

# Localisation in Learning Systems

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**British Council**



**MEXICO CITY**

21-23 March, 2019

#NewDirectionsLatam

# Outline

- **What is Localisation?**
- **Some Background Thinking**
- **Localisation in Practice**
- **Localisation & Vocabulary**
- **Conclusions**

# WHAT IS LOCALISATION?



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# Definition

**“... for a test to be used appropriately in a specific social or educational context, it must be shown to *fit* with the needs of that context.”**

O’Sullivan (in press)



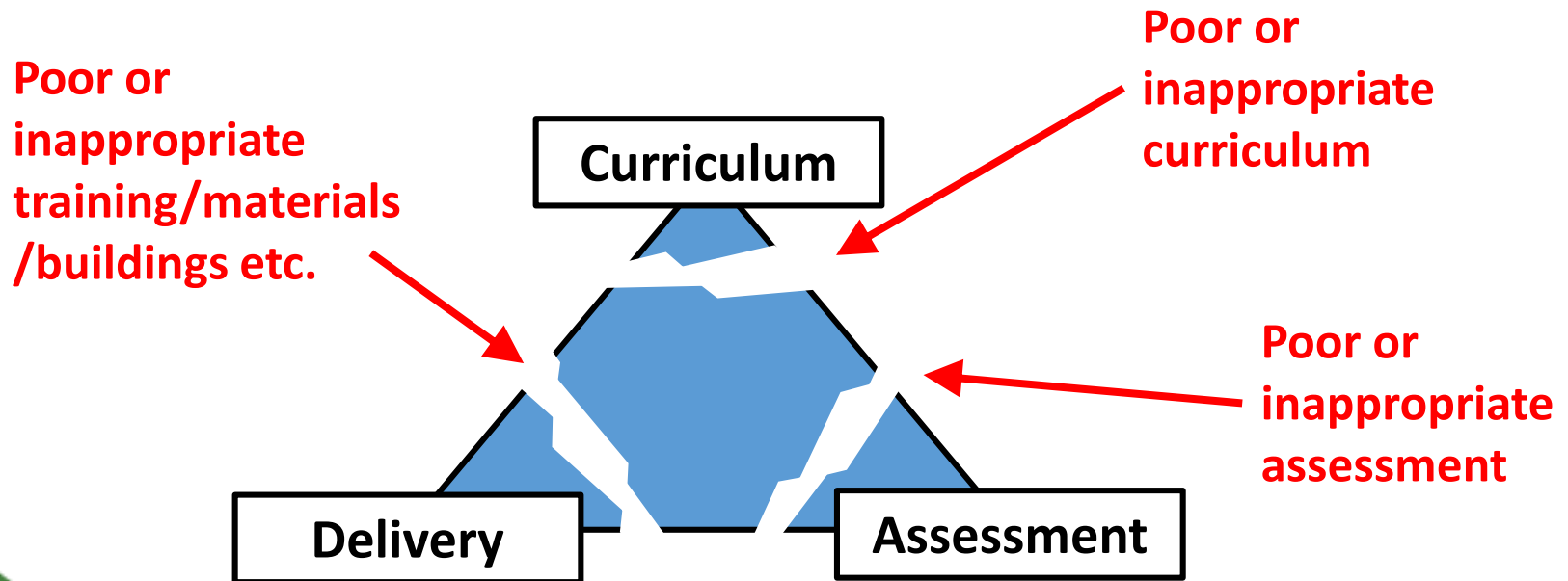
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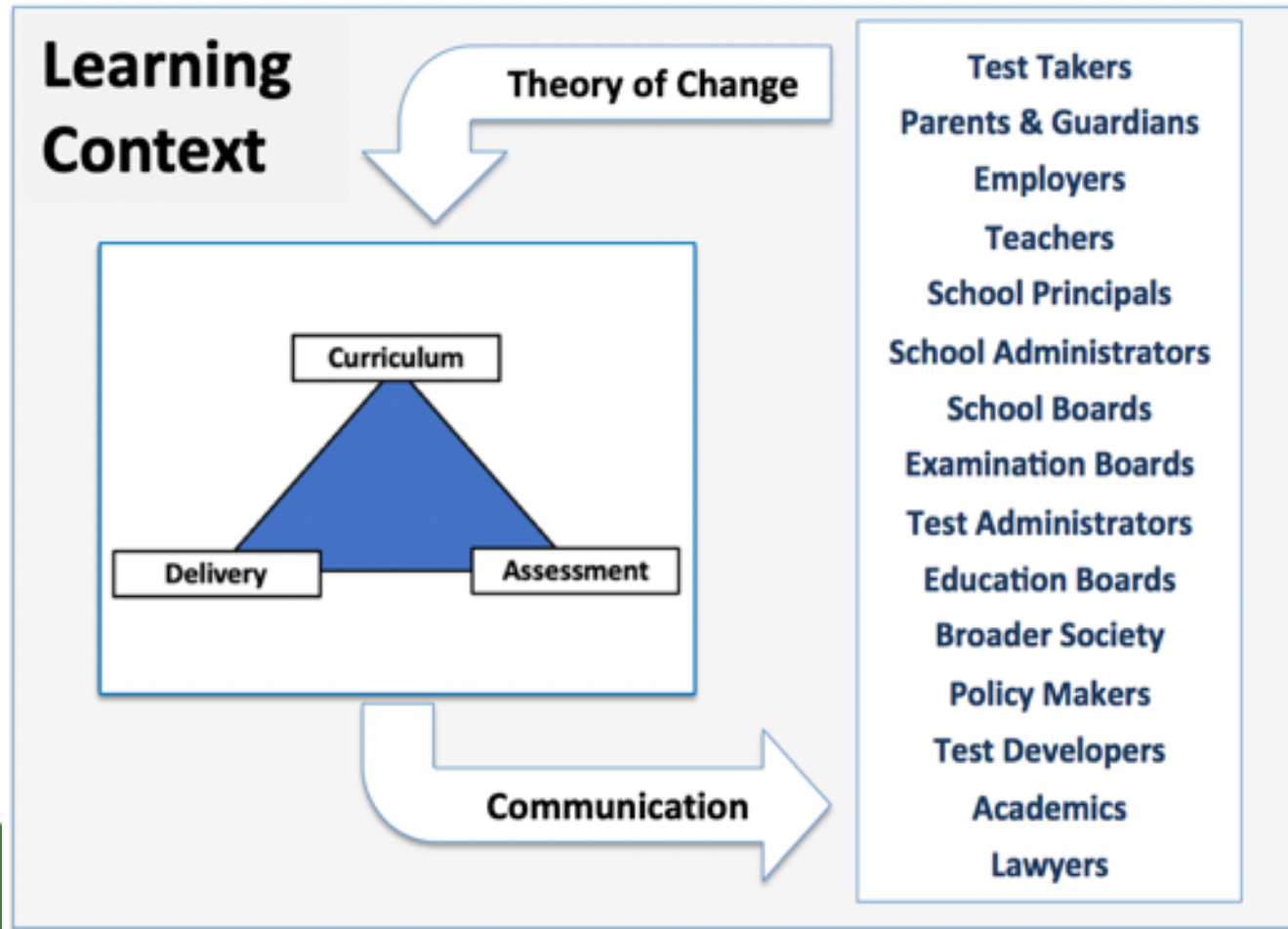
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# SOME BACKGROUND THINKING

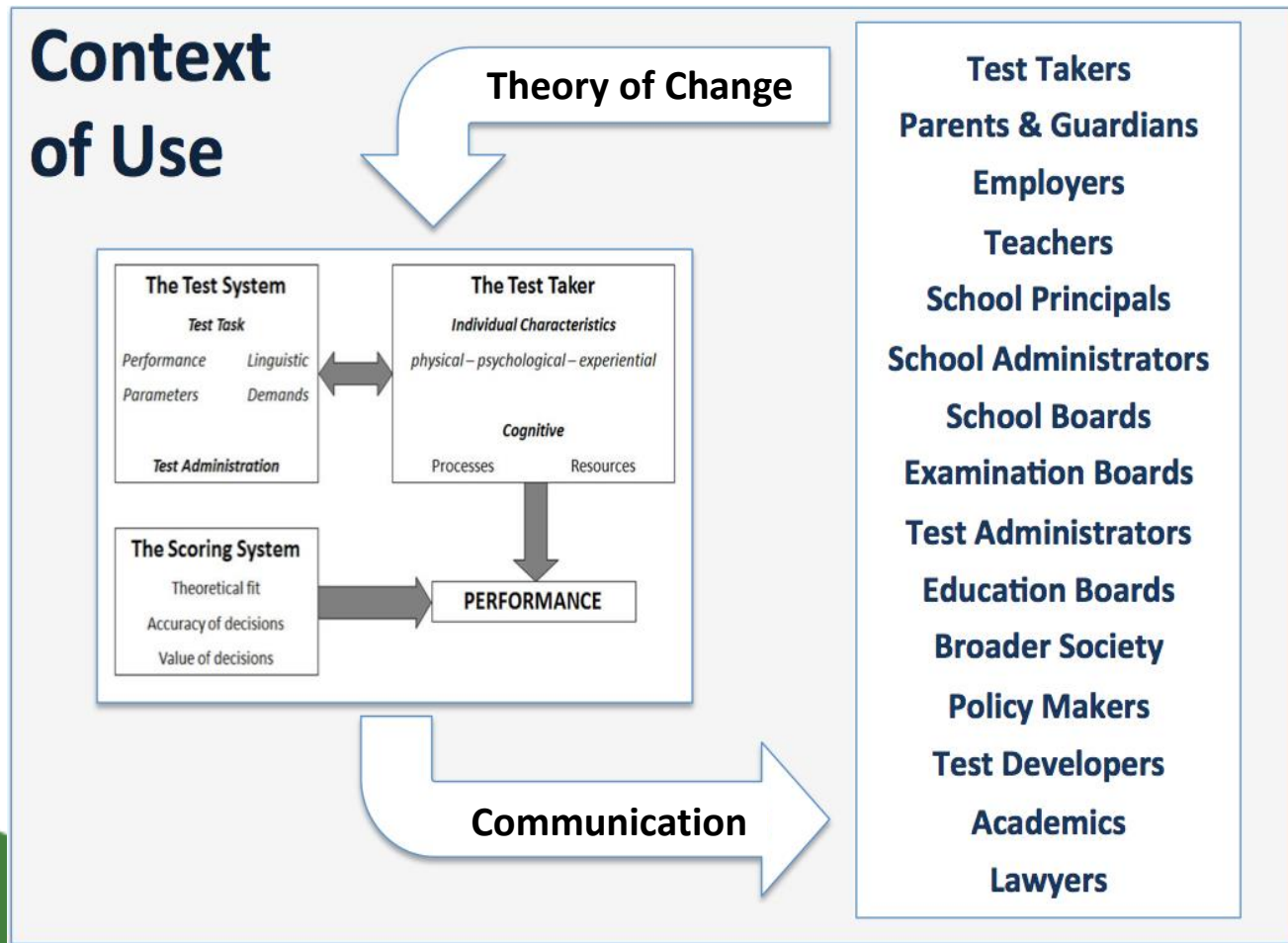
# A Comprehensive Learning System



# A Socio-Cognitive Approach



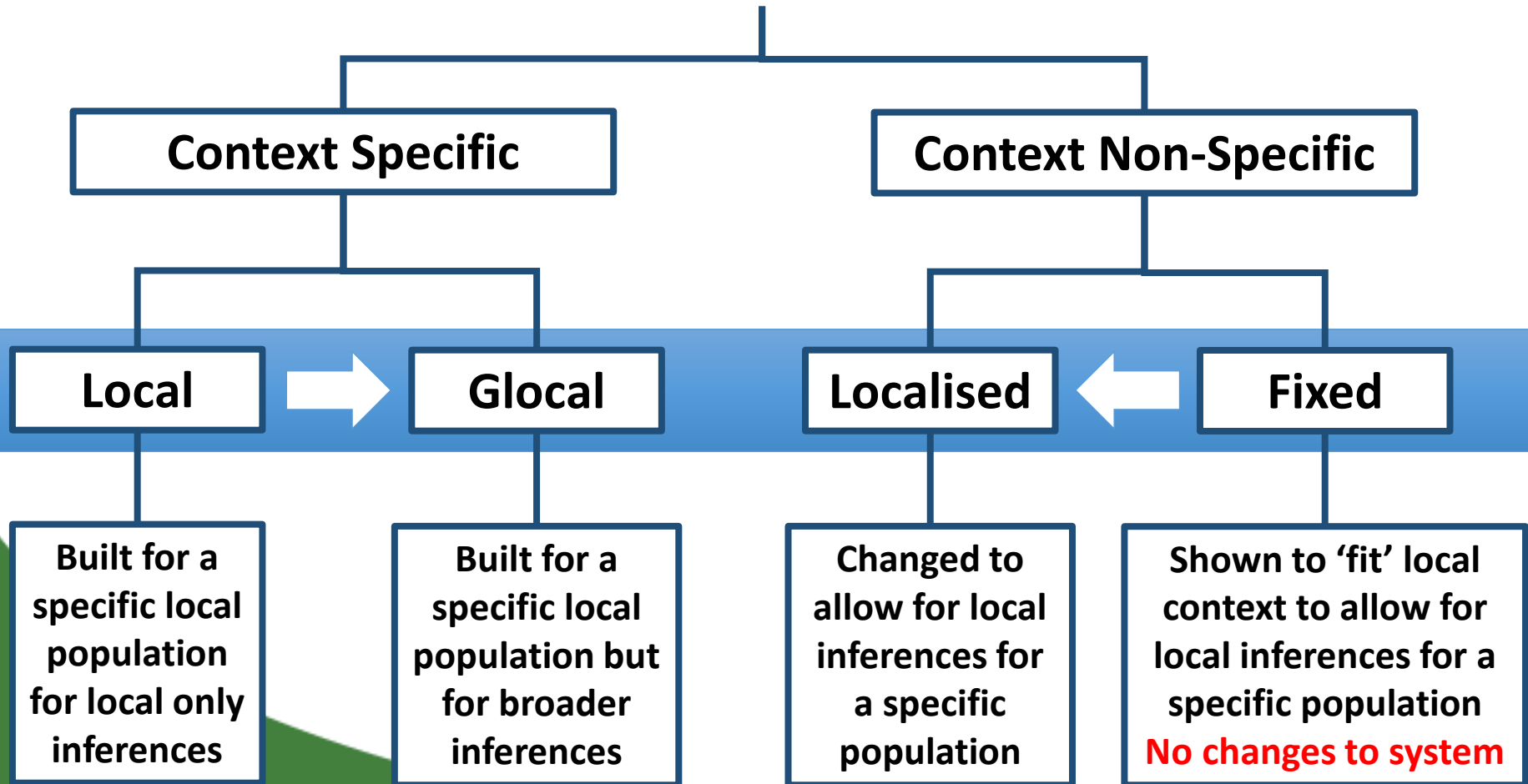
# A Socio-Cognitive Approach





# LOCALISATION IN PRACTICE

# A Socio-Cognitive Approach



# Inside the Socio-Cognitive Approach

## The Test

Test Taker Model

Language Use Model

Administration Model

Scoring Model



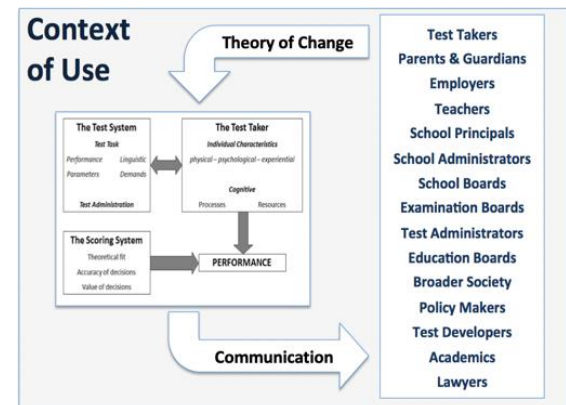
## The Local Context of Use

Language

Topics/Themes

Images

Format



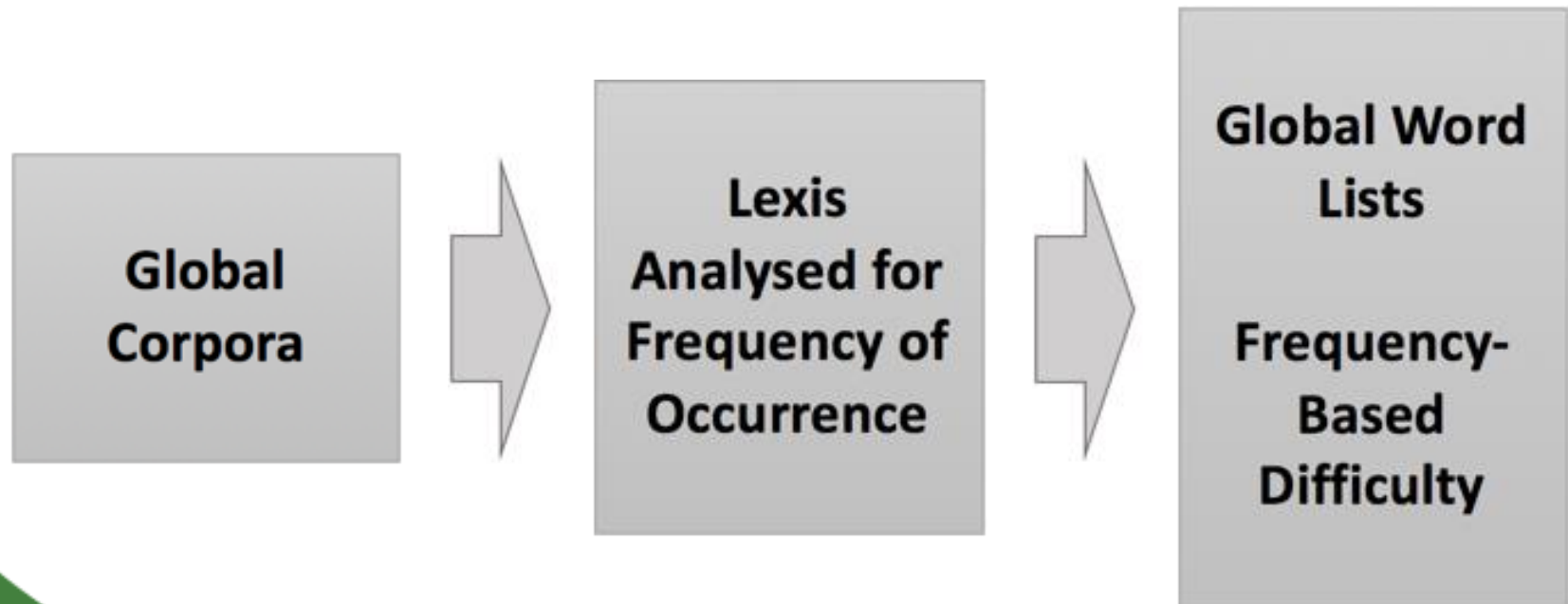
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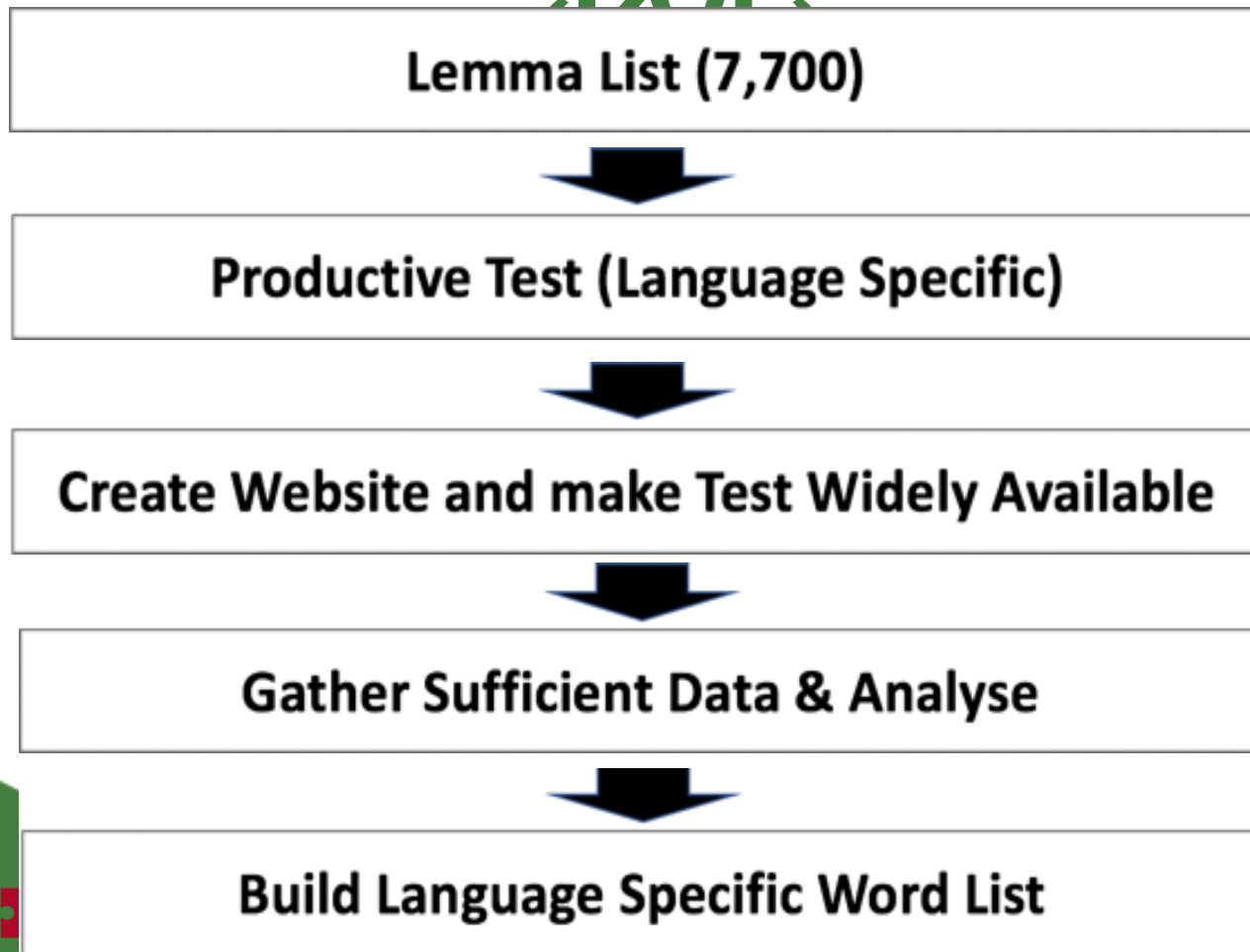
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# LOCALISATION & VOCABULARY

# A Socio-Cognitive Approach



# Knowledge of Vocabulary List



# Project Plan

- **Year 1:** Conceptualization and development of the target word list
- **Year 2:** Development of the test + more target list development
- **Year 3:** Pilot of data gathering, and revision of tests.  
**Main data gathering**
- **Year 4:** Analysis and writeup of project

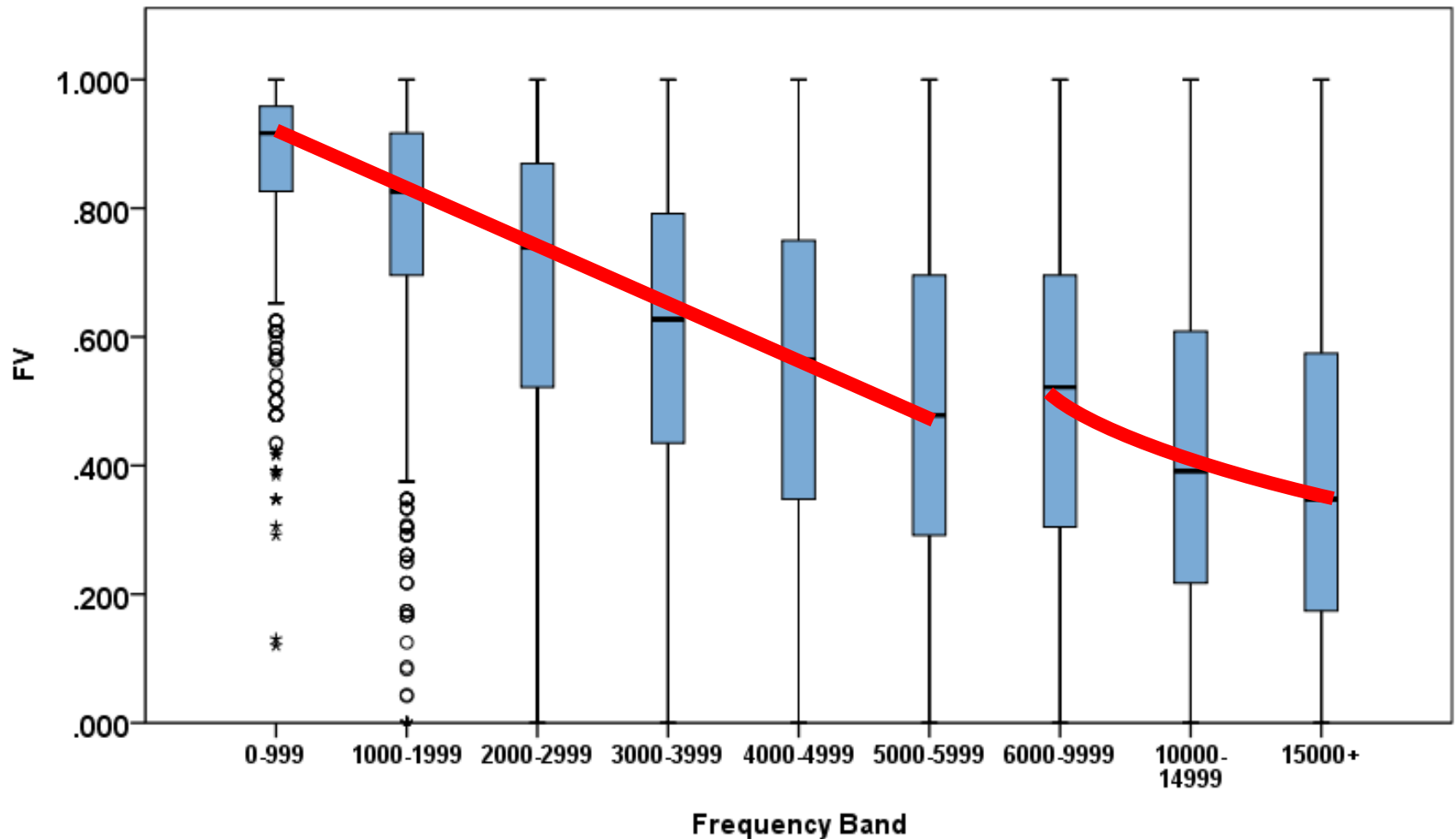
# Current Status

- Test launched October 4, 2018
- 3 languages (Spanish, German, Chinese)
- Promoted as the **Vocabulary Challenge**

**Website:** [www.vocabularychallenge.org](http://www.vocabularychallenge.org)



# Pilot Finding



# Respondents

- Spanish: 10,220
- German: 6,052
- Chinese: 9,251
- We have 15-50 responses per item depending on L1
- Looking for 150+ responses per item for IRT

# Preliminary Feedback - Overview

**Some lemmas are known to a similar extent**

**Others show large differences in knowledge**

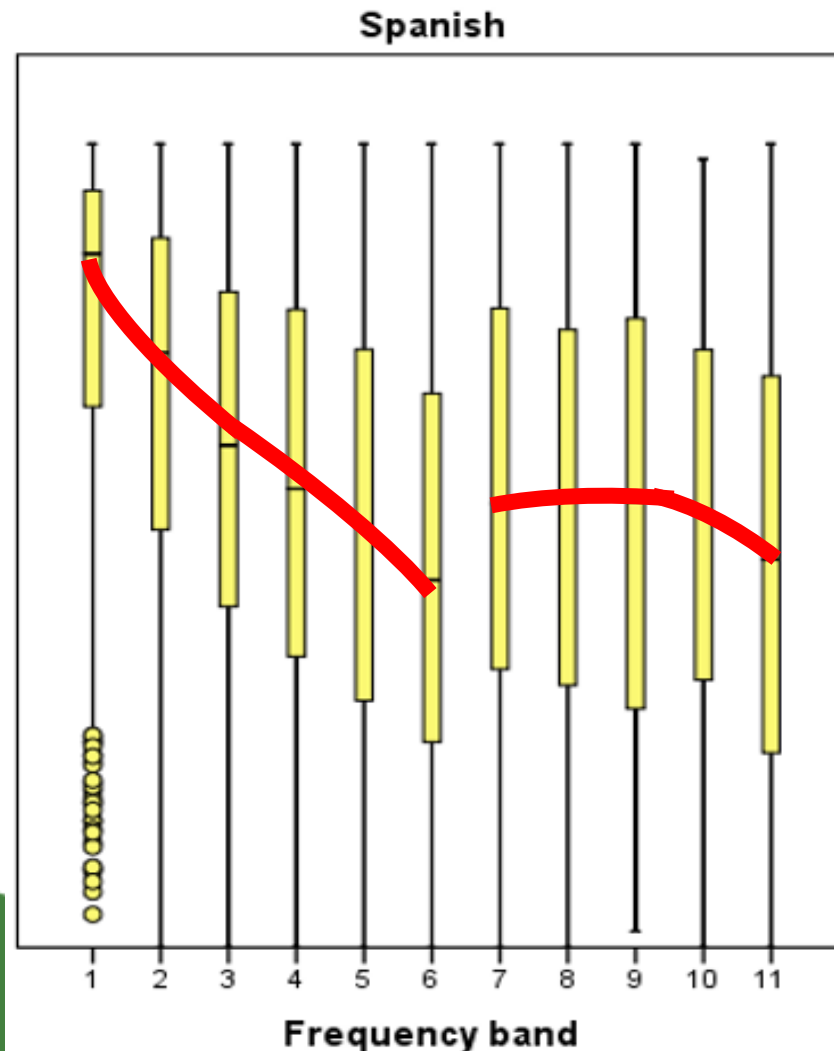


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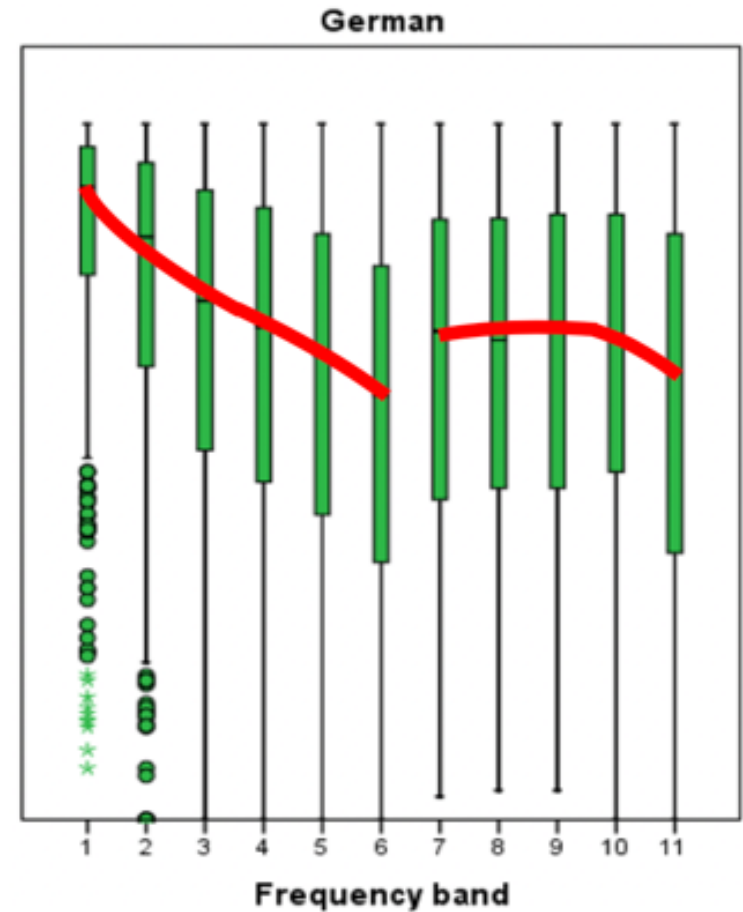
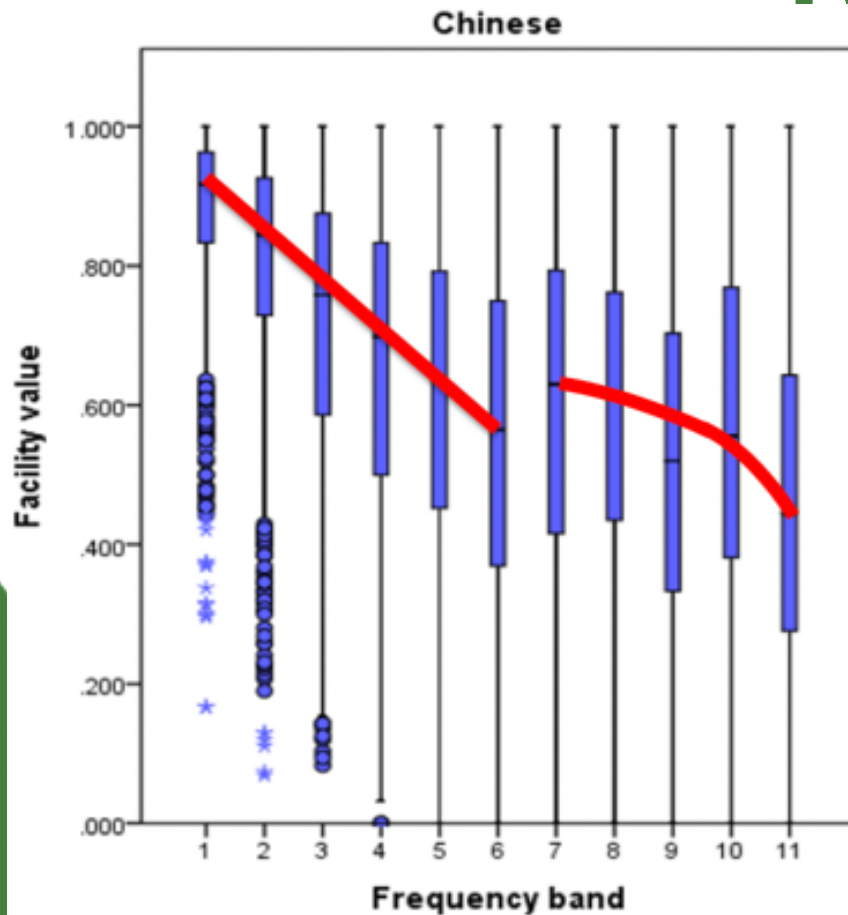
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# Preliminary Feedback – Spanish

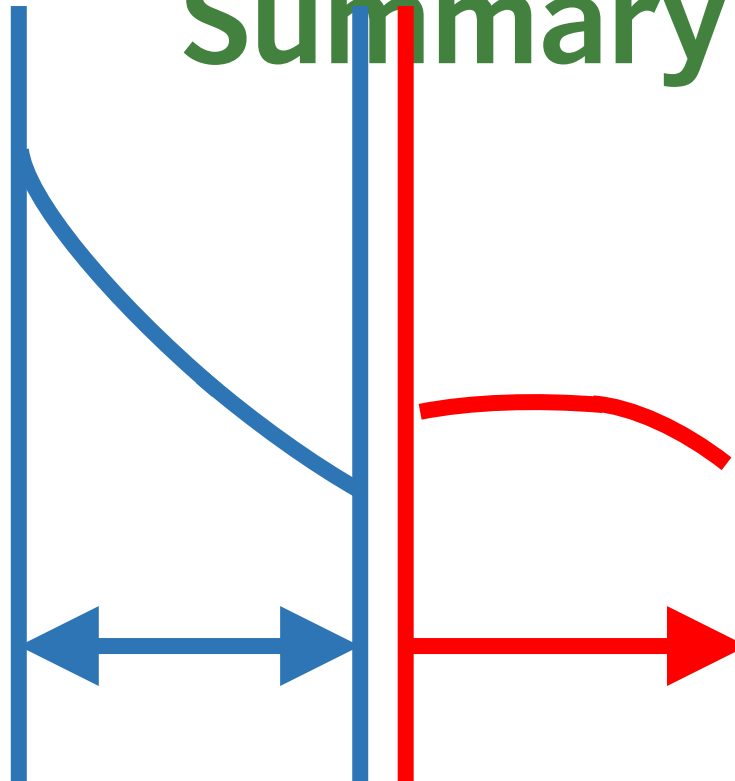


# Preliminary Feedback – Other



# Preliminary Feedback – Summary

Systematic  
pattern  
suggests that  
frequency is a  
fair predictor  
of difficulty



Unsystematic  
pattern suggests  
that frequency is  
**NOT** a fair predictor  
of difficulty from  
here



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# Implications

**The similarity in pattern for the more frequent lemmas indicate that frequency may predict difficulty regardless of language background up to the low B1 level**

**After that, there appears to be a difference both in pattern and in L1 response**

**This suggests a clear need for localised vocabulary lists**

# CONCLUSIONS



# Broader Implications

**“No convincing validation argument can be postulated for a language test that claims to be test taker agnostic. The argument proposed here means that for language and other tests, the argument that one-size-fits-all is not supportable.”**

O’Sullivan (in Press)

**Questions the local use of global tests of General Proficiency**

**Questions the local use of standardised norm-referenced tests**



Thank  
You

# Background Information

## Bienvenido al Vocabulary Challenge.

Esta versión está diseñada para hablantes nativos de español.

Queremos conocer un poco más sobre ti. Toda la información que ingreses será anónima y se utilizará únicamente con fines de investigación.

1. ¿Cuál es tu edad en años?

☐ 10 o menos ☐ 11-16 ☐ 17-23 ☐ 24 o más

2. ¿Durante cuántos años has estudiado inglés?

☐ 3 o menos ☐ 4-6 ☐ 7-9 ☐ 10 o más

3. ¿Cuántas horas a la semana usas el inglés?

(Esto puede incluir leer, hablar, ver televisión o usar las redes sociales, Internet o videojuegos.)

☐ Nunca ☐ 1-2 ☐ 3-4 ☐ 5 o más

4. Algunas palabras se escriben de manera diferente en inglés americano o inglés británico. Mira los ejemplos a continuación para saber qué ortografía usas más cómodamente.

### Inglés americano

Agonize

Liter

Savor

Analog

### Inglés británico

Agonise

Litre

Savour

Analogue

¿Te gustaría tomar el Vocabulary Challenge en inglés americano o inglés británico?

☐ Inglés americano ☐ Inglés británico

Siguiente

# Item Format

Stage 1: Question 1/10

**intérprete:** El principal intérprete de la obra de teatro es muy famoso.

a \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

SIGUIENTE



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# Feedback

Felicidades, ahora has alcanzado 20 palabras. Tú puntuación actual es 4/20! ¿Quieres probar algunas palabras más y aumentar tu puntaje? ¡También puedes aprender algunas palabras nuevas! ¿Continúas?

Aquí están tus puntajes de la etapa 2:

- 1: ✓ page
- 2: ✓ flower
- 3: ✗ esssssssss (explanation)
- 4: ✗ p (possess)
- 5: ✗ papa (pastor)
- 6: ✓ conscience
- 7: ✓ outline
- 8: ✗ d (delighted)
- 9: ✗ significan (synonymous)
- 10: ✗ fxxxxxxx (featured)

CONTINUAR

TERMINAR

# Preliminary Feedback -

Observation	Lemma	Spanish	German	Chinese
Some lemmas are known to a similar extent by the 3 L1 groups	<b>hostage</b>	0.57	0.67	0.58
Other lemmas show large differences in knowledge				
Cognates behave differently: e.g. German = rage. Spanish = rabia	<b>rage</b>	.52	.88	.70
Cognates: e.g. German = dynamisch: Spanish = dinámica	<b>dynamic</b>	0.46	0.93	0.38