



Ertel, C., Loff, A. & Engel de Abreu, P. • Language and Cognitive Development Group • University of Luxembourg

1 BACKGROUND & AIM

Oral language skills are significant predictors of reading in monolingual majority-culture children. Little is known about early predictors of reading in children from immigrant families who learn to read and write in a foreign language.

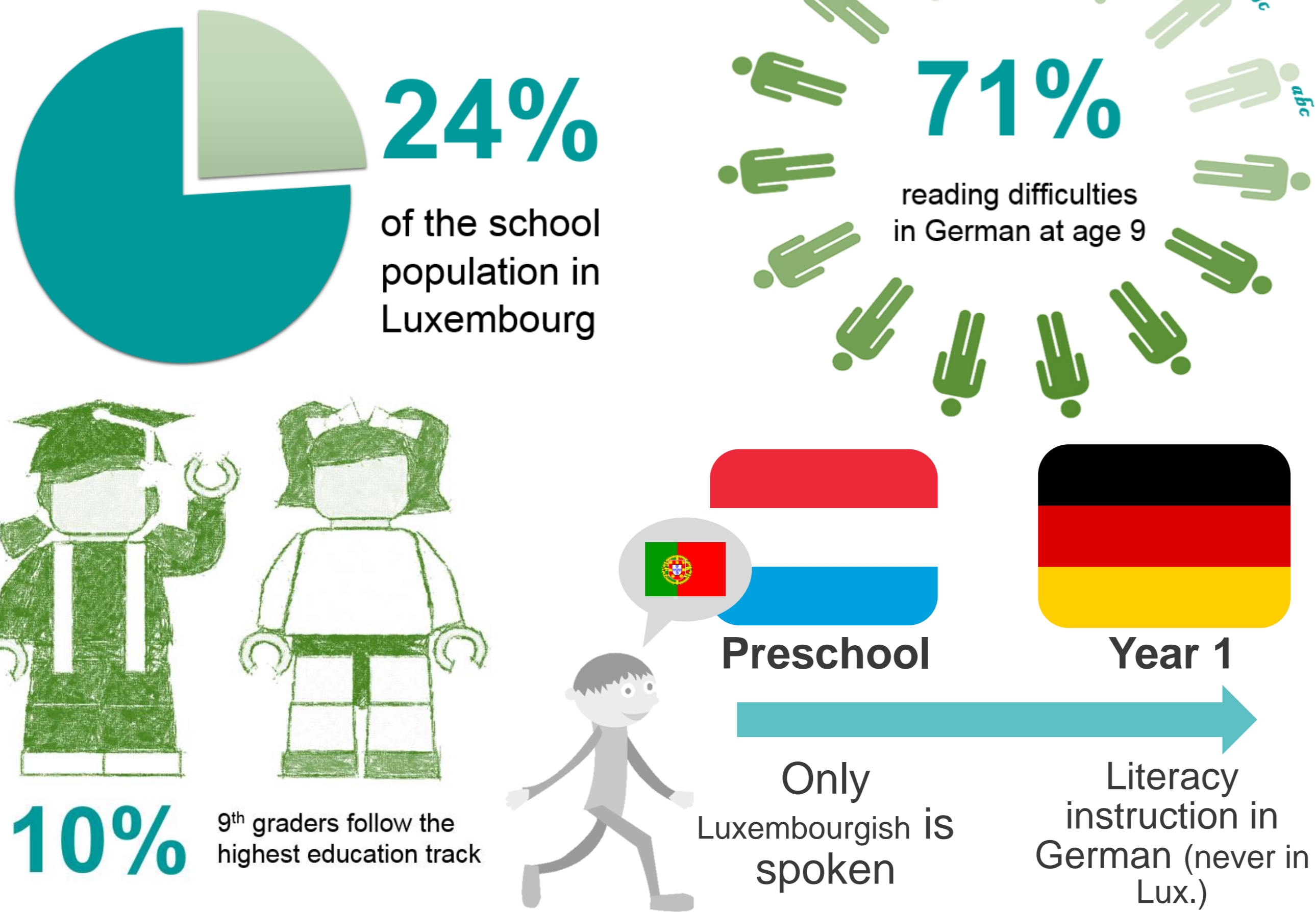
This study explores longitudinally how first language skills relate to reading in a foreign language in a population of Portuguese-speaking language-minority children growing up in Luxembourg.

WHAT ARE EARLY PREDICTORS OF READING FOR CHILDREN FROM IMMIGRANT FAMILIES WHO LEARN TO READ AND WRITE IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

2 STUDY CONTEXT

Luxembourg: trilingual educational system (Lux., German & French). Luxembourgish is a Germanic language.

Portuguese language-minority children:



3 METHOD: PARTICIPANTS

Typically developing Portuguese-speaking children
completed Kindergarten in public Lux. schools
only Portuguese is spoken at home

Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3
Preschool (K2)	Year 1 (Y1)	Year 2 (Y2)
Mean age 5.99	Mean age 6.91	Mean age 7.82
N = 80	N = 68	N = 66



4 METHOD: MEASURES

Data on 7 out of 15 tests is presented.

DOMAIN	MEASURES	K2	Y1	Y2
Oral language in L1, L2, and L3	Receptive vocabulary L1 ¹	X	X	X
	Nonword repetition L1 ²	X	X	X
	Narrative L1 ³	X	X	X
	Receptive vocabulary L2 ⁴	X	X	X
	Expressive vocabulary L3 ⁵		X	X
Reading in L3	Letter sound L3 ⁵		X	X
	Single word reading L3 ⁵		X	X
	Reading comprehension L3 ⁶			X

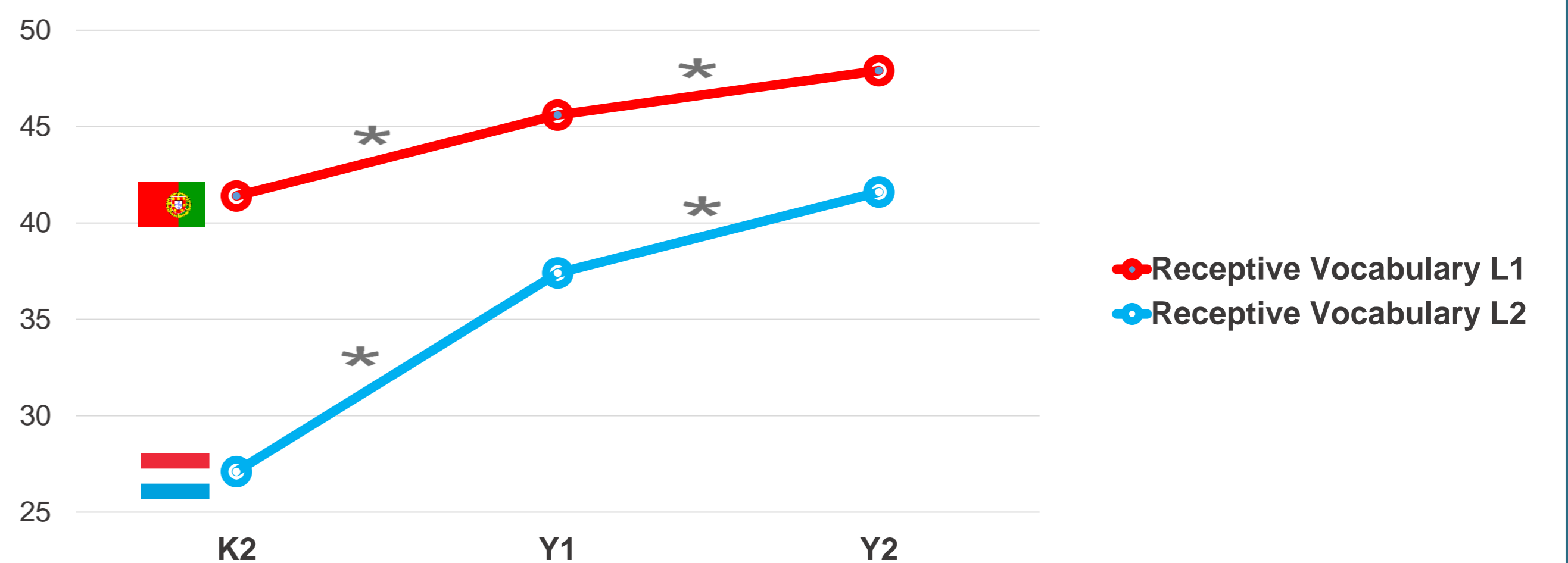
¹ PPVT in Portuguese; ² Brazilian Pseudo-Word Repetition; ³ ERRNI; ⁴ PPVT in Luxembourgish; ⁵ tests specifically developed for this Study based on curriculum in Y1; ⁶ ELFE (Ein Leseverständnistest für Erst- bis Sechstklässler)

5 RESULTS

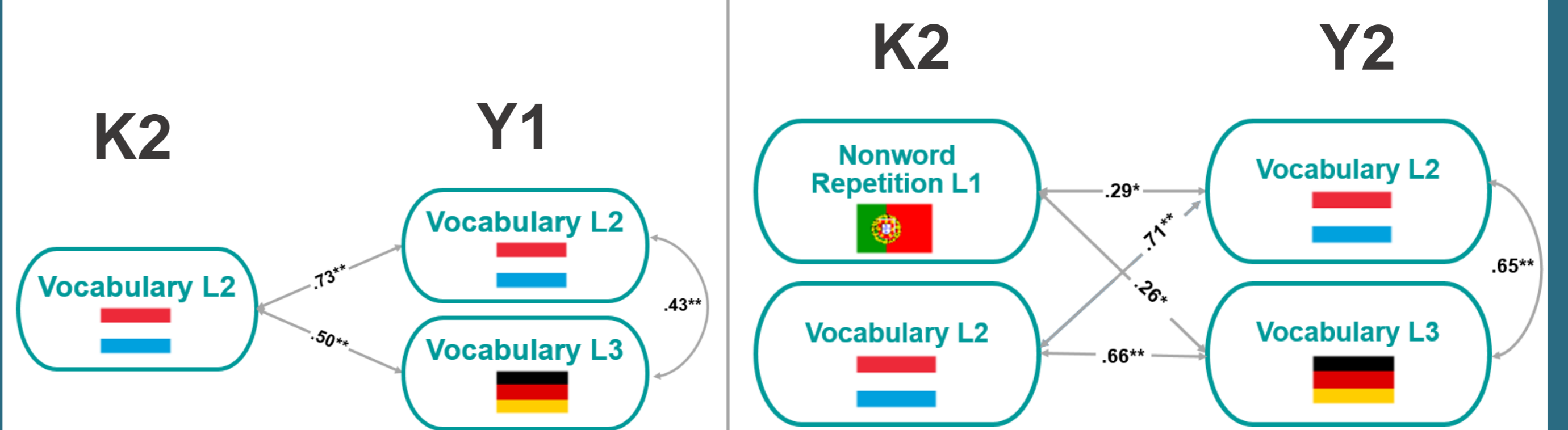
Means and standard deviations (N=66)

Measures	K2	Y1	Y2
Age (in years)	5.9 (.3)	6.9 (.3)	7.8 (.3)
SES	34.7 (11.1)		
Receptive vocabulary L1	41.4 (7.2)	45.6 (6.0)	47.9 (4.7)
Nonword repetition L1	33.7 (4.0)	32.8 (5.5)	33.8 (4.4)
Narrative L1	7.8 (1.5)	7.4 (1.5)	7.8 (1.2)
Receptive vocabulary L2	27.1 (8.6)	37.4 (5.2)	41.6 (4.7)
Expressive vocabulary L3		21.9 (8.2)	31.2 (7.6)
Letter sound L3		16.2 (3.9)	19.4 (0.9)
Single word reading L3		7.9 (5.7)	22.2 (8.1)
Reading comprehension L3			2.6 (2.3)

Vocabulary development in Portuguese and in Luxembourgish (N=66)

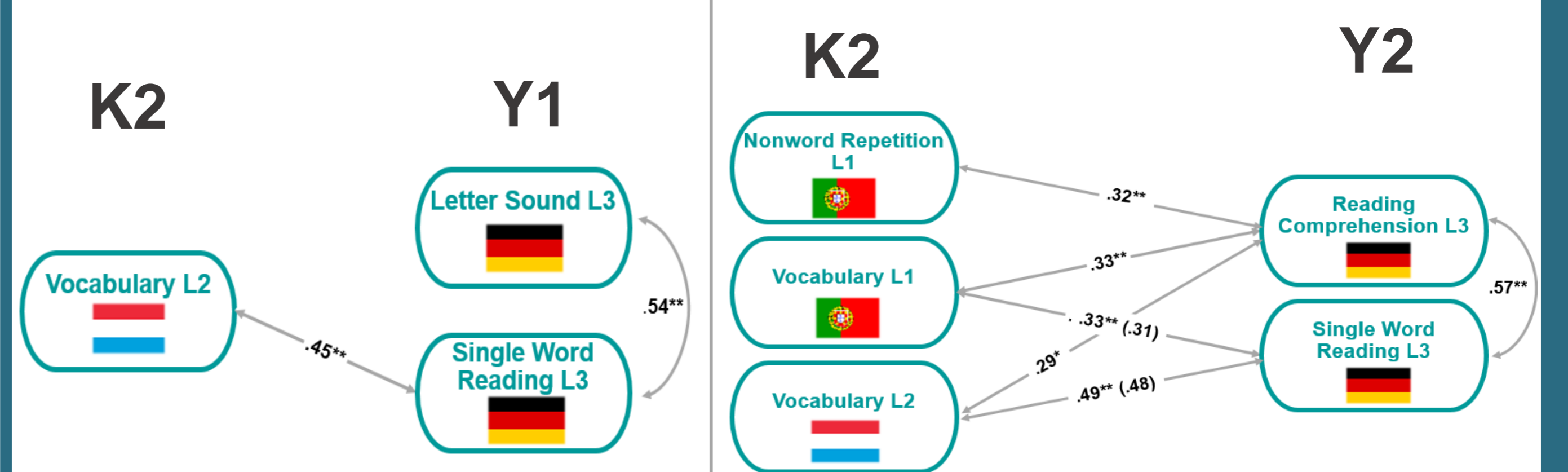


6 RESULTS VOCABULARY



Pearson correlation coefficients (N=66). Only significant correlations are represented. Correlations remained significant after controlling for SES.

7 RESULTS READING



Pearson correlation coefficients (N=66). Only significant correlations are represented. Correlations remained significant after controlling for SES. Coefficients in brackets after controlling for the respective other language.

8 DISCUSSION

The results on vocabulary indicate that in this population of Portuguese-speaking children growing up in Luxembourg, Luxembourgish (L2) and German (L3) lexical knowledge was strongly related.

Both, L1 (Portuguese) and L2 (Luxembourgish) vocabulary knowledge played a substantial role in reading in German (L3). Luxembourgish (L2) vocabulary knowledge in Kindergarten accounted for 8-24 % of the variance in reading ability in German (L3) two years later, while L1 (Portuguese) vocabulary accounted for a significant 11%.

L1 (Portuguese) vocabulary knowledge accounted for a significant 10% of the unique variance in reading in German (L3) after controlling for Luxembourgish (L2) vocabulary.

THESE FINDINGS PROVIDE EVIDENCE THAT L1 VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE PLAYS AN IMPORTANT AND SPECIFIC ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF READING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.