WORD IN THE LIST OF DISTRACTORS. SUBTRACT ERRORS FROM TOTAL CORRECT.

Rapid Word Recognition

Instructions: When I say start, you have 30 seconds to circle the exact same word in the line of words as you see in the left-hand column.

leaf	leave	feel	tail	feet	leaf
air	ire	ail	air	raid	are
hot	hot	hat	hit	hut	hop
windy	winds	Wind	Wound	Windy	watery
Soil	Said	Soil	Seal	Soul	Sulk
Cloud	Clear	Claim	Cloud	Clads	Gloat
Blar	Bulge	Bulk	Blew	Blar	blow
Claims	Claims	Clouds	Crows	Claims	Clowns
Fresh	Frail	Fresh	French	Frogs	Fragal
Pretty	Petty	Potted	Pooled	Pegged	Pretty
Fast	Fast	Fuss	Ghost	Fade	Joust
Beach	Birch	Beach	Beach	Bench	Peach
Sand	Sound	Send	Sent	Sand	Same
Cot	Cut	Cat	Cute	Cot	Cod
Water	Waist	Waste	Water	Wetter	Wished
Eats	Eats	Eat	Tea	teas	Ate
Dog	God	Ogle	Dug	Dig	Dog
Wave	Wove	Wave	Weave	Waves	Weaves
Ocean	Motion	Ocean	Notion	icing	Occult
Fun	Fan	Fin	Tan	Fun	Tuna
Noise	nasty	Maize	News	Noise	Moist
Splash	Spleen	Trash	Splash	Spits	Lashes
Radio	Raided	Radio	Raider	Rocks	Ruder
Chair	Share	Choice	Cheat	Chairs	Chair
Fish	Fashion	Fresh	Fish	Luh	touch

Subtract your incorrect answers from your total number attempted.

(Jeffries & McRae, 2012)

# REREADING TYPE 1

- CHOOSE AN EASY TO READ STORY DIVIDED INTO 500-WORD SEGMENTS. IN EACH SESSION OF REPEATED READING, MOVE TO THE NEXT SECTION OF THE STORY (GORSUCH AND TAGUCHI, 2008).
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** START YOUR STOPWATCH (ON YOUR PHONE), AND READ THIS PASSAGE ONCE. STOP YOUR STOPWATCH AS SOON AS YOU ARE DONE, MARK THE TIME ON YOUR TIME SHEET. NOW READ THE STORY A SECOND AND THIRD TIME TAKING TURNS READING IT ALOUD WITH A PARTNER. FINALLY, READ THE TEXT BY YOURSELF A FOURTH AND A FIFTH TIME TIMING YOURSELF AND MARKING YOUR TIME EACH TIME ON YOUR TIME SHEET. WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED, ANSWER QUESTIONS (OR WRITE A SHORT REPORT) EITHER IN YOUR FIRST LANGUAGE OR THE TARGET LANGUAGE.

CHAPTER 1

“Oh, *merde*.”

Harriet looked in the mirror, her toothbrush hanging out of her mouth. It was the first of June and she’d forgotten to say, *rabbit, rabbit, rabbit*.

She said it now, toothpaste foaming on her lips, but had the sinking feeling it was too late. The magic wouldn’t work. And if there was any day when she needed magic, it was today.

“*Merde*.”

“It’ll bring you good luck, little one,” Auntie Myrna had assured her niece when she’d taught her the incantation. “It’ll protect you.”

That had been years ago, but the rabbit habit hadn’t wholly taken. Most months Harriet remembered, but of course this month, when she needed it most, she’d forgotten. Though she knew it was probably because she had so much else on her mind.

“Shit.”

Did she really believe repeating *rabbit, rabbit, rabbit* made a difference? No. Of course not. It was just a silly, silly, silly thing acting

Rereading Type 1

Text	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T1							
T4							
T5							



# SPEED READING

1. START A STOPWATCH AND READ A TEXT AS FAST AS YOU CAN.
2. NOTE THE TIME WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED READING.
3. WITHOUT LOOKING BACK AT THE TEXT, ANSWER QUESTIONS.
4. MOVE ON TO THE NEXT TEXT.
5. READ FOUR OR FIVE TEXTS IN THIS MANNER IN ONE SESSION.
6. TRY TO MAINTAIN 70% ACCURACY ON QUESTIONS. IF HIGHER, SPEED UP. IF LOWER, SLOW DOWN A LITTLE.
7. REPEAT THIS PRACTICE REGULARLY (10 MINUTES FOR 20 SESSIONS, BETWEEN 7-10 WEEKS). ALL THE TEXTS SHOULD BE OF THE SAME LENGTH.

(Chung & Nation, 2006; Mikulecky & Jeffries, 2009; Quinn, Nation, & Millett, 2007)

The brain is perhaps the most important organ in the human body. Because we have a well-developed brain, human beings have the ability to think, that is, to make new ideas. The brain allows us to think, to invent an idea, and to remember it. The brain plays an important role in our health because it regulates, or controls, many of our most basic body functions. While we are conscious of many of these functions, we are not aware of many of the more mundane but indispensable actions such as breathing or standing up.

The brain has three main parts. Each part does a different task, so each part is equally important. The cerebrum is where you think, decide, remember, and feel. This is the large part on top. Under the cerebrum is the cerebellum. This part controls your muscles, so this part dictates your body movements. The third part, the medulla, controls a very important group of nerves. It is through these nerves that messages pass from your brain to the rest of your body. The medulla does not help you think. It tells the muscles in your body to work. For example, the medulla keeps you breathing, it makes your heart continue to beat, and it tells your stomach to digest that food that you just ate.

The human brain is a very complicated organ. There are several theories about how the brain works, but no one actually knows for certain how the brain works. We know that there are three parts, but no one is sure how the three parts interact with each other.

STOP and Note total time for reading

Speed Reading

	<u>Txt1</u>	Txt2	Txt3	Txt4	<u>etc</u>
Time					
Q1					
Q2					
Q3					
Q4					
Q5					

1. The main idea of paragraph 2 is
  - a. each part of the brain has a di
  - b. the human brain is a very con
  - c. the cerebrum and cerebellum
2. The word allows in line 2 means
  - a. Lets
  - b. Finds
  - c. Gives
3. You see a new shirt and decide to t
 

originated in the

  - a. Cerebrum
  - b. Medulla
  - c. Cerebellum
4. Your heart beats thousands of times every day because of the
  - a. Cerebrum
  - b. Medulla c, Cerebellum
5. All messages from your brain to your body travel
  - a. Through the nerves
  - b. To the heart
  - c. Near the stomach



# ORAL PAIRED READING

**A Reading 15 seconds from the beginning.**

**B Listening/Time keeping. Says Stop**

**A Reading 30 seconds starting from the beginning.**

**B Listening/Time keeping. Stop**

**A Reading 45 seconds starting from the beginning.**

**B Listening/Time keeping. Stop**

**Continue with pattern for about 10 minutes.**

**A Listening/Time keeping. Stop**

**B Reading 15 seconds from where Student A last stopped.**

**A Listening/Time keeping. Stop**

**B Reading 30 seconds from where Student A last stopped.**

**A Listening/Time keeping. Stop**

**B Reading 45 seconds from where Student A last stopped.**

The diagram illustrates the oral paired reading activity using a sample text. The text is divided into three sections, each with a 15-second reading interval for Student A and a listening/stop interval for Student B. The intervals are marked with 'A' and 'B' and time durations (15 s, 30 s, 45 s).

**15 s** (A): "He worked for Clarence... times he made the other clerks really mad. Some of them thought he was cruel—" "I see..." And rather obviously, Susanna thought, Laurie was one of them. She decided to pursue that sideways... "I've seen pictures of Clarence Sutherland. He certainly was a handsome man." Laurie's face had seemed to sag, her buoyancy flattened out.

**30 s** (A): Their lunch was served. Susanna chatted about her job at the Justice Department, about her background and the events that led her to Washington and to her present position. Finally, almost abruptly, she decided it was time... "Laurie, were you in love with Clarence Sutherland?" It was as though she had kicked her. Laurie's face turned to stone, she looked abstractedly around the crowded restaurant.

**45 s** (A): "Shouldn't I have asked?" "You can ask anything you wish. You're investigating a murder and I understand I'm a suspect. I also know you know I haven't an alibi. I was caught in the traffic at what I'm told was the approximate time of the murder. I was by myself."

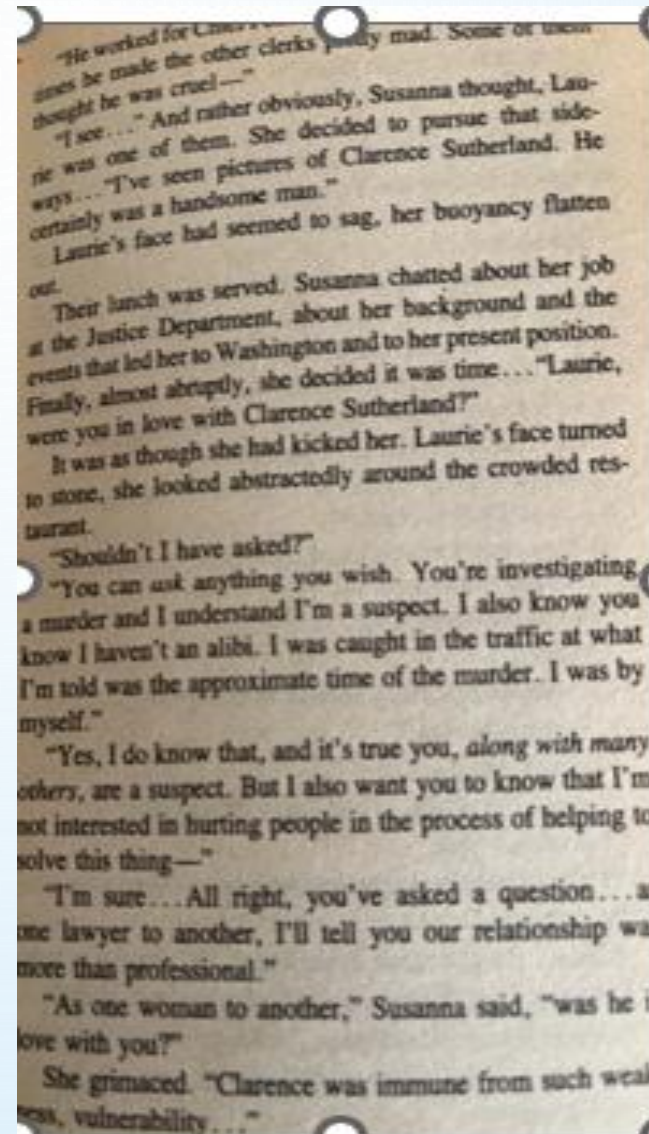
**15 s** (B): "Yes, I do know that, and it's true you, along with many others, are a suspect. But I also want you to know that I'm not interested in hurting people in the process of helping to solve this thing—"

**30 s** (A): "I'm sure... All right, you've asked a question... as one lawyer to another, I'll tell you our relationship was more than professional."

**45 s** (A): "As one woman to another," Susanna said, "was he in love with you?" She grimaced. "Clarence was immune from such weakness, vulnerability..."

## ONE-MINUTE READING

Ask students to reread a text for exactly one minute, once a week. Stop students after 60 seconds and ask them to mark the last word read and count how many words they read. Have students keep a record of their weekly one-minute readings to chart their improvement over time (Iwano 2004).



1 minute 90 7/16

1 minute 100 7/23

1 minute 105 7/30

## TEACHER READ ALOUD

- Read a text aloud to students at a regular pace, while students read along silently. The same can be accomplished with the CDs that now accompany some textbooks. Students can also echo read, sentence by sentence, as the teacher reads aloud.



# READING FLUENCY

**I read more fast  
because I changed my  
reading habits in this  
course.**

**I will not translate it to my first  
language in my mind as I did  
before, which shortens my  
reading time.**

**My reading in  
English has  
changed. I read so  
much faster and  
my understanding  
is better.**



# LISTENING FLUENCY

- Bottom up fluency is “the ability to decode speech automatically, so that conscious attention can be freed up to process ideas (Rost, 2014, p. 285
- Research on L2 listening proficiency suggests that while strategy training may be beneficial in some contexts, (Graham & Macaro, 2008; Mendelsohn, 1995; Vandergrift, & Tafaghodtari, 2010) **students need many more opportunities to listen to easily-comprehended oral texts on a variety of topics and with different voices and accents for meaningful input and fluency development (Nation & Waring, 2020; Renandya & Farrell, 2012; Renandya & Farrell, 2011; Skehan, 2009; Wang, 2010).**





# LISTENING FLUENCY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

1. **Quick Listening** (Millett, 2018).
2. **Word Grab** (Rost, 2014)
3. **Repeated listening** (Nation, 2014)
4. **3-2-1 Listening** (Rost, 2014)
5. **Reading while listening** (Chang, 2017)
6. **Narrow listening** (Nation & Newton, 2009; Chang, 2017).

## QUICK LISTENING

Quicklistens are regular, quick, focused listening exercises. They are based on ongoing audio stories utilizing the principles of graded readers: high student interest, repeated exposure to high-frequency vocabulary and grammar, and the principles of fluency development. 5-6 minutes a day is adequate. For more information about Quicklistens, read the *Introduction to Quicklistens* (MILLETT, 2018, 2014, 2018)

### QUICK LISTEN OCEANS

REVIEW PROMPTS (1 MINUTE)

RESPOND TO PROMPTS

WHILE LISTENING:

LISTEN



### Oceans

1. Almost \_\_\_\_\_% of Earth is covered by oceans.
2. Ocean plants make about \_\_\_\_\_% of the world's oxygen.
3. Many food chains at the coast start with seaweed that grows on \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Small animals that eat seaweed have \_\_\_\_\_ that protect them.
5. Crabs and birds eat small shellfish. T or F
6. Most coral reefs grow \_\_\_\_\_ coasts in tropical places...
7. Corals are small, soft animals that have a \_\_\_\_\_ that's as hard as rock.
8. After they die, their skeletons become a \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Anemones have \_\_\_\_\_ that sting animals...
10. Anemones don't hurt clownfish, so clownfish don't live near anemones. T or F
11. Clownfish \_\_\_\_\_ the anemones because they \_\_\_\_\_ tiny pieces of \_\_\_\_\_.

# WORD GRAB

This is an activity that promotes bottom-up listening fluency. The text difficulty needs to match the students level of proficiency. The students listen to a recorded story 2-3 minutes. Then, using cards with words or phrases, they identify which words or phrases they heard in the story. They can compare their choices with others. Then confirm by listening to



## Ecosystems

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. LISTEN
2. GRAB
3. COMPARE
4. LISTEN AGAIN.



Grassland animals	Clear grassland	Hunt animals
Gas	Global warming	Climate change
Move away	Sea creatures	Land animals
Gulf of Honduras	Safe	Challenge
Protect	Types	Atmosphere
Carbon monoxide	Corals die quickly	Volunteers
Herds	Oil derrick	Trees for homes
Starve	Rainforest	Medical treatment
Ourselves	Animal species	Protect
Giant	Factories	Scientists

## REPEATED LISTENING

This activity makes use of repetition and manipulating the speed of the repetitions. It quickly develops fluency in comprehending vocabulary or short phrases, such as numbers, days of the week, months of the year, greetings, names of food (Nation, 2014).

Example with numbers:

- Get someone to record the numbers from one to ten in the foreign language in a random order, for example, 6, 3, 8, 1, 7, 10, 2, 9, 4, 5, 3, 10, 3, 6.
- Each number should occur several times in a different place in the order so that you have plenty of opportunity to hear the same number again and again without knowing that it is coming.
- Write the numbers in order from 1 to 10 on a piece of paper, and as you listen to the recording point to the number that you hear **OR write the numbers you hear**.
- When you can do it easily at a slow speed, increase the speed and do it again.
- Keep doing this until you can easily recognize the numbers in their spoken form.

### Numbers Worksheet

Audio 1-10



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Audio 11-20

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Audio Tens

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Audio Hundreds

100 200 300 400 500 600 700  
800 900 1000

Audio Random



45 50 75 15 60 13 30  
50 16

## 3-2-1 LISTENING

- Audio extract is manipulated and presented in three versions
  - Slowed down 10-20%
  - Normal speed
  - Speeded up 10-20%
- Students listen without a transcript.
- Student discuss meaning
- Students consider how the speed changes effected their perceptions

(Rost, 2014)



## READING WHILE LISTENING (RWL)

Students can simply listen more than once to the same audio file ( with or without a written text or subtitles) to increase comprehension, build fluency, and promote incidental learning of vocabulary (BROWN, WARING, AND DONKAEWBUA, 2008; CHANG & MILLETT, 2016; CHANG & READ, 2008; NATION, 2014).

- Written text should be between 200 and 300 words.
- Review the written text to make sure it is completely understandable.



50% slower *BBC 6-minute English Ecotourism: good or bad?*: [Read While Listening](#)

- Listen while looking at the written text on a slow speed.
- Over several days, increase the speed of the playback until normal speed.



100% *BBC 6-minute English Ecotourism: good or bad?*: : [Read While Listening](#)

## NARROW LISTENING (CHANG, 2017; KRASHEN, 1996; RENANDYA, 2011).

Narrow listening means that all the “texts” are closely related in content so that vocabulary, phrase structures, collocations, and concepts are repeated. These can be related directly to content (not language) used in class, such as food, travel, music, sports, celebrations, holidays, or leisure activities of the target culture.

- Ask 5 or 6 proficient speakers to record themselves talking about each topic using conversational language for 1 or 2 minutes.
- Organize these collections of short recordings so that students can access them easily and independently (on a LMS).
- Tell students to focus on the meaning, not the form.
- Another set of recordings could be in use during the same time period on alternate days (variation could be introduced by changing tempo over time).

## LISTENING FLUENCY

**I can catch much more words than before. I like listening to TED Talks and CNN Student News.**

**Yes! I can listen to people who speak very fast!**

**At least, I can listen the whole sentence, not just few words, and I understand what they talk generally.**

# IMPLEMENTING FLUENCY ACTIVITY

**BALANCED CURRICULUM** (NATION AND WARING, 2020)

# minutes of class/week  $\div$  4  $=$  # minutes for fluency work

distributed in relatively short amounts of time (10-15 min.)

## 25% FLUENCY ACTIVITY IN A READING COURSE

<b>At the beginning of the course</b>	<b>Later in the course</b>
ER Training and Reading in class	Fluency Activity D ER out of class
ER Training and Reading in class	Fluency Activity A ER out of class
Fluency Activity A ER out of class	Fluency Activity B ER Out of Class
Fluency Activity B ER out of class	Fluency Activity C ER Out of Class
Fluency Activity C ER out of class	Fluency Activity D ER Discussion Day in class



## INSTRUCTOR ROLE

- Trainer
- Motivator and encourager
- Model for students
- Record keeper (fluency journal)
- Action Researcher

**How will you promote fluency building to support ER (and EL) in your classroom next week, next semester?**

**THANK YOU FOR LISTENING.**

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PRACTICING THESE ACTIVITIES, JOIN MY  
WORKSHOP ON THURSDAY.**