

2008

Mexican Immigrant Parents' Beliefs and Practices Related to Literacy

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CASE STUDY RESEARCH

MEXICAN IMMIGRANT PARENTS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES RELATED TO
LITERACY

by

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Presented to Educational Foundations and Leadership Department
and the Graduate School of George Fox University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Education

July 24, 2008

George Fox University

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Newberg, Oregon

“Mexican immigrant parents’ beliefs and practices related to literacy,” a Master’s research project prepared by Pamela M. Spurgeon in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Education degree in the Educational Foundations and Leadership department. This thesis has been approved and accepted by:

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe the literacy practices and beliefs exhibited by immigrant parents of Mexican descent in Oregon. The researcher collected data using a questionnaire and examined the correlation between generational differences of immigrants and respondents' beliefs and practices regarding reading and writing. From the survey sample, the researcher selected 5 representative families for observations and interviews to further explore how literacy is practiced in Mexican immigrant families' homes and daily lives. The belief regarding whether or not children begin learning before they go to school generated the most disagreement amongst participants. Data correlating acculturation and literacy practices resulted in a Pearson r of .494, a moderate correlation statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Although the teaching of reading is one of the major focal points of initial schooling, early literacy instruction begins long before children enter their first classroom. The adults in a child's life provide the exposure to literacy skills that is an essential component of learning to read. Many professional organizations acknowledge the important role that parents play in their policies and position statements regarding early literacy development (International Reading Association [IRA] & National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 1998; National Parent Teacher Association [PTA], 2000). These same organizations also encourage educators to develop partnerships between schools and homes in order to build upon and strengthen children's early literacy experiences.

Students entering classrooms in the United States are coming from increasingly diverse homes. In 2000 forty-four percent of minorities enrolled in K-12 public schools were Hispanic, an increase of 17% from 1972 to 2000 (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2003). According to the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics (2003), the population of Hispanic children has proportionally increased faster than that of any other racial and ethnic group in the United States. It is also important to consider that the growth of the Hispanic population has not just been limited

to the states typically associated with Spanish-speaking populations, such as California, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, Florida, and New York. Hispanic populations can be found in increasing numbers across the continental United States. In 2000 it was reported that 8% of Oregon's population was of Hispanic origin, and of that group 6.3% of respondents were of Mexican descent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000b).

Every year more Hispanic students are entering public school classrooms in Oregon, making it essential that teachers become more knowledgeable about the home literacy practices of these students' families. In order to build upon the initial literacy exposure that Hispanic students experience within their homes, educators must first have an understanding of what constitutes that exposure. As a native language development specialist working with native Spanish speaking English Language Learners to develop academic literacy in their first language, the researcher has witnessed firsthand the growth of the Hispanic population in the town, school district, and school site where she works. From these experiences, the researcher finds it essential for all school personnel, including paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators, to understand the literacy foundation and practices of the Hispanic population. Such awareness allows the opportunity for educators to build upon students' initial literacy experiences using supportive pedagogical practices and to encourage the development of a positive, supportive relationship between school and home.

Statement of the problem

The purpose of this study was to describe the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices exhibited by a sample of immigrant families of Mexican descent with students

attending an elementary school in Oregon. The study included data collected from families as reported in a parent survey and examined the correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing. Following an analysis of the survey, the researcher selected five representative families for additional observations and open-ended interviews to further explore how literacy is practiced in Mexican immigrant families' homes and daily lives.

The researcher opted to use a mixed method approach in this study. Quantitative data was gathered during the first stage of research using a survey administered to a large sample of respondents. The researcher then used more qualitative methods, including observations and open-ended interviews, to corroborate and expand upon the survey findings. It is the researcher's belief that a mixed method approach provided greater insight of the actual beliefs and practices related to literacy held and demonstrated by immigrant families of Mexican descent.

Hypotheses

Based on professional experiences working with Mexican immigrant families, the author hypothesized that overall, families would exhibit generally positive beliefs about literacy, in the sense that they would view literacy as holding importance and value in their lives. The author also anticipated that the families would show evidence of at least some literacy practices in the home, likely more related to functional literacy than literacy used for more academic purposes, a hypothesis based in large part on a review of literature focused on studies from Hispanic and other minority groups (Jiménez, 2001; Li, 2000; McCarthy, 1997; Monzó & Rueda, 2001; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). The

researcher also expected that these beliefs and practices might not coincide with those that are perhaps more familiar to U.S. educators and typically exhibited by middle class, White students; therefore making it especially important to do follow-up observations and interviews with representative families from the survey sample.

Previously the author assumed that the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices exhibited by immigrant families of Mexican descent would be more affirmative, and practices would increase in frequency and importance, as families became more acculturated. In other words, second and third generation immigrant families would exhibit beliefs and practices more typical of those considered “desirable” in the existing public school system in the United States, which tends to represent beliefs and practices characteristic of White, middle class persons, than their first generation, lesser-acculturated immigrant counterparts. Intuitively, that assumption made sense, and other researchers have indeed reported such findings in their work (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Goldenberg et al., 2001; Holloway, Rambaudo, Fuller & Eggers-Piérola, 1995; Paratore, Melzi, & Krol-Sinclair, 2003; Reese, 2002; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). However, recently the author has begun to doubt this initial assertion as she has encountered more immigrant families that have been in the U.S. longer, yet exhibit a wide range of literacy practices and hold differing beliefs of literacy.

A review of previous research and theory illustrated the wide range of variance in acculturation levels across different generations of immigrants, and even between members within immigrant families (Arzubiaga, Rueda, & Monzó, 2002; Garza & Gallegos, 1995; Li, 2000; Ortiz, 1993; Rueschenberg & Buriel, 1995). Thus using a

survey questionnaire, the author explored whether or not a statistically significant correlation existed between the generational immigrant status, or acculturation level, of families and their beliefs and literacy practices. Therefore, the researcher proposed a null hypothesis, in which there would be no statistically significant correlation found between the level of acculturation of the Mexican immigrant families and their beliefs about literacy and literacy practices.

Theoretical or conceptual frameworks

Much of this research was based on the conceptual framework that learning to read is a natural process that has the potential to begin at birth, long before children enter their first classroom in a public or private educational setting. Smith (2004) supports the conceptual framework that reading is first and foremost a natural process. Specifically, according to Smith, "reading is the most natural activity in the world" (p. 2) and all of us actually have been engaged in reading, in the sense of interpreting experience, since birth. Like Freire and Macedo (1987), Smith views reading in terms of making meaning of the world around us, not just simply as a matter of decoding written symbols of a printed text. Additionally, in his explanation of reading as a natural process, Smith emphasizes that reading is not a simple, isolated act that occurs. Rather, he states that:

Reading is never an abstract, meaningless activity. ... Readers always read *something*, they read for a *purpose*, and reading and its recollection always involve *feelings* as well as knowledge and experience.

Reading can never be separated from the intentions and interests of readers, or from the consequences that it has on them. ... Reading also can never be separated from writing or thinking. (p. 178)

According to Smith and other reading theorists (Allington, 2001; Goodman, Goodman, & Flores, 1984), reading should be acquired via a top-down approach in which the greatest emphasis is placed upon the meaning that reader's find while interacting with text.

Through such an approach, individuals learn to read by having an extensive amount of time to read and write in a contextualized manner, not, according to Allington, by spending a lot of time on decontextualized drills and phonics games that, according to Smith, only individuals that are already reading will have much success with anyway. From this perspective, learners should be engaged in meaningful reading experiences as often as possible, from as early as possible, and their ability as readers will improve simply through the act of reading itself.

Children acquire knowledge about written language in much the same way as they acquire knowledge about spoken language, from demonstrations that occur in the environment around them. As part of his theory that learning to read is a natural process, Smith (2004) compares learning to read with another natural process, learning spoken language. According to the interactionist position of first language acquisition, "language develops as a result of the complex interplay between the uniquely human characteristics of the child and the environment in which the child develops" (Lightbrown & Spada, 2000, p.22). According to Lightbrown and Spada, this theory of first language acquisition, based on ideas explored by Piaget and Vgotsky, emphasizes the importance

of the interactions children have with people and objects in their environment as they acquire language. In other words, children acquire language as they interact with their environment in meaningful ways, thereby learning the meaning of language and how to use language appropriately. Likewise, in terms of reading acquisition, as long as children are exposed to print in their environment and see others using print in meaningful ways, then they should naturally begin to develop an understanding of the different purposes and benefits of written language (Smith, 2004). The more opportunity that a learner has to interact with writing tools and written language in his or her environment, through ambient print, listening to stories, and seeing significant others reading and writing with a purpose and interest, then the more he or she will begin to develop an awareness of how written language works and is used, as well as a desire to become a member of what Smith refers to as the “Literacy Club”. The author included this explanation of the conceptual frameworks of first language acquisition and reading acquisition in a discussion of this study as these concepts are essential to how the researcher found understanding in the literacy practices and beliefs about literacy exhibited by a sample of immigrant families of Mexican descent, and for why an understanding of those beliefs and practices would be of importance to an educator of school-age children.

An understanding of acculturation theory is essential to an exploration of whether or not there exists a correlation between the beliefs and practices related to literacy of immigrant families of Mexican descent and generational differences of immigrants. The researcher approached this case study guided by what Garza and Gallegos (1995) have defined as a humanistic perspective on acculturation. In this model of exploring

acculturation, these researchers sought to identify many factors that contribute to, or impact, the process of acculturation of an individual, including family influences, socioecological influences, multicultural influences, and social behavior. The humanistic perspective model intends to include both the person and the situation in a discussion of the process of acculturation. Personal choice and free will are clear factors in the acculturation process according to this model, explaining why individuals in the same situation may not react the same towards either culture, in relation to this proposed case study, towards "Anglo" culture in the U.S. or towards "Mexican" culture. In the humanistic framework, Garza and Gallegos argue, "cultural constructs have a respective probability of influencing the individual, depending on significance and convenience" (p. 8). In other words, some of the environmental influences on acculturation can result in a conscious choice by an individual to adopt certain behaviors or not because they are of greater personal significance to the individual, while other influences do not result in a conscious change of behavior, but rather a "noncognitive" response based on convenience. How often an individual is exposed to a cultural construct, defined as the saliency of the construct, as well as the strength of the construct in terms of the cultural heritage of an individual, also impact whether or not an individual will adopt or reject certain behaviors in the acculturation process.

Garza and Gallegos (1995) make an essential point that there is much variance between individuals in terms of acculturation, even within subgroups, and that there is still much exploration to be done in the area of understanding acculturation, especially in

relation to the multicultural person. Specifically, they caution against making oversimplifications, and even state that:

It is inaccurate to assume that a third- or fourth-generation Chicano is necessarily more acculturated than a first- or second-generation Chicano.

Although the factor of generation is a relevant consideration, we should not lose sight of the fact that even given the same or similar external environmental factor, many variations can result. (p. 7)

For this reason, the researcher did not anticipate that there would be a statistically significant correlation between acculturation level and literacy practices and beliefs, as it is more likely that generational status of the immigrants is but one of many factors impacting the acculturation process.

Quantitative research questions

In the initial phase of this case study research, the researcher used a survey design to answer the first and second research questions that are more quantitative in nature:

1. What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices self-reported by a sample of immigrant parents of Mexican descent?
2. What is the correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing?

Qualitative research questions

Following an analysis of the survey data, a second, more qualitative phase of the case study research occurred. The researcher used data gathered during observations and focused, audio recorded interviews with representative families from the group of

Mexican immigrant families surveyed to answer the third and fourth research questions, which are more qualitative in nature:

3. How do Mexican immigrant families practice literacy in their homes and daily lives?
4. How do these beliefs and practices differ between more and lesser-acculturated immigrant families?

Definition of terms

Acculturation: While recognizing that the concept of acculturation includes far more aspects than simply the time spent exposed to a new culture, the researcher primarily used the term acculturation in this study to explain the time in years that an immigrant family has been in the United States and to discuss participants in terms of generational immigration status. For the purposes of this research, acculturation particularly referred to the movement within the immigrant family over time and across generations towards literacy practices and beliefs that more closely match those commonly found in the U.S. public school system.

First generation immigrant: First generation immigrants were defined for the purpose of this research as being individuals who immigrated to the United States after having been born in some other country.

Second generation immigrant: As described by Portes and MacLeod (1996), and as used in this study, second generation immigrants refer to U.S.-born participants with at least one foreign-born parent and also to foreign-born participants who were brought to the United States at an early age and have resided here ever since, with the clarification by

this researcher that they have received four or more years of instruction in the United States during their schooling.

Third or later generation immigrant: Third or later generation immigrants refer to individuals whose parents were born in the United States.

Literacy: For the purposes of this research, the term literacy was used to describe reading and writing that occurs for academic purposes, for functional purposes, and for personal entertainment.

Beliefs about literacy: In this study, the researcher focused primarily on participants' beliefs about using literacy, as well as their beliefs about how literacy is learned and who is responsible for teaching literacy to children.

Literacy practices: For the purpose of this study, self-reported and observed time spent reading in different contexts and types of materials read, and time spent writing in different contexts as well as types of items written indicated participants' literacy practices.

Access to literacy materials: In this study, access to literacy materials referred to participants' self-reported and observed access to items and tools that support literacy, including public library cards.

Limitations and delimitations

The researcher was aware of and openly acknowledged being the greatest limitation of this study. As a member of the White, middle class, dominant culture in this country, and as an educator trained in the United States to teach in a public education system that typically exhibits values and practices characteristic of White, middle class

society, the researcher's own experiences and way of thinking have shaped this study. As the researcher is not a member of the minority group, neither being of Mexican descent nor a recent immigrant to the United States, she was actually an outsider seeking an emic perspective on literacy in a minority group of which she does not pertain (Fetterman, 1998). Therefore, the researcher found it essential to remain cognizant throughout the research process of the biases that she could likely introduce to this study as she composed and selected survey items and interview prompts, observed in families' homes, and analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data. Although she did not represent the ideal case study researcher defined by Yin (2003) who "should be unbiased by preconceived notions" (p. 59), the researcher promised to strive for an awareness of such biases.

Another potential limitation of this study is the possibility that participants responded to survey questions and interview prompts, and possibly behaved in the observation setting, in ways that they believed would be acceptable to and/or desired by the researcher. As an educator that has worked with many of the children and adults from the families participating in the sample in both academic and social settings, the researcher especially had to be cautious of participants that tended to give responses or demonstrated behaviors during observations that had a tendency to be more socially desirable rather than actually accurate representations of the individual or family's true beliefs about literacy and literacy practices (Nardi, 2006).

CHAPTER 2

Review of the literature

Over the past several decades educational professionals and parents have shown an increased interest in how early literacy skills develop, and especially in the role that the students' home experiences have in this development. Researchers have responded to this desire for more knowledge. Although the availability and quality of studies that provide useful information about emerging literacy has improved, most of these studies still tend to focus on White, middle class American families. In response to the increasing number of minority students entering the U.S. school system, educators now more than ever are interested in how early literacy skills develop in the homes of minority students, and how that development may be different from that commonly found in White, middle class homes. Nevertheless, a review of related literature identified relatively few studies linked to home literacy practices of minority students. This review of related literature includes a discussion of: (a) cultural and parental views towards childrearing and education, including how they may change from one immigrant generation to the next, (b) home factors that influence children's reading achievement, (c) the focus on functional reading in daily activities, and (d) specific practices observed in homes of immigrants of Mexican descent.

Cultural and parental views towards childrearing and education

Several studies reviewed focused on the differences between educational experiences in the United States and Mexico (Reese, 2002; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Mexican immigrants in the U.S. and their families still in Mexico shared information in interviews that showed a difference in how education has been viewed by the grandparent generation, the parent generation still in Mexico, and their siblings that have immigrated to the United States (Reese, 2002). In an interview, one participant succinctly summarized the shift in perspective that has happened for many Mexican immigrants by describing the difference between her generation's views and those of her parent's generation:

In those days they said that the only inheritance that one could leave for one's children was to teach them how to work. Now we realize that the only inheritance is to leave them schooling, in order that they can work. (p. 8)

This shift in perspective can primarily be traced to a change in the way of life from one generation to the next (Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Most of the grandparent generation grew up in rural areas, where there were few opportunities for schooling, or little need for learning beyond basic computation and literacy skills. As happened in many regions of the world, once adults, members of this generation often moved to urban areas where education was more available and seen as a greater necessity; however, most of the grandparent generation, having little educational experience, was not able to provide much support for their own children. While there are still differences, mostly due to

economic constraints, regarding how many years of schooling are generally completed by Mexican children and their relatives in the United States, families of the current parent generation, both north and south of the border, tended to value education, supported their children in their schoolwork, and encouraged their children to do the best they can in school (Reese, 2002).

How parents view their role in the education of their children in many ways determines the amount and type of literacy experiences that young children have. This view is impacted by one's cultural experiences, as well as one's socioeconomic status. In a small study of low-income mothers, Holloway et al. (1995) interviewed African American, White, and Latina women. The women in their study did not view themselves as the primary teachers of their children. Many of the women expressed a desire for more guidance from teachers and schools regarding how to help their children at home, and others expressed frustration that the educators were not doing their jobs, since they viewed the teachers as the trained professionals who had the responsibility of teaching their children. Most of these parents did not see themselves as playing a crucial role in their children's education.

Reese and Gallimore (2000) explained why many immigrant Latino parents tend to believe that their role in the education of their children is limited. Through interviews, these researchers found that many parents believed that their children were not capable of reasoning or understanding until age 3 at the earliest, and age 5 at the latest. Many parents that held this view did not see any value in sharing books, reading, or writing with their children until they were able to understand, and usually that was the time when they were

ready to go to school and receive instruction from trained educators. Some parents from the study felt that it was simply a “waste of time” to read to a young child, and that “people who do so must not have anything better to do” (p. 115). However, Reese and Gallimore often found that many of these same parents did use books as tools to teach their children about morals and that books were read for religious purposes; parents just did not read to children for the sake of teaching them to read. Goldenberg, Gallimore, and Reese (2001) also reported that despite the extremely limited focus on literacy in many homes prior to schooling, many parents did take on a more active role in literacy development once their children started attending school.

Many studies (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Goldenberg et al., 2001; Holloway et al., 1995; Paratore, Melzi, & Krol-Sinclair, 2003; Reese, 2002; Reese & Gallimore, 2000) indicated that as immigrant families become more acculturated and familiar with U.S. schools, they are more likely to adopt literacy practices common to U.S. school systems, especially when educators provide sustained guidance and instruction. Reese (2002), in a comparison of mostly Mexican families living in the Los Angeles area and their relatives in Mexico, found that families living in the U.S. reported more literacy activities in the home, and that fathers and siblings participated more in helping young children with schoolwork than families still in Mexico. Mothers, on the other hand, were more likely to work outside the home in the U.S. and often could not assist their children as much as they would like. Contrary to other research, Arzubaga, Rueda, and Monzó (2002) found no relationship between immigration and instrumental knowledge, as defined by familiarity with schools and social services, and an increase in students’ self-concept as

readers, nor in their valuation of reading. In other words, time spent in the U.S. did not impact family attitudes and practices related to reading. Ortiz (1993) also reported finding no significant relationship between the amount of time Mexican American fathers had spent in the U.S. and the amount of literacy engaged in at home; however, due to considerable limitations in the sample size of generational subgroups included in the study, the validity of this finding could be considered questionable.

Home factors that influence children's reading achievement

In a study of Latino immigrant families Paratore, Melzi, and Krol-Sinclair (1999) found that highly successful students frequently engaged in reading stories, alone and with adults, wrote for a variety of reasons, and had parents that monitored their homework on a daily basis. On the contrary, children who struggled in school lacked consistency in motivation, schooling, participation in self-initiated literacy activities at home, and parental attention to academic success. Another small study of primarily Mexican American students that compared school achievement with the activities students partake in at home showed similar trends (Weisner et al., 2001). Findings from this study showed that watching television was the most reported activity for all children, but that students with higher school achievement tended to spend more time in activities at home related to homework, chores, family social activities, and hobbies, while students with lower school achievement tended to engage in activities at home that related to watching television, resting, or playing with video games, friends, or alone. This study also showed that activities engaged in by higher achieving students were more likely to include the use of literacy skills than those engaged in by lower achieving students.

Birch and Ferrin (2002) investigated factors that affect parental involvement in children's education by interviewing 20 Anglo American families and 20 Mexican American families and found that Mexican Americans tended to be more passively involved in activities that lead to academic success than their Anglo American counterparts. One of the most significant findings of their study related to literacy was the difference in time that parents reported having spent reading with their children. While 100% of Anglo American parents reported reading with their children at home, only 65% of Mexican American parents reported doing so. The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics (2003) similarly accounted that only 42% of Hispanic families reported reading daily to their children, as compared with 64% of White families. However, Birch and Ferrin's study showed that 88% of Mexican American parents did report helping their children with schoolwork at home. While their study focused on a rather small participant pool, one can still see how the frequency of engagement in reading and schoolwork at home for children of Mexican descent may not be as consistent as necessary to ensure academic success as described by other researchers (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Paratore et al., 1999).

Another factor shown to lead to lower achievement is poverty. Poverty limits a family's resources, which often results in lower literacy skills (Vernon-Faegans, Scheffner, Miccio & Manlove, 2001). Vernon-Faegans et al. illustrated the impact poverty has over children's home environment and their exposure to school-like materials, book reading, libraries, and other early literacy experiences. Their review of research highlighted the disproportionate number of African American and Hispanic

children that grow up in poverty stricken homes. Monzó and Rueda (2001) also addressed the issue of lack of books in some homes not only as a result of poverty, but in terms of a lack of knowledge about the importance of providing such materials, and by taking into consideration that undocumented parents, in some states, cannot obtain library cards. In one study, no more than five books were observed in any Hispanic home, and most homes had fewer than that (Goldenberg, Reese, & Gallimore, 1992). Delgado-Gaitan's (1992) observations addressed how lack of not only money and time, but also space available to many low-income families within their homes may also impact the amount of literacy resources owned and the use of such resources by the family. In a study comparing White middle class families and Hispanic working class families, McCarthy (1997) found that middle class families often had more literacy materials than working class families, but that most working class families did possess a few treasured materials. In addition, working class families from McCarthy's study described the difficulties they had extending their children's learning at home due to a lack of material resources, not because of a lack of desire to do so.

Several studies (Arzubiaga et al., 2002; Monzó & Rueda, 2001; Reese, 2002) have focused on the correlation between ecocultural factors, the combination of ecological aspects such as family resources and constraints and cultural influences such as values, beliefs, and perspectives, and the engagement of Latino families in reading activities. Arzubiaga et al. in a study of families from Mexico and El Salvador found an inverse relationship between families' workload, as defined by domestic responsibilities and the number of young children in the home, and the value that children place on reading. Their

findings indicated that children valued reading more when families spent more time together. In other words, according to the findings of these researchers, even time spent talking with family around the dinner table can have an impact on children's literacy development.

Functional reading in daily activities

Reading occurs to fulfill many different needs, at times serving a more academic purpose, at times a more pleasurable purpose, and at times a more functional purpose (Monzó & Rueda, 2001). Several researchers (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Jiménez, 2001; McCarthy, 1997; Monzó & Rueda, 2001; Reese & Gallimore, 2000) have found that families' daily routines often provide rich, meaningful contexts that encourage the development of language and literacy, but that those contexts tend to be different from typical school contexts. In a study of five Mexican American families, Monzó and Rueda observed families using literacy as a tool to accomplish tasks and to fulfill immediate needs. For example, parents often relied upon their children to assist them in reading documents written in English, such as medical forms, menus, signs, labels, maps, school forms, etc. The researchers describe how these and other functional reading activities help children to realize the importance of developing literacy skills and that children, when asked, do recognize this importance. However, findings from this study also indicate that many children do not see the relationship between the literacy activities they participate in at school and those they participate in at home; in many cases they find little value in the literacy commonly found in the context of schools.

In a qualitative study in which he observed, taught, and interviewed first and second-generation immigrant students in a Midwestern U.S. intermediate school, Jiménez (2001) found that Latino/a students identified and described using literacy in their daily lives in ways that were just as important as the literacy used in schools; however, like the students in Monzó and Rueda's (2001) study, they did not necessarily see a connection between literacy used in school and at home because there was a disconnect between the literacy taught and used at school and the realities of students' daily lives. From his research, Jiménez concluded, "the literacy promoted by U.S. schooling may not always be the literacy desired or needed by students from culturally and linguistically diverse communities" (p. 737). Rather, like other researchers (McCarthey, 1997; Monzó & Rueda, 2001), Jiménez found that these first and second-generation students were called upon regularly to assist their families by using functional literacy skills to meet day-to-day needs. According to Jiménez, immigrant families often relied on their bilingual children to translate important documents, such as bills and other complex texts. The focus of reading and writing in these families was typically not that of enjoyment of texts, or learning from texts, but rather that of using literacy for functional purposes as a part of day-to-day life.

In a study comparing White, middle class families and Hispanic, working class families, McCarthey (1997) reported that both groups valued literacy activities. However, interviews conducted with study participants indicated that middle class families tended to use reading for more pleasurable purposes, such as for personal entertainment and enjoyment, while working class families engaged in reading for more functional

purposes, specifically with the intentions of learning or fulfilling a need. One limitation to these findings is that the researcher did not compare Hispanic, middle class families to Hispanic, working class families. It would be interesting to see if the results for Hispanic, middle class families would be different.

Specific practices observed in homes of immigrants of Mexican descent

Rather than studying existing practices and attitudes towards literacy in Mexican immigrant homes, many studies (Paratore et al., 2003; Rodríguez-Brown, Li, & Albom, 1999) reported on how family literacy practices and attitudes towards reading change as a result of an intervention program. The results of these studies provided a measurement of program effectiveness, rather than a description of practices and attitudes prior to program influence. While this information is interesting, it does not provide educators with an in-depth understanding of their students' early childhood literacy experiences, precisely the information they need in order to develop an effective intervention program.

Gillanders (2001), who recognized the limitations of studying intervention results prior to looking at what already works for successful students, studied the families of four Mexican American kindergartners that had been identified as successful readers. Three out of the four families she interviewed came from urban areas of Mexico, and therefore had parents that had likely been exposed to more educational opportunities than their counterparts from rural areas. Gillanders reported that these children were engaged in extended homework activities that often involved parents providing dictation and drill practice of literacy skills, especially regarding letter-sound relationships. Very few books were observed in the homes, and the families did not engage in reading together, nor did

they use library resources. Other researchers (Goldenberg et al., 1992; Goldenberg et al., 2001; Reese & Gallimore, 2000) made similar observations of Mexican immigrant families in which children spent very little time on reading focused on meaning, but spent considerable time decoding and completing homework. Repetition, practice, and rote memorization are considered valued forms of learning in these families (Gillanders, 2001; Goldenberg et al., 1992; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Nevertheless, researchers have observed parents focusing more on meaning with their children when the reading tasks are viewed as entertainment rather than as school related activities (Goldenberg et al., 1992), and children observed by Reese and Gallimore did use reading and writing to engage in both church related activities and in other meaningful daily tasks, such as writing letters and notes. The most important factor linked to the success of all of these children, though, was the active role taken by parents in teaching their children to read (Gillanders, 2001). Even though the sample size in Gillanders' study is rather small, this finding is consistent with those of other studies (Paratore et al., 1999; Reese, 2002).

Conclusions from the literature review

Existing studies have provided information regarding the historic cultural and parental views towards childrearing and education that many Mexican immigrant families hold (Goldenberg et al., 2001; Holloway et al., 1995; Reese, 2002; Reese & Gallimore, 2000) and how those existing views can be altered as immigrant families are exposed to new experiences and environments in the United States (Goldenberg et al., 2001; Holloway et al., 1995; Paratore et al., 2003; Reese, 2002; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Other studies have illustrated home factors that influence children's reading achievement

and highlighted the importance of active parental involvement as a factor in the level of academic success experienced by students (Birch & Ferrin, 2002; Paratore et al., 1999; Weisner et al., 2001) and others have discussed the effects of factors such as poverty, limited resources, and domestic workload on potential achievement (Arzubiaga et al., 2002; Goldenberg et al., 1992; McCarthey, 1997; Monzó & Rueda, 2001; Reese, 2002; Vernon-Faegans et al., 2001). Still other researchers have reported their observations of functional reading in daily activities and other specific literacy practices in Mexican immigrant homes (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Gillanders, 2001; Goldenberg et al., 1992; McCarthey, 1997; Monzó & Rueda, 2001; Reese & Gallimore, 2000) and how those functional purposes are different from the more academic purposes focused on in schools (Jiménez, 2001; Monzó & Rueda, 2001).

Nevertheless, most of the researchers included in this literature review recognized the need for more specific research studies focused on cultural subgroups (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Gillanders, 2001; Jiménez, 2001; Ortiz, 1993; Reese, 2002; Vernon-Feagans et al., 2001). Many of these same researchers (Arzubiaga et al., 2002, Gillanders, 2001; Goldenberg et al., 1992; Jiménez, 2001; McCarthey, 1997; Ortiz, 1993; Rodríguez-Brown et al., 1999) acknowledged the limitations in sample sizes in their own studies, and also in the applicability of studies from one group to another, due to the differences between subgroups and individuals. Existing research focused on the practices and attitudes of Mexican immigrant families is extremely limited, and apparently non-existent for families in the Pacific Northwest. The need for further research in this area is clearly evident based on this review of related literature.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

Research questions

The purpose of this study was to describe the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices exhibited by a sample of immigrant families of Mexican descent with students attending an urban fringe elementary school in Oregon. The study included data collected from families as self-reported in a parent survey and examined the correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing. Following an analysis of the survey, the researcher selected six representative families for additional observations and open-ended interviews to further explore how literacy is practiced in Mexican immigrant families' homes and daily lives. Specifically, the study addressed the following quantitative and qualitative research questions:

1. What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices self-reported by a sample of immigrant parents of Mexican descent?
2. What is the correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing?
3. How do Mexican immigrant families practice literacy in their homes and daily

lives?

4. How do these beliefs and practices differ between more and lesser-accultured immigrant families?

Setting

This study was conducted in a traditionally rural community in the Northern Willamette Valley of Oregon, which has become increasingly more suburban during the past decade. At the time of the most recent U. S. Census, the total population of the town was close to 13,000 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2000a). Of that total population, 15.5% of inhabitants identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, and of that group, 87% identified themselves as being of Mexican descent. According to the City Hall's website, the Hispanic population is the largest and fastest growing minority in the community. The community is still characterized by its small-town atmosphere, in spite of recent growth. The researcher chose this particular location not only based on the convenience of working in this school district, and thus the implied relevance of the study findings for her own purposes as an educator, but also because the population of the previously described community made it an appropriate match for the specific information that was sought as a part of this research endeavor and because it was a fairly typical representation of the population in Oregon.

Participants

Participants in this study included all willing Mexican immigrant families from an elementary school in Oregon. There were 412 total students attending the k-5 school. The school population was comprised of 296 White students, 96 Hispanic students, 9 Asian or

Pacific Islander students, 3 American Indian students and 2 African American students.

Six students' families chose not to disclose their ethnicity. The overall socio-economic status of the school population was reflected in a free and reduced lunch rate of 45%.

The sample was comprised of primarily first or second-generation immigrants of Mexican descent with children attending kindergarten through the fifth grade. Both parents, and/or all guardians, had the opportunity to participate in this study. The researcher invited all primary caregivers in the family to participate because of the possibility that both parents/caregivers might not have shared the same beliefs towards literacy, nor reported identical literacy practices. Including all primary caregivers, when applicable, allowed for a more complete understanding of the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices of the Mexican immigrant families at this school. Members of the extended family, such as grandparents, aunts, and uncles that lived with the immigrant family, were also invited to participate for the aforementioned reasons. The population was anticipated to contain approximately seventy-one families, representing 96 elementary age students. The researcher strived to complete a census of the families in order to have the most representative data possible for the school's Mexican immigrant population, with the unit of analysis being the individual caregivers.

The Mexican immigrant families surveyed as part of this study comprised 23% of the entire school population. Of these families, 28% qualified for migrant status, meaning that one or both parents were employed in agriculture, nursery, forestry, fisheries, or other related jobs. The majority of the children from these Mexican immigrant families, 91%, were also identified as English Language Learners that participated in English Language

Development and/or Spanish Literacy classes. An additional 5%, or 5 children, were monitored English Language Learners, meaning that they had formerly participated in such language development classes, but were no longer identified as English Language Learners. While most of the participants were native-Spanish speakers, some parents also reported speaking an indigenous language at home with their children, such as Mixteco. All demographic data about the participants included in this study was obtained from school registration forms as self-reported by families. Survey information provided additional information regarding languages used at home, and the average years of schooling completed by the respondents.

From the sample of parents surveyed, representative families were then selected for the second, more qualitative phase of the study. The researcher recruited a purposive sample from the qualified, willing candidates according to their level of acculturation and scores on the survey scales in the areas of literacy practices and beliefs to participate in direct observations and focused open-ended interviews. The researcher attempted to include at least one Mixteco speaking family and one migrant family in this phase of the study. The resulting representative families included:

- 1 case of a lesser-acculturated family scoring in the “upper” third of participants
- 1 case of a lesser-acculturated family scoring in the “middle” third of participants
- 1 case of a lesser-acculturated family scoring in the “lower” third of participants
- 1 case of a more-acculturated family scoring in the “upper” third of participants
- 1 case of a more-acculturated family scoring in the “middle” third of participants
- 1 case of a more-acculturated family scoring in the “lower” third of participants

Human subjects safeguarding

Prior to the initiation of the study and any collection of data, in accordance with George Fox University standards, the researcher gained approval from the school district where the study was conducted and from the Human Subjects Research Committee at George Fox University.

Upon receiving approval from the school district and the Human Subjects Research Committee, the researcher contacted all Mexican immigrant families in the school personally via a letter sent home with an informed consent form in English (Appendix A) and Spanish (Appendix B), as well as with a phone call to invite them to become voluntary participants in the study.

Some participants in this study could be considered vulnerable for a variety of reasons, such as their minority status, their legal status as immigrants, their low socio-economic status, and/or their limited literacy levels. In an attempt to gain informed consent from all participants, all research instruments and related information were made available in both English and Spanish. When the researcher had reason to believe that a participant needed to have research materials read aloud, an oral reading was arranged at his or her convenience. After contacting possible participants, in the case of an individual with limited literacy, the researcher scheduled an appointment with the individual, read and explained the informed consent form in either English or Spanish, as preferred by the participant, and, only after receiving consent from the participant, continued administering the questionnaire. If for any reason it was suspected that a participant did not fully understand and accept the research process, or that the research process was

causing the participant to experience prolonged anxiety, the researcher was prepared to exclude the participant from the study. However, the researcher found no instances in which a participant needed to be excluded from the study after agreeing to participate.

It was possible that some participants could have experienced some emotional discomfort when completing this survey, particularly if they did not hold themselves in high esteem as literate individuals. Some participants could have potentially felt ill at ease if their literacy practices did not reflect what they believed to be socially desirable as a result of their own limited literacy skills. It was also possible that some participants may have felt some apprehension about participating in the study as a result of their legal immigrant status. In no way did the researcher or the research instruments ask participants to report on their legal status at any time during the research process.

As the researcher provided opportunities for participants to complete the self-administered surveys in group settings, as well as offered to orally read the survey for those participants that required the survey read aloud, it was impossible to guarantee participants' anonymity. However, the researcher insured participant confidentiality by promising not to disclose the respondents' identity in any way. The data collected was used to describe groups and no individuals were identified. All completed questionnaires and signed consent forms were locked in separate, secure locations for a period of no less than three years. The researcher was the only individual who had access to these materials. Upon completion of the study, the researcher held a voluntary meeting with families in which information gathered and learned through the research process was shared with all interested study participants.

Research design

In the initial phase of this case study research, a survey design was used to answer the first and second research questions that were more quantitative in nature:

1. What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices self-reported by a sample of immigrant parents of Mexican descent?
2. What is the correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing?

At this point in the research, participants responded to both structured and open-ended items on a self-report questionnaire. The use of a survey questionnaire was appropriate at this stage of the study as the researcher aimed to gather data about the demographics, behaviors, and attitudes of a large sample of respondents (Nardi, 2006).

Following an analysis of the survey data, a second, more qualitative phase of the case study research occurred. The researcher used data gathered during observations and focused, audio recorded interviews with representative families from the group of Mexican immigrant families surveyed to answer the third and fourth research questions, which were more qualitative in nature:

3. How do Mexican immigrant families practice literacy in their homes and daily lives?
4. How do these beliefs and practices differ between more and lesser-accultured immigrant families?

The use of direct observations and interviews characteristic of case study research as appropriate at this stage of the study as the researcher aimed to explain and describe how

representative Mexican immigrant families practice literacy within the real-life context of their homes and daily lives (Yin, 2003).

Yin (2003) clearly explained that case studies need not solely be connected to qualitative research, but rather “can be based on any mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence” (p. 15) as appropriate to the exploration of the proposed research questions. The use of direct observations and focused, open-ended interviews allowed the researcher to gather additional data to increase her understanding of the literacy practices and attitudes of the study participants that would have otherwise been inaccessible, or greatly limited, through the sole administration of a survey questionnaire (Yin, 2003). Collecting data, or evidence, from a variety of sources allowed the researcher to corroborate findings through the process of seeking what Yin described as “converging lines of inquiry” (p. 98) which increased the validity of the study. For these reasons, the researcher chose to use a mix of quantitative and qualitative methodologies in this research endeavor, as well as a mix of data sources, resulting in both data and methodological triangulation.

Role of the researcher

During the research process, the researcher initially played the role of survey administrator, including the reading of the questionnaire items to some respondents in a face-to-face situation (Nardi, 2006). She also was a participant-observer of families engaging in literacy activities in their homes, and of the families’ literary environments. In addition, the researcher participated in the research as an interviewer, conducting focused interviews which were generally open-ended in nature, but which also

incorporated the use of prompting questions to address specific topics relevant to the study (Yin, 2003).

In conjunction with the role the author played as a researcher in this study was the equally important role that she held as an educator. The researcher has been an elementary Spanish Literacy Teacher in the school district where the research was conducted for the past seven years. She taught in the school-site where the research was carried out during the year prior to the study, and continued to work as a full-time teacher at the school-site throughout the realization of this research endeavor. As one of two literacy teachers for native-Spanish speaking students at her school, the researcher taught the majority of the students from the families that participated in this study. In addition to teaching, her role as an educator included much interaction outside of the normal school day with students and their families throughout the year in the form of conferences, family meetings, and other school-wide events.

Instrumentation/Materials

Participants completed a survey in order to provide data regarding family demographics, availability of literacy materials in the home, parents' beliefs about using and learning literacy, and their literacy practices. The survey was loosely based upon a questionnaire developed by Rodríguez-Brown, Li, and Albom (1999), with questions added and adjusted as appropriate to this study. The 42 survey items required participants to respond with yes/no answers, to select a response from several choices, to respond using a 4-point Likert scale, or to provide an open-ended response. The survey was available to participants in English and Spanish, with the possibility for individual or

small group administration for participants who so desired, or that needed assistance as a result of limited literacy skills. The Spanish version of the questionnaire was translated by the researcher and proofread for content equivalency and linguistic appropriateness by a team of bilingual colleagues. The survey was field tested with 5 Hispanic families from a neighboring elementary school prior to the initiation of the study to establish validity and reliability. Upon completing the survey questionnaire, each respondent received a book in appreciation of their time and participation during this stage of the research. The English version of the survey is included in Appendix C and the Spanish version in Appendix D.

Prompting questions were used as a guide during the focused, open-ended interviews. Yin (2003) suggested that researchers engaging in case study research develop a protocol to use to guide the research process. The questions included on a protocol serve as “reminders regarding the information that needs to be collected and why” (p. 74). As suggested by Yin, the researcher included two levels of questions on the protocol, prompting questions to ask of the interviewee during conversation, and guiding questions for the researcher to refer to that were essential to the understanding of the overall research. The researcher also referred to the case study protocol for guidance in relation to specific topics of interest and likely sources of evidence to look for during the interviews and observations conducted as part of site visits in family’s homes. A list of prompting questions in English is included in Appendix E, and in Spanish in Appendix F. The protocol was not revised following the analysis of survey data prior to the actual site visits with representative families. As anticipated, the researcher visited each of the representative families once. Each field visit occurred over the course of one evening,

chosen at the convenience of both the family and researcher. The interviews lasted approximately one hour. Prior to the start of the interview, the researcher asked for participant consent to use a digital audio recorder and only proceeded to record the interview when granted consent. The researcher used a Panasonic digital audio recorder (model RR-US450) to record the interviews and Panasonic Voice Editing software, version 2.0, premium edition (2004-2007) in the transcription of interview data. Following the home visits, each family received a book in appreciation of their time and participation during this stage of the research.

Operational definitions

1. Familial role: The familial role indicated on questionnaire item #1 (0= mother; 1= father; 2= other.
2. Acculturation to the U. S. educational system: The score on the scale created by combining self-reported questionnaire items #2, #3, and #4, and as used to discuss participants in terms of generational immigration status (#2: 0= no; 1= yes) (#3: 0= no; 1= yes) (#4: 0= 0 years; 1= 1-3 years; 2= 4-6 years; 3= 7-10 years; 4= 11+ years). The researcher made the following designations according to the resulting score on the acculturation scale: 0-1= lesser-acculturated immigrant and 2-6= more- acculturated immigrant. These designations classified participants as "more-acculturated" even if they were born in another country, as long as they had attended school in the U.S. for a minimum of 4 years, as specified in the definition of acculturation offered in chapter 1.
3. Years of schooling completed: The self-reported schooling completed as specified

on questionnaire item #5 (0= none; 1= some primary school; 2= primary school; 2.5= some middle school; 3= middle school; 3.5= some high school; 4= high school; 4.5= some college; 5= college; 6= don't know).

4. Languages spoken: The self-reported languages spoken as indicated on questionnaire #6 (0= English; 1= Spanish; 2= Mixteco; 3= other; 4= English and Spanish; 5= Spanish and Mixteco; 6= English, Spanish, and Mixteco; 7= all other combinations).
5. Migrant status: The classification reported on the school district's Migrant Education Program Detail Report (0= not migrant; 1= migrant). The researcher decided to include this data for each respondent after collecting the completed surveys in order to provide additional demographic information for respondents.
6. Access to literacy materials: The score on the scale created by combining questionnaire items #7, #8, #9, #10, and #11 (#7: 0= no; 1= yes for each item, possible total of 10 items) (#8: 0= no; 1= yes) (#9: 0= no; 0= do not have one; 1= yes) (#10: 0=no; 1= yes; 2= already have one) (#11: 0= 0 books; 1= 1-5 books; 2= 6-10 books; 3= 11-15 books; 4= 16+ books). The resulting score on the access to literacy materials scale was designated as 0= no access to materials; 1-6= limited access to materials; 7-12= access to materials; 13-18= extensive access to materials. In addition, the researcher also tracked which literacy items were reported as present or not in the home to assess for frequency of items.
7. Reading practices: The score on the scale created by combining questionnaire items #12, #13, #14, #15, and #16 (#12-#15: 0= 0 mins.; 1= 10 mins.; 2= 20

mins.; 3= 30+ mins.) (#16: 0= per each item not checked; 1= per each item checked, possible total of 15 items). The resulting score on the reading practices scale was designated as 0= exhibits no reading practices; 1-7= exhibits limited reading practices; 8-14= exhibits some reading practices; 15-21= exhibits many reading practices; 22-27= exhibits extensive reading practices. In addition, the researcher also tracked which items were read or not in the home to assess for frequency.

8. Writing practices: The score on the scale created by combining questionnaire items #17, #18, #19, #20, and #21 (#17-#20: 0= 0 mins.; 1= 10 mins.; 2= 20 mins.; 3= 30+ mins.) (#21: 0= per each item not checked; 1= per each item checked, possible total of 11 items). The resulting score on the writing practices scale was designated as 0= exhibits no writing practices; 1-6= exhibits limited writing practices; 7-12= exhibits some writing practices; 13-18= exhibits many writing practices; 19-23= exhibits extensive writing practices. In addition, the researcher also tracked which items were written or not in the home to assess for frequency.
9. Literacy practices: The overall score on the combined reading and writing scales. The resulting score on the literacy practices scale was designated as 0= exhibits no literacy practices; 1-12= exhibits limited literacy practices; 13-25= exhibits some literacy practices; 26-38= exhibits many literacy practices; 39-50= exhibits extensive literacy practices.
10. Participation and interest in literacy activities held at school: The score on the

scale created by combining questionnaire items #22 and #23 (#22-#23: 0= no; .5= maybe or not sure; 1= yes). The resulting score on the literacy activities participation and interest scale was designated as 0= none; 1= some; 2= definite.

11. Participation and interest in adult or parent literacy classes: The score on the scale created by combining questionnaire items #24 and #25 (#24-#25: 0= no; .5= maybe or not sure; 1= yes). The resulting score on the literacy classes participation and interest scale was designated as 0= none; 1= some; 2= definite.
12. Interest in learning more about literacy with children: The level of interest self-reported on questionnaire item #26 (0= no; 1= maybe; 2= yes).
13. Beliefs about using literacy: The score on the scale created by combining questionnaire items #27, #28, #29, #30, #31, #32, and #33 (0= strongly disagree; 1= disagree; 2= agree; 3= strongly agree). The resulting score on the beliefs about using literacy scale was designated as 0-5= mostly in strong disagreement; 6-10= mostly in disagreement; 11-16= mostly in agreement; 17-21= mostly in strong agreement.
14. Beliefs about learning literacy: The score on the scale created by combining questionnaire items #34, #35, and #36 (0= strongly disagree; 1= disagree; 2= agree; 3= strongly agree). The resulting score on the beliefs about learning literacy scale was designated as 0-1= mostly in strong disagreement; 2-4= mostly in disagreement; 5-7= mostly in agreement; 8-9= mostly in strong agreement.
15. Beliefs about literacy: The overall score on the combined beliefs about using and beliefs about learning literacy scales. The resulting score on the beliefs about

literacy scale was designated as 0-7= mostly in strong disagreement; 8-15= mostly in disagreement; 16-23= mostly in agreement; 24-30= mostly in strong agreement.

16. Responsibility for teaching literacy: The score on the scale created by combining questionnaire items #37 and #38 (0= parents; 1= teachers; 2= parents and teachers; 3= other; 4= marked all options).
17. Participant rank on literacy practices and beliefs scales: The overall score on the combined literacy practices, beliefs about using literacy, and beliefs about learning literacy scales. The resulting score on the participant rank scale was designated as 0-26= lower third of participants; 27-53= middle third of participants; 54-80= upper third of participants.
18. Difficulties encountered when reading with child: As shared in free responses written by participants on questionnaire item #39 (the researcher examined responses for common themes).
19. Difficulties encountered when writing with child: As shared in free responses written by participants on questionnaire item #40 (the researcher examined responses for common themes).
20. Enjoyment encountered when reading with child: As shared in free responses written by participants on questionnaire item #41 (the researcher examined responses for common themes).
21. Enjoyment encountered when writing with child: As shared in free responses written by participants on questionnaire item #42 (the researcher examined responses for common themes).

Data analysis

The researcher treated the data obtained via the questionnaire used in this study to statistical analyses using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Graduate Pack computer software package version 16.0. All quantitative data was coded using numeric values. Additionally, for the purposes of statistical analysis, the researcher combined many questions from the survey instrument to create scales, predominantly for analyzing acculturation to the U.S. educational system, access to literacy materials, literacy practices, and beliefs about literacy. Prior to creating these scales, the researcher analyzed the variables using Cronbach's alpha to test for reliability. The researcher used descriptive statistics to explore the nature of the sample, especially regarding immigrant generational status (in terms of acculturation to the U. S. educational system), languages spoken in the home, years of schooling completed, and whether the respondent was the mother, father, or other caregiver in the family. The researcher employed a *t*-test analysis to analyze the differences in responses for lesser-accultured and more-accultured immigrants on the survey scales. Pearson correlations were used to examine how the variables related with each other, particularly to analyze the relationship between immigrant generational status (first generation immigrants versus non first generation immigrants) and beliefs about literacy and literacy practices. The researcher examined the last four free response questions in order to find themes regarding difficulties encountered in reading and writing in the home, as well as positive literacy experiences shared by families.

Qualitative data, including observation notes and digital, audio recordings from the interviews were transcribed, translated when needed, examined by utilizing Bell's (1997) theory of commonplaces for literacy, which included an examination of the User, Text, Context, and Process, and then organized into themes. Using Bell's theory of commonplaces for literacy allowed the researcher to organize qualitative data from the study, in much the same way as Li (2000) previously applied the theory to the organization of interview and observation data during her ethnographic study of a Filipino immigrant family. The researcher in the present study utilized Bell's theory to consider the individual "user" of the texts as well as the "texts" that were used, including printed text and writing materials, and also oral language and storytelling in Spanish, English, and perhaps other native languages. An analysis of the "context" included an examination of the home environment, events from the participants' daily lives in which they use literacy, and the frequency of literacy activities, and an analysis of the "process" involved an investigation of how the families interact with literacy, specifically how and why they use literacy. An examination of the user and texts would help to describe the families' access to literacy materials, while an examination of the context and process would further the researcher's understanding of the individuals' and families' literacy practices and overall beliefs about literacy, expanding upon the more qualitative data gathered from the survey questionnaire.

The digital, audio recordings and subsequent transcriptions, as well as all other documents related to the collection of data, including qualitative data tables from SPSS,

were backed up on FoxFiles, an online document management system made available by George Fox University.

Procedures

1. The researcher requested and was granted permission from the school district to conduct this study.
2. The researcher submitted her research proposal to her thesis committee and the Protection of Human Subjects Initial Review Questionnaire to the George Fox University Human Subjects Research Committee (HSRC) for approval. The researcher received notification of approval of her research application from the HSRC on September 24, 2007.
3. The researcher translated the informed consent form (Appendix B) and survey questionnaire (Appendix D) to Spanish. The materials were then proofread for content equivalency and linguistic appropriateness by a team of bilingual colleagues.
4. The researcher purchased a variety of English, Spanish, and bilingual (English/Spanish) picture and chapter books at the Scholastic Warehouse Sale to give to families in appreciation of their participation following their completion of the survey questionnaire and, if applicable, following their participation in an interview/observation during the second phase of the study.
5. Upon receiving approval from the school district and the Human Subjects Research Committee, the researcher field-tested the informed consent form and survey questionnaire with 5 families from a neighboring school to check for

instrument reliability and validity. The researcher contacted via telephone five families that she had worked with in the past to inform them of the proposed study and ask for their assistance in piloting the questionnaire. She used a convenience sampling technique for selecting these families, and simply chose the first five families living in a particular apartment complex that answered their telephones. Based on the correlation coefficients calculated using Cronbach's alpha, the researcher determined that the survey questionnaire employed in the pilot study demonstrated acceptable internal consistency and would therefore be reliable to serve the purposes of answering these research questions. The researcher also made several significant observations during the pilot study that provided important information for this research. She determined the necessity of providing an additional instruction sheet in English (Appendix C) and in Spanish (Appendix D) to accompany the research materials. The variance between responses related to literacy practices and beliefs about literacy amongst family members was noted, and the researcher recognized the importance of including and encouraging the participation of multiple family members in the survey sample. It also became apparent to the researcher that she would need to assure future participants of the value of all types of answers, as some pilot respondents expressed feelings of self-consciousness related to their perceived limited literacy skills. In addition, the researcher made a few changes to specific questionnaire items to increase the clarity of the instrument. See Appendix G for specific findings related to the pilot study, a complete list of the researcher's observations regarding the effectiveness

of the questionnaire items, and the resulting changes to the survey instrument as a result of the pilot study.

6. Also upon receiving approval from the school district and the Human Subjects Research Committee, the researcher obtained demographic data as self-reported by families on school registration forms from the school secretary in order to identify families of Mexican descent for participation in this study. The list obtained from the school secretary included all families that identified themselves as Hispanic. The researcher then removed families from the list that she knew for sure were not of Mexican descent. She then contacted any remaining families on the list that she did not previously know to determine if they were of Mexican descent.
7. All identified families of Mexican descent in the school were then contacted personally via a letter sent home in English (Appendix H) and Spanish (Appendix I), as well as with a phone call from the researcher to invite them to become participants in the study. During the phone call, the researcher inquired as to the parents, caregivers, and/or other members of the extended family within the home that would be interested in participating in the study, the language of preference of the individuals for research documents, and whether they would prefer to have research materials sent home directly, to attend a group meeting at the school to complete the informed consent form and questionnaire, or whether they would like to schedule an individual appointment with the researcher either at their home or the school. The researcher also asked families about their language preferences

and whether they would prefer a picture or chapter book for the book that they would receive in appreciation of their participation upon completion of survey questionnaire. The researcher recorded the potential respondents' preferences in an Excel spreadsheet.

8. In addition, the researcher gave a brief explanation of the research project and survey at an annual meeting with parents of English Language Learners at the school on October 3, 2007. Parents had the opportunity to express their interest and fill in their preferences for participation in the survey using a print-out of the Excel spreadsheet following the meeting. The researcher also took advantage of her face-to-face contact with parents during the fall conferences in October. After conferencing with parents, the researcher explained the upcoming research. The parents then had the opportunity to share their interest and preferences for participation in the survey with the researcher. Some families chose to read and sign the informed consent document at the conference, as time allowed.
9. After signing informed consent forms, participants were then provided several different opportunities to complete the survey questionnaire, including:
 - a) Individual administration by scheduled appointment either at home or at school.
 - b) Small group administration by attending a scheduled meeting with the researcher at the school. (Several such meetings will be held, as necessary.)
 - c) Obtaining a copy of the questionnaire to fill out and return on one's own.

10. The researcher held the following meetings to assist families in completing the survey: Tuesday, November 6th from 6:30-7:30 PM; Thursday, November 15th from 4:00-5:00 PM and from 5:15-6:15 PM; Friday, November 16th from 3:45-4:45 PM; and Wednesday, November 28th from 4:30-5:30 PM and 5:30-6:30 PM. All meetings were held in the teacher/researcher's classroom at the school. The researcher offered to have individual appointments at other locations, but all the participants chose to come to the school building.
11. The researcher collected questionnaires from participants over a two month period, spanning from mid October to mid December.
12. The researcher made additional effort to contact families that had indicated interest but that had not completed and returned the questionnaire by making personal phone calls and written announcements. To further encourage participation in the survey, the researcher included a brief paragraph about the research project in a classroom newsletter sent out to all the families of her students at the beginning of October. She included another announcement about the survey in the November newsletter, thanking parents that had already agreed to participate and that had turned in their surveys. An attachment was included for families that had not yet been contacted by the researcher for them to fill out and turn in regarding their interest in participating and their participation preferences. The researcher then proceeded to call parents that had not yet been contacted or that did not turn in the letter of interest. An additional announcement about the survey was included in the December newsletter, again thanking parents that had

already turned in their surveys and asking families that had still not done so to return the surveys by Friday, December 14th. The researcher also called all families that had not yet turned in their surveys during the week of December 4th-7th. As the researcher did not want to pressure families, no family received more than two phone calls to remind them to turn in their surveys, one call earlier in the fall, and one call in early December to remind them of the deadline.

13. After reaching the deadline for turning in surveys, the researcher analyzed survey data using SPSS. Several families had left survey question #4 blank (the question regarding years of schooling in the U.S.). Because the information was essential for calculating the participants' acculturation level, the researcher called participants that had not responded to this question to ask for the accurate answer. When calling about these missing answers, the researcher assured the participants that it was fine for them to choose not to answer, but that she just wanted to be sure that they had understood the question. The researcher found that as expected, the participants did not understand how to answer the question and therefore left it blank. The researcher also called regarding missing responses on the scale items. She found that rather than intentionally leaving these items blank, in most instances the respondents skipped items because they were unfamiliar with taking surveys and missed entire pages/sections; or they did not understand the question. In these cases the researcher was able to clarify the questions and/or survey format via telephone. In the case of the reading/writing at work questions (#14, #19),

several individuals left the questions blank because they said they did not work, in which case the researcher asked if it would then be alright to mark "0 minutes".

14. After analyzing survey data, the researcher then identified potential representative families for home visits and interviews and purposively selected six families from the identified sample of willing participants. From the research participants that indicated that they were willing to participate in the second phase of the study, the researcher identified four cases of lesser-acculturated participants that scored in the lower third of survey participants on the literacy practices and beliefs scales. There were forty-five cases of willing, lesser-acculturated participants scoring in the middle third of survey participants and five cases of willing, lesser-acculturated participants scoring in the upper third of respondents. With regards to more-acculturated families, there were no cases of participants scoring in the lower third of respondents on the literacy practices and beliefs scales. There were fourteen respondents scoring in the middle third of participants and seven respondents scoring in the upper third of participants. When purposively selecting cases from these willing, identified families, the researcher took into consideration several factors. Some participants were chosen because the researcher did not know those families very well and the observations and interviews would also allow the opportunity to forge a stronger connection with the family. Family #2 was chosen because the researcher wanted to insure that a Mixteco speaking family was included in the second phase of the study. Family #2 and Family #3 were also strong selections because of their migrant status. The researcher chose

not to select several families because the acculturation levels of the parents were different. In many cases, one parent was a lesser-accultured immigrant while the other parent was a more acculturated immigrant, often scoring in the same tier (middle or upper third) on the literacy beliefs and practices scales. In order to be able to compare and contrast the different beliefs and practices exhibited by lesser and more acculturated immigrants, the researcher chose not to select these families from mixed acculturation levels for the purposes of the second phase of this study.

15. The researcher recruited potential representative families by contacting them to explore their continued interest in participating in the study. She then scheduled one home visit per family, approximately one to two weeks in advance of the interview/observation. The researcher then began to carry out observations and interviews with representative families, usually meeting with one representative family per week. As anticipated, the observations and interviews lasted approximately one hour, with the home visits typically including a longer, culturally appropriate social visit as well.
16. Following the home visits, the researcher transcribed and translated the digital, audio recordings from the interviews. Specifically, the researcher transcribed each interview using Panasonic Voice Editing Version 2.00 Premium Edition computer software (2004-2007). After transcribing each interview, the researcher listened to the interview, revised for accuracy, and then transferred the transcription to a Microsoft Word document in order to add the appropriate Spanish language

orthographic characters where appropriate. The researcher then translated the transcriptions of interviews conducted in Spanish into English.

17. The researcher randomly assigned pseudonyms to interview participants in order to protect their confidentiality using a website with the most popular baby names in Spanish from 2007 (BabyCenter, 2008). The researcher imported the lists of names into an Excel spreadsheet. She created a list of randomized numbers and then assigned each number to a name. The researcher then assigned names to the interview participants from the list of most popular names, in randomized order. Some names were eliminated from the list as they had too many characters and would impact the formatting of the interview transcripts. The following names were assigned to participants from the representative families: Sara and Allison, Family 1; Marta, Fátima, Juan, and Marcos, Family 2; Gabriel, Olivia, Valentina, Álvaro, and Josué, Family 3; Mia, Mateo, and Julieta, Family 5; and Jimena, Santino, Delfino, and Matías, Family 6.
18. The researcher analyzed observation and interview notes for themes using Bell's (1997) theory of commonplaces for literacy. Specifically, the researcher printed copies of the transcribed and translated audio recordings from the interviews. She then highlighted the transcribed interviews using four colors to specify the four commonplaces in Bell's theory: pink = users (who), orange = texts (what, printed and oral), yellow = context (when and where), and blue = process (how and why).

19. The researcher also reviewed demographic data from the survey and included the data in the descriptions of the representative families and in data triangulation for each representative family.
20. The researcher decided to add information regarding each survey and interview participant's migrant status to SPSS data based on the School District Program Detail Report for the Migrant Education Program as of February 20, 2008.
21. At this time, the researcher also finished identifying themes in the four free-response survey questions.
22. The researcher then wrote chapters four and five of her Master's Thesis to report on findings and conclusions from the research.
23. Finally, the researcher presented research findings to her thesis committee. She held a parent meeting to share the information gathered and learned through the research process with interested participants and conducted an informational meeting for interested colleagues.

What contribution might the study provide?

This research not only has significance for the researcher, as a teacher of Mexican immigrant students, but also for all educators instructing in areas with increasing Hispanic populations. Every year more Hispanic students, especially those of Mexican descent, are entering public school classrooms in Oregon, making it essential that teachers become more knowledgeable about the home literacy practices of these students' families. In order to build upon the initial literacy exposure that Hispanic students experience within their homes, educators must first have an understanding of what

constitutes that exposure. The researcher has witnessed firsthand the growth of the Hispanic population in the town, school district, and school site where she works. From these experiences, the researcher finds it essential for all school personnel, including paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators, to understand the literacy foundation and practices of the Hispanic population. Such awareness allows the opportunity for educators to build upon students' initial literacy experiences using supportive pedagogical practices and to encourage the development of a positive, supportive relationship between school and home. When teachers and school administrators have greater knowledge about families' beliefs about literacy and literacy practices, they are better able to provide opportunities within schools to further develop literacy for students and their families. It is the researcher's sincere belief and aspiration that professional educators, and in turn, students and their families will benefit from the information gathered as part of this research.

Specifically, the findings from this study, especially regarding families' access to literacy materials, could potentially be useful to school personal in the allocation of funds from Title 1 that are designated for spending to support family literacy. As school personal consider options such as making literacy boxes for families to use at home, survey results for data specifically related to the needs of students' families could serve to guide decisions regarding spending priorities.

Information regarding families' desire to access the public library obtained via the survey questionnaire and interviews with representative families could offer a focus for future parent meetings. Based on findings, it could be desirable to, as often, perhaps, as

once a year, focus one of the school based ELL family meetings on helping families to obtain library cards and to learn about opportunities and information offered at the public library. Additional information shared by parents via the surveys and interviews could also be beneficial for the school district. Particularly, the information regarding one family's desire to access the school district's collection of materials for families, but their difficulty encountered in doing so related to an inconvenient schedule.

CHAPTER 4

This study was comprised of two phases. The findings from the two phases are found in separate sections included within this chapter. The first section of chapter four includes a presentation of quantitative findings from the first phase of the study (survey findings), followed by a section on qualitative findings from the second phase of the study (interview findings).

Survey Findings

In the initial phase of this case study research, the researcher utilized structured and open-ended items on a self-report questionnaire with Mexican immigrant families to answer the first and second research questions regarding a description of the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices of immigrant parents of Mexican descent and the correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to their beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing. Specifically, this phase of the study addressed the following quantitative research questions:

1. What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices self-reported by a sample of immigrant parents of Mexican descent?
2. What is the correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing?

First, the researcher will discuss demographic information to provide a profile of the survey respondents. Then the researcher will discuss the reliability of the research instrument using Cronbach's alpha. Next, descriptive and inferential statistics related to the respondent's behaviors and attitudes as measured in the survey will be presented. Then, the researcher will introduce findings related to the relationship between generational differences and respondents' literacy practices and beliefs about literacy. The researcher will close this section of the chapter with findings from the four free response questions.

The researcher identified several significant findings in the first phase of this study, which will be explained in detail in the following sections. Data showed that the survey sample included a greater representation of lesser-acculturated immigrants than more-acculturated immigrants. However, the acculturation construct scored low on reliability measures. Survey results demonstrated a variance of scores on the construct scales for literacy practices, literacy beliefs, and access to literacy materials. Respondents tended to agree or strongly agree with the belief statements regarding using and learning literacy; although, the belief regarding whether or not children begin learning before they go to school generated some dissent amongst respondents. With regards to literacy practices, the activities respondents engaged in most frequently consisted of reading and writing to or with a child at home. Responses also indicated that homework or schoolwork were the texts most used for reading and writing by the respondents. In almost all instances, with the exception of work, respondents reported engaging in reading activities with greater frequency than writing. Respondents predominantly

recognized the responsibility of both parents and teachers in teaching children to read and write.

With regards to the relationship between acculturation and beliefs about literacy and literacy practices, the differences in responses for lesser-accultured and more-accultured immigrants were not statistically significant with regards to literacy beliefs and access to literacy materials. However, differences in responses between the two immigrant groups were statistically significant on the literacy practices construct, demonstrating a moderate correlation between the two constructs. A statistically significant albeit weak correlation also existed between literacy practices and literacy beliefs.

Participants' open-ended answers on the four free response questions also offered significant findings. Survey responses most frequently referred to issues of attention, language, and time regarding factors that contribute to difficulties when reading with their child. With regards to what is most difficult about writing with their child, participants' responses most frequently referred to issues of language, spelling, and the skill level of the parent and/or child. When asked to identify what they enjoy most about reading with their child, participants most frequently discussed learning, texts, comprehension, the joy of reading, and time together or bonding in their responses. Participants most frequently discussed learning, teaching and helping, time together or bonding, and the joy of writing in their responses related to what they enjoy most about writing with their child.

Demographic information

A total of 85 respondents completed surveys during the first phase of this study. The survey sample consisted primarily of mothers, 63.5% of respondents, with fathers representing 35.3% of respondents. One aunt also completed and submitted a survey. As shown in Table 1, the majority of respondents reported either using Spanish (35.3%) or both English and Spanish (54.1%) in the home. Seven respondents mentioned also speaking Mixteco, an indigenous language of many varieties spoken in regions of the Mexican states of Oaxaca, Puebla, and Guerrero.

Table 1

Languages Spoken

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid English	2	2.4	2.4	2.4
Spanish	30	35.3	35.3	37.6
English & Spanish	46	54.1	54.1	91.8
Spanish & Mixteco	2	2.4	2.4	94.1
English, Spanish & Mixteco	5	5.9	5.9	100.0
Total	85	100.0	100.0	

A total of 28.2% of the total survey respondents qualified for migrant status.

Although this percentage does not initially appear significant, the response rate of migrant families in this survey is noteworthy. A total of 27 students were listed as qualifying for migrant status on the school district program detail report for migrant education. These 27 students represented 22 families. Without any intentional effort made by the researcher to elicit the participation of these migrant families more than any other potential survey participant, 20 migrant families completed surveys in this study. In other words, there was a participation rate of 91% of the school's migrant families in this study.

The majority of the respondents, 92.9%, and their parents, 96.5%, were not born in the United States. As shown in Table 2, most respondents reported having completed some schooling; however 16.5% reported having completed no schooling. With relation to schooling completed, 68.2% of respondents said that they had completed no schooling in the United States, while 12.9% reported completing eleven or more years of schooling here (see Table 3). In terms of acculturation to the U.S. educational system determined by considering the country of birth of the respondent and their parents, as well as by the number of years of schooling completed by the respondent in the United States, 71.7% of the survey respondents classified as lesser-acculturated immigrants while 28.3% classified as more-acculturated immigrants.

Table 2

Total Years of Schooling Completed^a

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	14	16.5	16.5	16.5
	some primary school	6	7.1	7.1	23.5
	primary school	21	24.7	24.7	48.2
	some middle school	1	1.2	1.2	49.4
	middle school	21	24.7	24.7	74.1
	some high school	6	7.1	7.1	81.2
	high school	10	11.8	11.8	92.9
	some college	1	1.2	1.2	94.1
	college	5	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	85	100.0	100.0	

a. Includes schooling completed anywhere.

Table 3

Years of Schooling Completed in the U.S.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0 years	58	68.2	68.2	68.2
1-3 years	3	3.5	3.5	71.8
4-6 years	5	5.9	5.9	77.6
7-10 years	8	9.4	9.4	87.1
11+ years	11	12.9	12.9	100.0
Total	85	100.0	100.0	

Reliability statistics

The researcher used Cronbach's alpha (α) to test for reliability by assessing internal consistency between survey questions designed to measure specific constructs. The researcher used an alpha level of .700 and above to verify an appropriate level of significance for the correlation coefficients. As shown in Table 4, the researcher noted that the correlation coefficients were strong for the responsibility for teaching literacy construct ($\alpha = .908$), the beliefs about literacy construct ($\alpha = .860$), the beliefs about using literacy construct ($\alpha = .856$), and the literacy practices construct ($\alpha = .768$). A significant finding from the test for reliability was that the acculturation construct had a low correlation coefficient ($\alpha = .318$). The researcher focused on the literacy beliefs and literacy practices constructs for the purposes of further statistical analysis, recognizing the

limitations of correlation findings due to the lower reliability of the acculturation construct. Nevertheless, based on the correlation coefficients calculated using Cronbach's alpha, the researcher determined that the survey questionnaire employed in the study demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, with a coefficient of $\alpha = .829$ when all survey questions, with the exception of the four free response questions, were combined.

Table 4

<i>Reliability Statistics</i>		
Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Access to Literacy Materials	0.595	5
Acculturation to U.S. Educational System	0.318	3
Beliefs About Learning Literacy	0.589	3
Beliefs About Using Literacy	0.856*	7
Literacy Beliefs ^a	0.860*	10
Literacy Practices ^b	0.768*	10
Participation & Interest in Literacy Classes	0.392	2
Participation & Interest in Literacy Events	0.392	2
Questionnaire ^c	0.829	38
Reading Practices	0.589	5
Responsibility for Teaching Literacy	0.908*	2
Writing Practices	0.600	5

^aConstruct combined all questions related to Beliefs about Learning and Using Literacy. ^bConstruct combined all questions related to Reading and Writing Practices. ^cIncludes all questionnaire items, with the exception of the four free response questions.

* $\alpha > .700$

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics for the scales created from the survey questionnaire are included in Table 5. The mean score on the acculturation scale was 1.06 with a standard deviation of 1.75. It was a positively skewed distribution, as there was a median score of 0 on this scale. In other words, based on scores from the acculturation scale, respondents most commonly qualified as lesser-accultured immigrants. The variance of scores on the construct scales for literacy practices, literacy beliefs, and access to literacy materials were (*SDs* = 9.77, 4.52, and 4.01, respectively). The majority of respondents indicated that it is both the parents' and teachers' responsibility to teach a child to read (77.6%) and write (80%) on the responsibility for teaching literacy scale ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 1.47$).

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Survey Scales

		Acculturation to the U.S. educational system	Access to literacy materials	Literacy practices	Responsibility for teaching literacy	Literacy beliefs
<i>N</i>	Valid	85	85	85	85	83
	Missing	0	0	0	0	2
Mean		1.0588	13.1176	18.3059	3.3529	24.2952
Median		.0000	14.0000	17.0000	4.0000	25.0000
Std. Deviation		1.74815	4.01014	9.77457	1.46958	4.52098
Variance		3.056	16.081	95.542	2.160	20.439

Considering all of the statements included on the literacy beliefs scale, the belief regarding whether or not children begin learning before they go to school generated the greatest dissent amongst respondents (see Table 6). This belief had the lowest mean score ($M = 1.92$) with the most significant level of standard deviation ($SD = .86$) measured on the questionnaire. Also, while most respondents agreed (29.4%) or strongly agreed (65.9%) that reading and writing are a necessary for getting a job ($M = 2.59$, $SD = .66$), there was more variance in agreement as to whether or not reading is important for actually performing the job ($M = 2.40$, $SD = .82$). In comparison to other belief statements, more respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with statements related to using literacy for pleasure, including the beliefs that reading is a valuable use of time ($M = 2.32$, $SD = .67$) and that reading and writing are an important form of entertainment ($M = 2.34$, $SD = .68$). However this finding was not of particular significance, as 90.6% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with both beliefs that reading and writing are an important form of entertainment and that reading is a valuable use of time. The mean scores for all belief statements on this construct, with the exception of the belief that children learn before going to school, were greater than $M = 2$. A score of 3 for each belief statement indicated strong agreement and a score of 2 indicated agreement. Therefore, respondents tended to agree or strongly agree with the belief statements regarding using and learning literacy.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Literacy Beliefs

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Importance of children reading daily	85	2.612	.5584
Children learn before they come to school	85	1.918	.8621
Children learn by observing others reading and writing	85	2.376	.5971
Reading and writing is empowering	84	2.476	.6672
Reading and writing are necessary for getting a job	85	2.588	.6600
Reading and writing are useful in everyday life	85	2.671	.5646
Reading and writing allow participation in society	85	2.518	.6097
Reading is a valuable use of time	85	2.324	.6668
Reading is important for job	84	2.405	.8231
Reading and writing are an important form of entertainment	85	2.341	.6823
Valid <i>N</i> (listwise)	83		

Note. Maximum score for each question on the literacy beliefs construct = 3, indicating strong agreement with the belief.

Considering the reading and writing practices included on the literacy practices scale, it is apparent that in almost all instances respondents reported engaging in reading activities with greater frequency than writing. As shown in Table 7, the mean scores for minutes spent reading at home, both alone and with children, and at church were higher

than the mean scores for writing at home, both alone and with children, and at church. However, with regards to working, respondents reported writing more frequently ($M = .96$, $SD = 1.19$) than reading ($M = .69$, $SD = 1.09$). Overall, the literacy practices respondents engaged in most frequently as indicated by the highest mean scores on the literacy practices construct consisted of reading ($M = 1.53$, $SD = .80$) and writing ($M = 1.27$, $SD = .85$) to or with a child at home.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Literacy Practices

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Items read at home, work, or church	85	6.447	3.8437
Items written at home, work, or church	85	3.776	2.5745
Minutes spent reading at home alone daily	85	1.306	.9762
Minutes spent reading at church each week	85	1.029	1.2449
Minutes spent reading at work daily	85	.694	1.0913
Minutes spent reading to or with a child at home daily	85	1.529	.7956
Minutes spent writing at home alone daily	85	.847	.8238
Minutes spent writing at church each week	85	.447	.9821
Minutes spent writing at work daily	85	.959	1.1908
Minutes spent writing to or with a child at home daily	85	1.271	.8506
Valid <i>N</i> (listwise)	85		

The literacy practices construct also measured items read (see Table 8) and written (see Table 9) by the respondents. Of the texts included on the questionnaire, respondents most frequently reported reading homework or schoolwork ($M = .871$). With a mean score of .118, novels were reported as the least read text on the construct. With regards to writing, homework or schoolwork were again reported as the item most frequently written by respondents ($M = .671$). As previously noted, participants once more reported engaging more frequently in reading than in writing when considering the parallel literacy activities of reading and writing schoolwork, as demonstrated by the higher mean score for reading over writing schoolwork. With a mean score of .118, respondents indicated that journals were the least written item on the construct.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Items Read

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Homework or schoolwork	85	.871	.3376
Newspapers	85	.588	.4951
Children's books	85	.553	.5001
Bible or Religious texts	85	.518	.5027
Letters	85	.506	.5029
Magazines	85	.447	.5001
Instructions	85	.447	.5001
Notes	85	.435	.4987
Recipes	85	.400	.4928
Forms or Documents	85	.400	.4928
Lists	85	.376	.4874
Labels	85	.353	.4807
Textbooks	85	.235	.4267
Email	85	.200	.4024
Novels	85	.118	.3241
Valid <i>N</i> (listwise)	85		

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Items Written

	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Homework	85	.671	.4728
Notes	85	.494	.5029
Lists	85	.482	.5027
Letters	85	.400	.4928
Instructions	85	.365	.4842
Forms or Documents	85	.329	.4728
Summaries	85	.306	.4635
Recipes	85	.306	.4635
Emails	85	.153	.3621
Labels	85	.153	.3621
Journals	85	.118	.3241
Valid <i>N</i> (listwise)	85		

Comparing means (t-test)

The differences in responses for lesser-acculturated and more-acculturated immigrants were not statistically significant with regards to literacy beliefs; however, differences in responses between the two immigrant groups were statistically significant with an alpha level of .01 on the access to literacy materials and literacy practices constructs. As shown in Table 10 and Table 11, the scores on the literacy beliefs construct

demonstrated little difference for more-acculturated immigrants ($M = 24.56$, $SD = 4.28$) and lesser-acculturated immigrants ($M = 24.19$, $SD = 4.63$), $t = .335$, $p = .738$ (two-tailed), $df = 81$. The scores for more-acculturated immigrants ($M = 14.92$, $SD = 2.92$) and lesser-acculturated immigrants ($M = 12.41$, $SD = 4.18$) were statistically significant on the access to literacy materials construct, $t = 2.69$, $p = .009$ (two-tailed), $df = 83$. The more-acculturated immigrants ($M = 25.33$, $SD = 8.68$) reported statistically greater literacy practices than did the lesser-acculturated immigrants ($M = 15.54$, $SD = 8.79$), $t = 4.64$, $p = .000$ (two-tailed), $df = 83$.

Table 10

Group Statistics: Acculturation & Survey Constructs

	Acculturation to the U.S. educational system ^a	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Std. Error Mean
Literacy beliefs	≥ 2.00	23	24.5652	4.28344	.89316
	< 2.00	60	24.1917	4.63963	.59897
Literacy practices	≥ 2.00	24	25.3333	8.68115	1.77203
	< 2.00	61	15.5410	8.79455	1.12603
Access to literacy materials	≥ 2.00	24	14.9167	2.91796	.59563
	< 2.00	61	12.4098	4.17683	.53479

^a ≥ 2.00 = more-acculturated immigrants; < 2.00 = lesser-acculturated immigrants

Table 11

Comparing Means for Acculturation & Survey Constructs

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Literacy beliefs	Equal variances assumed	.068	.795	.335	81	.738	.37355	1.11480	-1.84454	2.59165
	Equal variances not assumed			.347	42.996	.730	.37355	1.07541	-1.79522	2.54232
Literacy practices	Equal variances assumed	.010	.922	4.637	83	.000	9.79235	2.11157	5.59252	13.99218
	Equal variances not assumed			4.664	42.658	.000	9.79235	2.09953	5.55726	14.02744
Access to literacy materials	Equal variances assumed	3.317	.072	2.689	83	.009	2.50683	.93232	.65249	4.36117
	Equal variances not assumed			3.132	60.066	.003	2.50683	.80048	.90567	4.10799

*p < .01.

Correlation statistics

The researcher used Pearson r correlations to examine how the variables related with each other, particularly to analyze the relationship between immigrant generational status (lesser-acculturated immigrants versus more-acculturated immigrants) and beliefs about literacy and literacy practices. The researcher initially proposed a null hypothesis, in which there would be no statistically significant correlation found between the level of acculturation of the Mexican immigrant families and their beliefs about literacy and literacy practices. However, the data correlating acculturation and literacy practices resulted in a Pearson r of .494, indicating a moderate correlation which was statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level (Table 12). A statistically significant correlation at the $p < .05$ level also existed between literacy practices and literacy beliefs ($r = .242$), however that relationship was rather weak in strength. Both correlations were positive and two-tailed. The data did not indicate a significant relationship between the constructs of acculturation and literacy beliefs.

Table 12

Correlation Statistics

		Acculturation to the U.S. educational system	Literacy practices	Literacy beliefs
Acculturation to the U.S. educational system	Pearson	1	.494**	.081
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.469
	<i>N</i>	85	85	83
Literacy practices	Pearson	.494**	1	.242*
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.027
	<i>N</i>	85	85	83
Literacy beliefs	Pearson	.081	.242*	1
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.469	.027	
	<i>N</i>	83	83	83

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

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

Free response questions

The researcher examined participants' free responses from the survey for common themes. In some instances two themes were identified within the same response, in which case the researcher classified the same response under multiple thematic categories.

When asked to identify what is most difficult about reading with their child on survey question #39, participants' responses most frequently referred to issues of attention, language, and time (Table 13). The next most frequent response was that the participants found no difficulties in reading with their child. With regards to attention, respondents' comments mentioned children being easily distracted, not paying attention to the reading or the parent, rushing to be done, or wanting to do something else, such as watch television, talk, play, or rest. Common responses related to the issue of language explained participants' difficulties reading texts in English, or knowing which language, Spanish or English, to use when reading with their child. Respondent #66 wrote:

No Es [*sic*] difícil [*sic*] cuando es en español, pero si es en Ingles [*sic*] si [*sic*] por no saber pronunciar algunas letras [It is not difficult when it is in Spanish, but if it is in English, yes because of not knowing how to pronounce some letters].

Participants wrote about time limitations related to demands of having younger children, children that want to hear the same story over and over again, and simply not having enough time available.

Table 13

Question # 39: What is most difficult about reading with your child?

Theme	Frequency	Percent
Attention	24	28%
Language	12	14%
Time	12	14%
No Difficulties	8	9%
Decoding ^a	5	6%
Patience, parent	5	6%
Providing Assistance ^b	5	6%
Skill Level, parent	5	6%
No Response	4	5%
Vocabulary	3	4%
Everything	2	2%
Interest, child	2	2%
Dislike for Reading, child	1	1%
Initially Learning to Read	1	1%
Interruptions	1	1%
Living Arrangement	1	1%
Unfamiliar Material	1	1%

Note. N = 85.

^aDecoding includes: reading accents and periods, letter confusion, pointing to words, sounding out, and volume when reading aloud.

^bProviding Assistance includes: answering questions, explaining meaning, and generally not being able to help.

When asked to identify what is most difficult about writing with their child on survey question #40, participants' responses most frequently referred to issues of language, spelling, and the skill level of the parent and/or child (Table 14). The second most frequent response was that the participants found no difficulties in writing with their child. With regards to language, respondents' comments mentioned the difficulties of writing in English, as well as not always knowing which language, English or Spanish, to use when writing with their child. Respondent #69 wrote, "No saber escribir el Ingles [*sic*]. eso [*sic*] mease [*sic*] sentir algo preocupada [Not knowing how to write English. That makes me feel a little worried]." Some responses related to the issue of spelling included the child not knowing how to blend letters to write words, the parent and/or child confusing letters with similar sounds, and the parent not knowing the correct letters to spell the word. Participants acknowledged limitations related to the skill level of the parent and/or child by writing about not knowing the alphabet or understanding the letters, not writing well in general, or not knowing how to write.

When asked to identify what they enjoy most about reading with their child on survey question #41, participants most frequently discussed learning, texts, comprehension, the joy of reading, and time together or bonding in their responses (Table 15). With regards to learning, respondents mentioned their children's learning, their own learning, and learning engaged in by the parent and child together. Respondents wrote about learning new skills, words, and information when reading. Respondent #52 wrote, "What little I read to her I see her absorb the information and see her use it other ways." Many participants wrote about enjoying books and other written texts, such as stories, journals, poems, and songs, with their children. Respondent #70 replied:

Me emociona mucho leer con mi hija . . . por que [sic] juntos podemos viajar a traves [sic] de las historias de los libros [I really enjoy reading with my daughter . . . because we can travel together through the stories from the books].

Common responses related to comprehension explained how participants enjoy when their children understand what they read in general. In terms of comprehension, respondents also wrote about asking and answering questions, making comments, and discussing characters from books. The researcher designated the joy of reading as a theme to describe the respondents' affective comments related to enjoying reading activities. Participants wrote about having fun, laughing, liking, and enjoying the act of reading. Many respondents identified the time spent together with their children, or time bonding with their children, as being what they most enjoy about reading.

Table 15

Question # 41: What do you enjoy most about reading with your child?

Theme	Frequency	Percent
Learning, parent and/or child	20	24%
Texts ^a	14	16%
Comprehension	13	15%
Joy of Reading, parent and/or child	13	15%
Time Together (Bonding)	13	15%
Attention	5	6%
Improvement, child	4	5%
Interest, child	4	5%
Independence, child	3	4%
No Response	3	4%
Everything	2	2%
Teaching & Supporting, parent	2	2%
Coloring	1	1%
Effort, child	1	1%
Knowledge of Sounds, child	1	1%
Language	1	1%
Listening & Sharing, parent	1	1%
Reading Together	1	1%
Time Available	1	1%

Note. *N* = 85.^aTexts include: books, stories, journals, poems, and/or songs.

When asked to identify what they enjoy most about writing with their child on survey question #42, participants most frequently discussed learning, teaching and helping, time together or bonding, and the joy of writing in their responses (Table 16). With regards to learning, respondents mentioned their child's learning, their own learning, and learning engaged in by the parent and child together. Respondents wrote about learning to write letters, words, and names, as well as about the learning process in general. Respondent #18 wrote the following regarding her children learning:

Me gusta todo lo que ellos empiezan [sic] hacer porque es la edad de que les llama la atencion [sic] que quieren pintar o hacer muchas cosas con un color o lápiz pero sobre todo les llama la atención de escribir su nombre [I like everything that they start doing because it is the age when they are interested and they want to paint and do a lot of things with a crayon or pencil, but most of all they are interested in writing their name].

Many participants wrote about their enjoyment of either teaching and helping their children learn or when their children teach and help them. Participant #55 described her enjoyment of learning together with her children, as well as how they teach and help each other at home, by writing:

Que aprenden ellas y yo practica[sic] con ellas y Que [sic] nos alludemos [sic] a escribir Juntamente [sic]. Correctamente o por lo menos un poco mejor [That they learn and I practice with them and that we can help each other write together correctly, or at least a little better].

In addition, many respondents identified the time spent together with their children, or time bonding with their children, as being what they most enjoy about writing. The researcher designated the joy of writing as a theme to describe the respondents' affective comments related to enjoying writing activities. Common responses related to the joy of writing included liking and enjoying the act of writing, and one participant wrote about her child's feelings of pride at being able to write. Respondent #63 described the joy of writing in the following way:

Lo que mas [*sic*] me gusta con relación a escribir es que mis hijos escriben algo tan bonito que me llena de alegría [*sic*] [What I like best with regards to writing is that my children write something so beautiful that I am filled with joy].

Table 16

Question # 42: What do you enjoy most about writing with your child?

Theme	Frequency	Percent
Learning, parent and/or child	24	28%
Teaching & Helping, parent or child	16	19%
Time Together (Bonding)	11	13%
Joy of Writing, parent and/or child	9	11%
Composing Texts ^a , parent and/or child	8	9%
No response	7	8%
Improvement, child	6	7%
Attention	5	6%
Everything	4	5%
Skills ^b , parent or child	3	4%
Handwriting	2	2%
Independence, child	2	2%
Interest, child	2	2%
Beautiful Work	1	1%
Comprehension	1	1%
Effort, child	1	1%

Note. *N* = 85.^aComposing texts includes writing names, sentences, homework, word searches, and stories copied from books.^bSkills include: not being able to write, writing well, writing beautifully, and sounding out correctly.

Conclusion

In the initial, more quantitative phase of this study, the researcher posed the following questions:

1. What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices self-reported by a sample of immigrant parents of Mexican descent?
2. What is the correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing?

Survey findings have answered both of these questions.

With regards to the first question in which the researcher sought to describe the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices of immigrant parents of Mexican descent, survey results demonstrated a variety of responses on constructs related to behaviors and attitudes. Respondents tended to agree or strongly agree with the belief statements regarding using and learning literacy; although, more disagreement existed relevant to the belief regarding whether or not children begin learning before they go to school. With regards to literacy practices, the activities respondents engaged in most frequently consisted of reading and writing to or with a child at home. Responses also indicated that homework or schoolwork were the texts most used for reading and writing by the respondents. In almost all instances, with the exception of work, respondents reported engaging in reading activities with greater frequency than writing. Respondents predominantly recognized the responsibility of both parents and teachers in teaching children to read and write. Additionally, participants' referred to issues of attention, language, and time as factors contributing to difficulties when reading with their child,

and identified issues of language, spelling, and the skill level of the parent and/or child as increasing the difficulty of writing. In terms of the overall enjoyment of reading, respondents discussed learning, texts, comprehension, the joy of reading, and time together or bonding in their responses, and identified learning, teaching and helping, time together or bonding, and the joy of writing with regards to what they enjoy most about writing with their child.

The study also answered the question as to the existence of a correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing. With regards to the relationship between acculturation and beliefs about literacy and access to literacy materials, the differences in responses for lesser-accultured and more-accultured immigrants were not statistically significant. However, differences in responses between the two immigrant groups were statistically significant on the literacy practices construct, indicating a positive, moderately strong correlation between the two constructs. Thus, as an immigrant becomes more-accultured, he or she engages in more literacy practices. However, the acculturation construct scored low on reliability measures. A statistically significant albeit weak correlation also existed between literacy practices and literacy beliefs.

Interview Findings

The researcher conducted observations and focused audio-recorded interviews with representative families from the group of Mexican immigrant families surveyed to answer the third and fourth research questions regarding how Mexican immigrant families practice literacy in their homes and daily lives and how their beliefs and practices differ between more and lesser-aculturated immigrant families. Specifically, this phase of the study addressed the following qualitative research questions:

3. How do Mexican immigrant families practice literacy in their homes and daily lives?
4. How do these beliefs and practices differ between more and lesser-aculturated immigrant families?

For each representative family, first a description of the family, including specific information relevant to the interview and demographic information from the interview and survey data, will be reported. Then, the researcher will report findings as organized by using Bell's (1997) theory of commonplaces for literacy, which included an examination of the User, Text, Context, and Process for each family. The findings for each representative family will then conclude with an analysis of the triangulation of interview data with survey results.

The researcher identified several findings in the second phase of this study, which will be illustrated in detail with relation to each family in the following sections. From information gathered during the structured interviews, the researcher found that members

from each of the representative families used texts, or participated in literacy activities in the home, including babies, toddlers, school-age children, and adults. However, the researcher noticed that the level of participation seemed to move along a continuum from more passive to more active engagement as the participants' scores on the combined literacy beliefs and practices scale increased. This distinction was more pronounced for lesser-aculturated families than for more-aculturated families. Interview and observation data also showed that all representative families were in possession of some literacy materials, or texts, although the type and quantity of the possessions varied from one family to another. However, both the lesser-aculturated and the more-aculturated families scoring in the upper third of respondents on the combined survey scales (families #3 and #6, respectively) demonstrated evidence of the most access to literacy materials. As expected, with regards to the context, or frequency and location in which literacy activities take place, the researcher observed that the two families scoring in the upper third of participants on the combined survey scales reported more frequent and longer periods of engagement in literacy activities. In terms of purposes for reading, as included in the category of processes, the researcher found that more-aculturated families talked about reading for pleasure where as lesser-aculturated families did not. In lesser-aculturated families literacy activities were reported mostly or exclusively in relation to academic or religious education.

Another finding was that no respondents classifying as more-aculturated on the survey questionnaire scored in the lower third on the combined survey scales for literacy practices and beliefs. Therefore, the researcher could not identify a representative case of

a more-acculturated family scoring in the lower third of participants on the combined survey scales for literacy practices and beliefs for the purposes of the second phase of this research.

Family #1: Case of a lesser-acculturated family scoring in the lower third of participants on the combined survey scales

Description of representative family. The members of this family include: Sara, the mother; Allison, the daughter in fourth grade; and a 17 month old baby brother. The father was not present at the time of the interview. The researcher interviewed the family in their home on Wednesday, February 13, 2008. The focused, audio recorded interview lasted approximately twelve minutes (00:11:42). The interview occurred in Spanish, per family preference. During the interview, the researcher spoke almost exclusively with Sara, the mother. However, Allison, the daughter, did respond when addressed directly by either her mother or the researcher. The interview occurred primarily in the family room, which was connected to the kitchen. The researcher observed multiple families living in the home.

The mother of this family was respondent #74 in the survey sample. On the survey, she self-reported that neither she nor her parents were born in the United States. She completed primary school, but did not attend school at all in the United States. According to her survey response, family members speak both English and Spanish in the home.

Users (who). The daughter, Alison, reads and writes mostly alone. Sara, the mother, said that she is there to help check her daughter's work, or to listen to her

daughter, but that she doesn't really read or write on her own. The baby looks at the books and they read to him.

Texts (what). The daughter, Allison, has a collection of books including books from school, library books, books from church (*La biblia católica para jóvenes* [*The Catholic Bible for Children*] and *La eucarista* [*The Eucharist*]), and her own books and workbooks. According to Alison, former teachers gave her some of the books. The family keeps the books on two shelves in a closet in the hallway. Allison estimated having 20 books in her book closet; although they did not count the texts, the researcher estimated that there were likely more than 20 books present. Allison identified and shared several of her favorite books from the book closet with the researcher. According to her mother, they like to read funny books and Allison has been bringing home books about television cartoons. The baby brother likes pictures books about colors. Sara also tells stories to her kids in Spanish about when she was little. Homework from school was the only text written by the family in the home; they did not have any family generated texts available to share with the researcher.

Context (when, where). According to Sara, Allison reads at 8:30 or 9:00 at night in her room, before going to bed. Sara said they go to the public library every week, however the researcher worries that she suggested this frequency during the interview. But, when prompted by the researcher, "or whenever", the mother repeated that they visit the library weekly. Sara also shared that her daughter completes writing homework in her room, about two to three times per week. The mother said that most of the daughter's

reading and writing takes place in her bedroom, and unfortunately the researcher did not ask to see that location.

The researcher observed adequate lighting in the home. The environment was quiet without a lot of distracting noise and action during the duration of the interview. The family room had comfortable seating on couches and armchairs, and there were also stools around a counter in the kitchen.

Process (how, why). Alison, the daughter, writes her homework and Sara, the mother, checks her work. Alison reads alone, and sometimes her mother listens to her, but Sara does not read on her own. When they read together, Alison chooses the books to read from their book closet. Alison is also studying books for church. In addition, her mother says that she reads because at school they say that she has to read. They go to the public library to check out books and to rent movies. According to Sara, not understanding the words in books makes reading at home hard, and books with funny stories make reading at home easier. Sara talked about how before Allison wasn't remembering what she had read very well, that she didn't always understand the books. However, she explained that now she is bringing other books home, books with cartoon characters, and she is remembering more about what she reads.

Triangulation with survey results. In terms of access to literacy materials, the mother's responses on the survey indicated that the family possessed many literacy supplies in their home including: paper, pencils, pens, crayons, markers, colored pencils, scissors, and a dictionary, but did not own glue or tape. The researcher did not see evidence of these supplies in the home, but nor did she ask the family to share these at the

time of the home visit and interview. On the survey the mother reported both having and using a library card, which she also confirmed during the interview. The researcher estimated seeing at least twenty books in the home, which was consistent with the mother's survey response of owning sixteen or more books.

With regards to literacy practices and beliefs about literacy, the mother's survey responses indicated that the family reads together ten minutes a day, on average, but that she does not read alone. This was fairly consistent with what the researcher learned during the interview, however it appears that the family, or at least the daughter, may read for as much as thirty minutes per night. On the survey the mother reported reading children's books, newspapers, the Bible, and homework. During the interview and home visit, the researcher saw or heard evidence that children's books, the Bible and other religious texts, and homework are read in the home; however the mother did not mention reading newspapers. Both on the survey and during the interview the mother indicated that the family members do not engage in writing activities, aside from her daughter's homework. On the survey, she agreed with all the beliefs about using and learning literacy, but strongly disagreed that reading is important for her job. Her survey responses indicated that she believes it to be the parents' responsibility to teach reading and writing to their children. In the interview, the mother talked about checking her daughter's homework, and also discussed some challenges that her daughter has experienced while learning. In addition, she takes her children to the library, and engages in oral storytelling with them.

When replying to the free response questions on the survey, the mother described what is most difficult about reading with her children by writing, “No es difícil [*sic*] cuando el niño ya sabe leer es difícil [*sic*] cuando empieza a leer [It's not difficult when the child already knows how to read. It's difficult when he/she is starting to read]”. She wrote about spelling difficulties as posing the greatest challenge in writing with her children. During the interview, she identified the greatest challenges towards reading and writing with her children as being when her daughter doesn't understand the words in the texts that she reads, or when she cannot remember them well. Her survey response regarding what she enjoys most about reading with her children also focused on comprehension. With relation to reading, the mother wrote that she enjoys reading when her daughter understands what the book is about. Likewise, she wrote that what she enjoys most about writing with her daughter is when her daughter understands what she writes. During the interview, she said that funny books from the school and library help make reading at home easier.

In conclusion, the researcher noticed minimal variance between what the mother reported on the survey and what was shared and seen during the home visit and interview. The interview allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the respondent's literacy practices and beliefs about literacy and of her family's access to literacy as initially shared on the survey. Overall, the data and evidence gathered and observed in both the survey and interview appeared to be consistent and reliable. The researcher did not expect the mother's responses on the survey (free response questions) and during the interview

(what makes reading/writing at home easier/harder) to be identical due to the open-ended nature of the questions.

Family #2: Case of a lesser-acculturated family scoring in the middle third of participants on the combined survey scales

Description of representative family. The members of this family include: Marta, the mother; Fátima, the daughter in second grade; and the father, who was not present at the time of the interview. The researcher interviewed the family in their apartment on Tuesday, February 26, 2008. The focused, audio recorded interview lasted approximately twenty-one minutes (00:21:19). The researcher conducted the interview in Spanish, per family request. During the interview, the researcher spoke primarily with Marta, the mother. However, Sara, the daughter, contributed to the conversation as well, usually when prompted by either her mother or the researcher, but sometimes of her own accord. The interview occurred in the family room, which was connected to the kitchen. The researcher observed multiple families living in the home.

The mother of this family was respondent #46 in the survey sample. On the survey, she self-reported that neither she nor her parents were born in the United States. She did not attend school, neither in Mexico nor in the United States. According to her survey response, family members speak both Spanish and Mixteco in the home. As shared with the researcher during the interview, the mother comes from an indigenous family from the state of Oaxaca, Mexico. This family qualifies for migrant status according to the school district's program report for migrant education.

Users (who). Marta reported that her daughter, Fátima, reads at home. Marta said that her husband reads with their daughter sometimes, but explained that he usually gets home late and is tired. When talking about herself, Marta said that she doesn't know how to read, claiming only to read a little bit. She said that sometimes she does look at books, and she will read a little bit of what she can understand.

Texts (what). Fátima seemed very proud of her books, and kept producing the few books that she owned and/or had borrowed from school throughout the course of the visit. Fátima took out some books stored in an end table. Most of the books were borrowed from the daughter's classrooms and the school library. However, she did have two books that were her own. When she shared the books, she emphatically showed the one that she loved the most. Most of the books were written in Spanish, and one was in English. The family did not have any books written in Mixteco. The researcher and Marta talked about how it is hard to find books in Mixteco. The family does not have a library card, but Marta claims they would like to in the future. Fátima keeps a notebook where she writes numbers that she practices with her mom. She also showed the researcher one of her homework pages that she was working on from her Spanish literacy class. When asked about other examples of writing, Marta said that they don't do that. Marta said that she tells stories to her daughter about when she was growing up, and what she went through growing up. Marta tells these stories in Mixteco.

Context (when, where). Marta said that Fátima reads when she brings a book home. She spends fifteen minutes reading every night. They read after dinner, usually starting at about 8:00 and finishing at about 8:15-8:20. Sometimes they sit at the table and

sometimes at the couch to work. Fátima said that she keeps all of her special papers and things in her desk at school. Marta explained that she doesn't bring things home anymore. They are renting a small room in the apartment, and they don't have space to save things. Her husband says that it is better for her to leave her things at school, so she doesn't bring them home now.

The interview took place in the area of the home where the family reports engaging in literacy activities. The researcher observed adequate lighting in the room. In the family room and kitchen there was a couch, several chairs, and a table. The television was turned on throughout the interview, with the volume turned down.

Process (how, why). As Fátima reads and writes to complete her schoolwork, Marta supervises and encourages her. If Fátima doesn't bring home a book or homework, then Marta tells her to practice her numbers in her notebook. Marta also talked about how sometimes she dictates words for Adriana to write after she has read aloud from books. Marta said that sometimes she asks Fátima to teach her from the books, so that they can learn together. Marta also shared that Fátima has been helping another younger student from the neighborhood with his math homework. According to Marta, not knowing how to write makes writing at home difficult. Being able to read and understand the letters and words makes reading at home easier.

The mother expressed her belief that it is important for her child to learn to read so that Fátima doesn't turn out like her. This theme came up repeatedly throughout the interview. During the interview Marta said, "Es por su bien de ella. Yo no quiero que, que ella salga como yo de burra [It's for her own good. I don't want her, her to end up a

“donkey”, not very smart, like me]”. Marta also talked about her own frustrations growing up because her father didn’t see the value in educating a girl and wouldn’t let her go to school. She explained to the researcher:

Yo cuando estaba en México, yo quería ir a la escuela. Mis papás no me dejaban ir a la escuela. No sé. Creo que mi papá era muy celoso. Me decía: -¿Para qué vas a la escuela si no eres hombre? [When I was in Mexico, I wanted to go to school. My parents didn’t let me go to school. I don’t know. I believe my dad was very jealous. He used to tell me, “Why go to school if you are not a man?”]

That is why she now talks about her own daughter, saying, “Ahora que tiene oportunidad de estudiar, que aprenda a leer. Para que al rato, ella no ande como yo [Now that she has the opportunity to study, she should learn to read. So that later, she doesn’t end up like me].”

Marta also talked a lot about the importance of her daughter spending time studying. She said that Fátima often wants to play outside, but that she tells her that studying is more important. She wants her daughter to have homework every day. When Fátima showed one of the books she had, Marta talked about how the book was written in English. She said that Fátima says that she can read it and understand it, but her mother is not sure. Marta also talked about how she speaks Mixteco with her daughter, but that Fátima doesn’t want to speak in Mixteco. She said that Fátima’s father only speaks Mixteco with her, and that she understands everything in Mixteco, but that she doesn’t

want to speak. Marta also explained how it is hard for Fátima to talk with her grandma because the grandma lives in Oaxaca, Mexico and speaks only Mixteco.

Triangulation with survey results. In terms of access to literacy materials, the mother's responses on the survey indicated that the family possessed some literacy supplies in their home, including: paper, pencils, pens, scissors, and tape, but did not own crayons, markers, colored pencils, glue, or a dictionary. The researcher did see evidence of paper in the home, as well as some writing utensils. On the survey the mother reported neither possessing nor using a library card, but she did indicate a desire to obtain one. During the interview, Marta also expressed a desire to obtain a library card, consistent with her previous response. The researcher estimated seeing one to five books in the home indicated as owned by the family, which was more than the mother's survey response of not owning any books.

With regards to literacy practices and beliefs about literacy, the mother's survey responses indicated that she reads alone twenty minutes a day on average, the family reads together twenty minutes a day on average, and they read on average twenty minutes per week at church. These estimates were not consistent with what the researcher learned during the interview, at which time the mother mentioned reading with the daughter for fifteen to twenty minutes per night, but said that she rarely read on her own and did not discuss any church-related reading. On the survey the mother reported reading magazines, recipes, letters, lists, labels, notes, forms or documents, and the Bible. During the interview and home visit, the researcher saw or heard evidence that children's books and homework are read in the home; however the mother did not mention or share any of the

other texts with the researcher. The researcher did not directly ask the mother to share these texts, so there remains the possibility of their existence and use within the home. On the survey the mother indicated writing the following types of texts in the home: recipes, letters, emails, instructions, lists, and homework. However, her daughter's homework was the only evidence of written texts in the home observed by the researcher. On the survey, the mother was mostly in disagreement with the beliefs about using literacy, but agreed with some; she agreed with all the beliefs about learning literacy. Her survey responses indicated that she believes it to be both the parents' and the teachers' responsibility to teach reading and writing to children. In the interview, the mother talked about overseeing and prioritizing her daughter's homework and also mentioned some learning activities that she dictates for her daughter, such as math practice. In addition, she engages in oral storytelling with her daughter.

When replying to the free response questions on the survey, the mother said that the letters that she doesn't know make reading difficult for her. When asked about writing, she responded that almost everything makes it difficult for her. These responses were consistent with the reading and writing challenges that she identified during the interview. Her survey response regarding what she enjoys most about reading with her children focused on the enjoyment of sharing texts together. With relation to reading, the mother dictated the following response to the researcher, "Me gusta cuando ella se pone a leer y yo estoy escuchando o platicando con ella [I like it when she is reading and I am listening or chatting with her]." Likewise, she explained that what she enjoys most about writing with her daughter is when they are playing together.

In conclusion, the researcher noticed some variance between what the mother reported on the survey and what was shared and seen during the home visit and interview. The interview allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the respondent's literacy practices and beliefs about literacy and of her family's access to literacy as initially shared on the survey. Overall, the data and evidence gathered and observed in both the survey and interview appeared to be fairly consistent and reliable. The researcher did not find evidence for some information included on the survey responses, however, the researcher did not in all circumstances directly ask for such evidence. The researcher did not expect the mother's responses on the survey (free response questions) and during the interview (what makes reading/writing at home easier/harder) to be identical due to the open-ended nature of the questions. The responses were, however, quite similar.

Family #3: Case of a lesser-acculturated family scoring in the upper third of participants on the combined survey scales

Description of representative family. The members of this family include: Gabriel, the father; Olivia, the mother; Valentina, the daughter in second grade; Álvaro, the son in kindergarten; and Josué, the son in pre-school. The researcher interviewed the family in their home on Wednesday, February 20, 2008. The focused, audio recorded interview lasted approximately twenty-five minutes (00:25:05). The interview took place in Spanish, per family preference. During the interview, the researcher spoke primarily with both parents. However, the children were present throughout the interview, sitting at the same table working on projects, and they interjected their comments frequently. The interview took place at the family's dinner table, which was adjacent to the kitchen and

the family room. The researcher observed multiple families living in the home. The family explained that this was a short-term, temporary living arrangement as they are having work done on their home. Currently, the members of the family are sharing one room in the home where they are staying.

The mother of this family was respondent #63 in the survey sample. On the survey, she self-reported that neither she nor her parents were born in the United States. She completed primary school, but did not attend school at all in the United States. According to her survey response, family members speak Spanish in the home. According to the school district's program report for migrant education, this family qualifies for migrant status. The father did not complete a survey questionnaire, although he participated in the interview.

Users (who). The entire family, Gabriel, Olivia, Valentina, Álvaro, and Josué, engage in literacy activities. Olivia said that usually they all read together. During the interview, Olivia's son asked her to write for him, which she did. The youngest son, Josué, practiced writing his name during the interview. He also drew pictures for texts written by his mother, copied some writing, and retold a familiar story. During the interview, Valentina shared books and papers she had written, and spent some time working quietly as the adults talked. Álvaro, who had been sick and still didn't seem quite well, was present with the family, but not as actively engaged with the conversation or activities during the researcher's visit.

Texts (what). The family shared a large box of books that they had received from the hospital, the family clinic, and the school, as well as others that they had purchased,

sometimes from book orders. They also showed a box of supplies that they use for doing homework, painting, and other projects. Olivia, the mother, explained that the supplies were just those that they currently had on hand; she reported they had others that were in storage at the moment. Gabriel said that they only have their most important things right now. The box included: scissors, tape, markers, crayons, a pencil sharpener, paper, and stickers. As observed during the interview, the family composes texts together regularly. When asked about their written texts, Olivia showed a large pad of paper that had several pages that the kids had worked on. They also shared papers that they had previously worked on, including the alphabet, vowels, math, copying, homework, poems, coloring books, and special art projects. They had a book that they saved made by Valentina in pre-school. The father explained that when a lot of papers start to pile up, then they burn them. Unfortunately, just prior to the researcher's visit, the family had burnt a lot of their papers. The researcher noticed that the family still had a considerable amount of written texts to share even in light of the recent disposal of some of their papers, and the fact that most of their possessions are currently in storage.

When asked about whether they orally share stories at home, the parents had contradictory answers. Olivia said yes, but Gabriel responded no. After laughing together, the father explained that they sometimes write stories. Olivia explained that she likes to tell stories about her past. Both parents said that they use Spanish when they tell stories about their past.

Context (when, where). During the interview, the researcher observed that the family had tables, chairs, and sufficient lighting in the area where they engaged in literacy

activities. However, throughout the course of the interview, other members of the household were in the family room with the television on. This appeared to be normal. Olivia said that the family reads and writes together in their free time. She said that usually they read in the afternoon, and sometimes before they go to bed. If they have an appointment in the afternoon, then they read another day. The father explained that sometimes they read at the table, like during the interview, and sometimes in their room. Their box of books is kept in their room. When asked about writing, the mother explained that they don't write together every day, but sometimes, and that they usually only write in the room with the table.

When the researcher asked the parents about their own reading interests, the father said that sometimes he reads the books that the kids bring from school. The family did not report visiting the public library. However, they had several questions about what one can do at the library. They expressed interest in going to the public library to see about getting a library card. They did attempt to visit the school district's REACH Center, however they were unable to check out any materials due to a conflict of schedules. (REACH stands for "Resources, Education, and Community Help" in the school district.)

The researcher asked near the end of the interview if the kids are always so engaged in their activities, or if it was more due to her visit. The father said that they are always like that. Olivia also said that it is normal almost every evening for them to concentrate on their work.

Process (how, why). All members of the family interact as they read and write. During the interview, the researcher observed several such interactions. Josué, the

youngest son, asked his mother, “Mami, ¿puedes escribir usted: -A mí me gusta jugar al parque con mi familia? [Mommy, can you write, ‘I like to play at the park with my family?’]” Olivia then clarified whether he would like her to draw a picture, or the letters. Josué asked for the letters so that he could draw the picture. A few similar occurrences took place during the course of the interview. At one point Josué asked his mother to write something for him to copy.

During the interview, Josué also asked his mother to read aloud a book to him. Olivia, however, was telling the researcher about one of the art projects that she does with her kids by painting on napkins. So, Josué started to enthusiastically tell the story from the book *Diez fantasmas tímidos* [*Ten Shy Ghosts*] on his own. It was evident that he knew the story well.

Both parents talked about guiding their children in learning activities. Gabriel explained how he sometimes works with the kids on the weekends or on days that he doesn’t have to work. He said that he teaches them. He has them do work, such as by practicing addition, subtraction, and writing the alphabet on large paper. Olivia said that sometimes she lets them choose what they want to do, and that they work on an activity on their own. But, she also shared that sometimes they plan an activity together, and then they all work on it to complete it. She talked about how they sometimes work together to make scenes. When the researcher reflected on their family time and stated that it seemed like it was a fun time for everyone, including the adults, both parents enthusiastically agreed.

When the researcher asked about how the kids select books from their book box, the mother explained that they choose the book that they want to read, when they want. Then, they read it together. Olivia explained:

Escogen el libro que ellos quieren leer. Y, empezamos a leer el, con el primero que escogió uno, y que...si no llegamos a todos, otro día leemos el otro [They choose the book that they want to read. And, we start reading the, with the first one that one of them chose, and...if we don't get to all of them, another day we read the other one].

Their father also added that sometimes they ask the kids what they would like to read.

Josué talked enthusiastically about some learning activities that had occurred at school. The parents also discussed their children's homework, with the researcher and amongst themselves during the course of the visit. The researcher noted that the family talked frequently about learning at school, as well as about the learning activities that they engaged in together at home.

Learning more is a primary reason for reading and writing in this family. The mother talked about the family learning together and explained one of their reasons for reading in this way:

Siempre para que los niños, para que aprendan poco más de lo que nosotros. Podemos ayudarles, ellos también a nosotros. Aprendemos algo diferente [Always so that the children, so that they learn a bit more than we did. We can help them, they can help us, too. We learn something different].

They cited time as being a factor that can make reading and writing activities difficult. Gabriel explained that it is hard for them when they get home from work late, and that sometimes they just don't get to the literacy activities. Sometimes they are not sure if they should just work on something small, or not; or, sometimes they just don't get finished. The parents said that being healthy makes reading and writing at home easier for them. A few times during the interview, Gabriel and Olivia spoke about how their son, Álvaro, needed to complete homework from school because he had been sick and therefore absent.

Triangulation with survey results. In terms of access to literacy materials, the mother's responses on the survey indicated that the family possessed many literacy supplies in their home including: paper, pencils, pens, crayons, markers, colored pencils, scissors, glue, and tape, but did not own a dictionary. The researcher saw evidence of these supplies, as well as many others as previously described, in the home. On the survey the mother reported neither possessing nor using a library card, but she did indicate a desire to obtain one, which she confirmed during the interview. The researcher observed many books in the home, which was consistent with the mother's survey response of owning eleven to fifteen books.

With regards to literacy practices and beliefs about literacy, the mother's survey responses indicated that she reads on average twenty minutes alone per day, the family reads together twenty minutes per day, she reads ten minutes per day at work, and they read ten minutes per week at church. The researcher heard and saw clear evidence of the family reading together during the interview; however the mother did not discuss nor

share further evidence about reading alone, at work, or at church. On the survey the mother reported reading children's books, magazines, recipes, letters, instructions, lists, labels, notes, forms or documents, the Bible, and homework. During the interview and home visit, the researcher saw or heard evidence that children's books and homework are read in the home; however the mother did not mention reading any other texts. The mother's survey responses indicated that she writes on average ten minutes alone per day and the family writes together twenty minutes per day. The researcher heard and saw clear evidence of the family writing together during the interview; however the mother did not discuss nor share further evidence about the writing that she does alone. On the survey the mother reported writing recipes, instructions, lists, notes, homework, and reports. During the interview and home visit, the researcher saw evidence of the mother writing as she helped with homework, as well as sentences for her children to copy. On the survey, she strongly agreed with all the beliefs about using and learning literacy. Her survey responses indicated that she believes it to be the parents' responsibility to teach reading and writing to their children. In the interview, the mother talked about supporting her children with their schoolwork, and also discussed ways that she creates learning experiences for her kids.

When replying to the free response questions on the survey, the mother described getting her children to pay attention and not talk so much as the greatest challenges in reading. In terms of writing, she identified the topic as posing the greatest challenge. She wrote that it is difficult when the children don't want to write about the assigned homework, but would rather write about what they would like. During the interview, she

identified time as being the family's greatest challenge for engaging in reading and writing activities. In her survey response regarding what she enjoys most about reading with her children, the mother wrote that she enjoys learning something new with her children each day. Likewise, she wrote about the enjoyment of writing with her children in the following way:

Lo que mas [sic] me gusta con relación a escribir es que mis hijos escriben algo tan bonito que me llena de alegría [sic] [What I like best with relation to writing is that my children write something so beautiful that it fills me with happiness].

During the interview, she identified being healthy as the greatest factor in encouraging the family's participation in reading and writing activities.

In conclusion, the researcher noticed minimal variance between what the mother reported on the survey and what was shared and seen during the home visit and interview. The interview allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the respondent's literacy practices and beliefs about literacy and of her family's access to literacy as initially shared on the survey. Overall, the data and evidence gathered and observed in both the survey and interview appeared to be fairly consistent and reliable. The inconsistencies primarily occurred in relation to the respondent's individual reading and writing practices at home and at work, as well as the family's practices at church. The researcher did not find evidence for some information included on the survey responses, however, the researcher did not in all circumstances directly ask for such evidence. The researcher did not expect the mother's responses on the survey (free response questions) and during the interview

(what makes reading/writing at home easier/harder) to be identical due to the open-ended nature of the questions.

Family #4: Case of a more-acculturated family scoring in the lower third of participants on the combined survey scales

With regards to more-acculturated families, there were no cases of participants scoring in the lower third of respondents on the combined literacy practices and beliefs survey scales. Therefore, the researcher was not able to select a representative family meeting these criteria for the purposes of the second phases of this study. Hence, one of the more significant findings of this research is that the more-acculturated respondents all scored in the middle or upper third on the survey scales for literacy practices and beliefs.

Family #5: Case of a more-acculturated family scoring in the middle third of participants on the combined survey scales

Description of the representative family. The members of this immediate family include: Mía, the mother; Mateo, the son in fourth grade; and Julieta, the 14 month old baby sister. The father was not present at the time of the interview, as the mother and father are not together and have not been for some time according to the mother. The researcher interviewed the mother at their family's restaurant on Wednesday, March 19, 2008 in the late afternoon. The focused, audio recorded interview lasted approximately twelve minutes (00:12:03). During the interview, the researcher and Mia spoke in English, per Mia's preference. During the interview, the researcher spoke exclusively with Mia, the mother. Mateo, the son, was sleeping on a long bench along the far wall of the restaurant. The interview occurred at a table in the restaurant, near the main entrance

and front counter. The restaurant was empty, aside from the family and the researcher during the majority of the interview. Mia did get up once to assist some costumers. Overall, at that time of day, the restaurant appeared for the most part empty. A large screen television was on with the volume turned up. From the conversation, the researcher learned that the restaurant belongs to Mia's parents, and that Mia and her two children, Mateo and Julieta, live with her parents.

The mother of this family was respondent #67 in the survey sample. On the survey, she self-reported that neither she nor her parents were born in the United States. She completed some years of college, attending over eleven years of school in the United States. According to her survey response, family members speak both English and Spanish in the home.

Users (who). Mia reported that she and Mateo read together, and that sometimes they read to the baby. She said that they do not write together, but that Mateo works on writing his homework and other papers at the restaurant by himself. Mia also reported reading and writing sometimes alone.

Texts (what). Mia said that she loves horror books. She normally has a book with her at the restaurant. She said that she picks books for herself by reading the back of the book to see if it is something that will interest her. She said that she normally chooses books that have short stories instead of a longer book because they work out better when she has shorter periods of time for reading. Mia buys her books from stores. Mateo also has his own books. According to Mia, he has a little Children's Bible. Mateo also has a bunch of books that he gets from school and from book orders, as well as magazines

about wrestlers and other things. He has a mix of reading materials in English and Spanish. Mateo generally picks his books from the book orders. Mia explained that he chooses whatever he wants to read, “‘cause, yeah, if I pick them, then I’m sure he’s not going to be interested in reading them.” Mia also said that her daughter, Julieta, has a couple of baby books. Unfortunately, they did not have any texts available at the restaurant to share with the researcher.

In terms of written texts, Mateo works on homework from school. He also writes and draws. Mia said that she writes when she takes orders at the restaurant. She also writes letters to a friend about once a month.

Mia said that Mateo tells her about what happened to him at school when he gets home, and that she has told him stories from when she was growing up. Mia also shared that her mother and grandmother sometimes tell stories. Her grandmother comes about once every two years from Mexico to visit. Mia enthusiastically commented, “We love it when my grandma comes over because she tells us a bunch of stories from, you know, when she was younger, and stuff that happened in Mexico.” Mateo’s great-grandmother from Mexico tells ^{him} her stories in Spanish. Mia explained that sometimes Mateo does not always understand the words in Spanish, and he asks Mia to explain the words to him in English. Mia said that she tells her stories in both languages, saying that “whenever we talk, for some reason, it’s always mixed.”

Context (when and where). According to Mia, she and Mateo read together as much as they can. However, she said that they don’t have a lot of time because they are almost always at the restaurant. She said that when they get home early, then they try to

read a little bit. Sometimes they read together at night, in Mia's bedroom, before they go to bed. Mia also said that she reads sometimes on her own during the day at the restaurant, when she has time. She said that she reads throughout the day when she doesn't have customers, everything is clean, and the baby's not awake. She keeps a book with her so she can try to read, but she said that she really doesn't have much time. Mia explained that Mateo has books all over at home; they are not really set up anywhere. Mateo works on homework at the restaurant, or he'll work on writing papers or making drawings with writing.

Mia shared that they have wanted to go to the public library, but that they have not yet gone. She said that they don't have a library card. Mateo really wants a library card so that he can go and bring books home, but Mia said they just haven't had time yet.

Process (how and why). When Mateo works on his homework at the restaurant in the afternoon, Mia explained that he works at a table; she'll come over and he'll ask her questions. Mia did report reading alone for pleasure. She said that sometimes she reads part of a story that she's reading to Mateo, but that he doesn't really get into the stories that she reads. Mia said that she'll have Mateo read his books. Sometimes they read from the Children's Bible together, and sometimes they read to Julieta. Mia said that Julieta, the baby, isn't really interested yet, "You know, she'll point. But then she wants to turn the pages really fast and doesn't let me read".

The idea of reading based on individual interests and for pleasure came up frequently throughout the interview, and appears to be one of the family's main purposes for engaging in reading activities. When asked about her reasons for reading, Mia replied,

"I just, I like to read, you know. I love to be in sus, suspense." Mia also described how she reads books in English so that she can practice the words and learn more words. She explained that she doesn't have as much of an opportunity to practice her English working in the restaurant, and reading allows her to do that. Regarding Mateo, Mia said that she reads with him so that he can practice and get better at reading. Reading appears to serve both a pleasurable and educational role for this family. The issue of having enough time clearly is a major factor that makes reading and writing activities a challenge. And, the value of time spent together is a motivator for engaging in literacy activities. Mia explained, "Well, I love sitting down with him and, you know, reading together. . . . I love to spend time with him, you know, and listen to him. And, see if he's improving, or not." Mia expressed feeling good about being able to help her son. She continued:

I just love spending time with him, when I can. . . . And, yeah, I like it when he asks me, you know, he'll ask me, 'What's this?' Or, 'What does it mean?' And, you know, it feels good to answer, to tell him. . . . If I know what it is, you know. Or him telling me, you know, things that he knows.

Triangulation with survey results. In terms of access to literacy materials, the mother's responses on the survey indicated that the family possessed many literacy supplies in their home including: paper, pencils, pens, crayons, markers, colored pencils, scissors, glue, and tape, but did not own a dictionary. The researcher did not see evidence of these supplies, as the interview took place at the family's restaurant instead of in their home. On the survey the mother reported neither possessing nor using a library card, but

she did indicate a desire to obtain one, which she confirmed during the interview. The researcher did not see any books during her visit with the family; however from listening to the mother's description of texts used by family members, the mother's original survey response of owning one to five books seems to be an underestimate.

With regards to literacy practices and beliefs about literacy, the mother's survey responses indicated that the family reads together twenty minutes a day, on average, and that she also reads an average of twenty minutes per day for her job. This was fairly consistent with what the researcher learned during the interview, however during the interview the mother also reported reading alone. On the survey the mother reported reading novels, children's books, letters, instructions, and homework. During the interview, the researcher heard evidence that novels, children's books, homework, and also a Children's Bible are read in the home. The mother's survey responses indicated that she writes on average thirty minutes or more per day for her job and she reported writing lists and notes. The researcher heard evidence of the mother writing for work during the interview, as well as writing letters on occasion. On the survey, she was mostly in strong agreement with the beliefs about using literacy, but disagreed that reading and writing are an important form of personal entertainment, a belief that seemed inconsistent with the purposes for reading that she shared with the researcher during the interview. She was mostly in agreement with the beliefs about learning literacy, but disagreed with the belief that children begin learning to read and write before they start attending school. Her survey responses indicated that she believes it to be the parents' and teachers' responsibility to teach reading and writing to children. In the interview, the mother talked

about helping her son with his schoolwork, providing reading materials for her children, and engaging in oral storytelling.

When replying to the free response questions on the survey, the mother described the greatest challenge in reading with her children as getting her son interested in the reading material. With regards to writing, she wrote about her son's feelings of frustration as being the greatest challenge. During the interview, she identified not having enough time as the greatest challenge towards reading and writing with her children. With relation to what she enjoys most about reading and writing with her children, the mother wrote on her survey about watching her children develop independence. She wrote that she enjoys being able to listen to her son read on his own. Likewise, she wrote that what she enjoys most about writing with her son is when she helps him figure out how to spell words and watching him learn more every day. During the interview, she also talked about enjoying the time that she spends reading and writing with her children.

In conclusion, the researcher noticed minimal variance between what the mother reported on the survey and what was shared and seen during the home visit and interview. The interview allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the respondent's literacy practices and beliefs about literacy and of her family's access to literacy as initially shared on the survey. Overall, the data and evidence gathered and observed in both the survey and interview appeared to be consistent and reliable, although it seemed that the mother used literacy in more ways and for more purposes than initially shared on the survey questionnaire. The researcher did not expect the mother's responses on the survey (free

response questions) and during the interview (what makes reading/writing at home easier/harder) to be identical due to the open-ended nature of the questions.

Family #6: Case of a more-acculturated family scoring in the upper third of participants on the combined survey scales

Description of the representative family. The members of this family include: Jimena, the mother; Santino, the father; Delfina, the daughter in first grade; and Matías, the baby brother. The researcher interviewed the mother and father at the townhouse where Jimena, Delfina, and Matías live on Tuesday, March 18, 2008 in the late afternoon. The focused, audio recorded interview lasted approximately twenty-six minutes (00:25:55). The researcher conducted the interview primarily in English, per the parents' preference. However, all adults used Spanish most frequently when speaking with the daughter, Delfina. During the interview, the researcher spoke with both Jimena and Santino. The researcher was not expecting the father to be present, as the parents are not living together. However, the researcher observed that the parents seem to get along well and Jimena invited Santino to participate. The researcher previously noticed both parents regularly participating together at school events involving their daughter. Jimena responded in greater detail and was often quicker to reply during the interview, but Santino was also a willing participant. Delfina was present throughout the interview, and responded when prompted by her mother and/or the researcher. The interview occurred primarily in the family's living room, with a brief visit upstairs to the daughter's bedroom. A television was on with the volume turned down during the visit.

The mother of this family was respondent #71 in the survey sample. On the survey, she self-reported that neither she nor her parents were born in the United States. She completed high school, attending over eleven years of school in the United States. According to her survey response, family members speak both English and Spanish in the home.

The father was respondent #80 in the survey sample. On the survey, he self-reported that he was born in the United States, but that his parents were not. He also completed high school, attending over eleven years of school in the United States. According to his survey response, family members speak both English and Spanish in the home. The researcher noted that Santino classified as a more-acculturated respondent and scored in the middle third of participants on the survey scales, unlike Jimena who scored in the higher third.

Users (who). Jimena reads with Delfina during the week. She said that she doesn't read a whole lot on her own right now, but that she used to. Santino said that he doesn't really read alone, "Just when I'm with her [Delfina]. That's the only time I ever read books." Delfina takes her homework with her to Santino's house on the weekends. Sometimes Delfina also works on reading and writing with her babysitter or cousins when she is staying with her father.

Texts (what). Delfina and Jimena read the books that Delfina brings home from school. Delfina also has her own collection of books, including some of Jimena's books from when she was little, which she gave to Delfina. Delfina showed many of her favorite books to the researcher, including: *La semana de Cookie* [*Cookie's Week*], *Snowy Day*, *El*

bebé [*The Baby*], and a large book of *Cuentos tradicionales* [*Traditional Tales*]. Delfina owns a variety of books, some written in English, some in Spanish, and some which are bilingual and include both English and Spanish. She keeps her books in her bedroom, which is on the first floor landing outside of Jimena's room. Delfina has a twin bed, a plastic desk, many toys, and a set of two plastic drawers where she stores her books in her room. According to Jimena, one of the drawers is for her coloring and writing supplies and the other is for her books. Delfina also showed the researcher her toy computer. The computer functions in both English and Spanish and includes many learning games. Jimena said that the math games are Delfina's favorite, but that there are spelling and vocabulary games as well. Santino said that Delfina also has books that she leaves at his house, and that her cousins have a bunch of books that they read when they're together. Jimena said that her son, Matías, has a couple of little baby books that he will bring to her to read. In addition, Jimena reported reading magazines.

In terms of written texts, both parents talked about working on homework from school with Delfina. Jimena shared that her daughter likes to write the alphabet and letters, and that Delfina writes a lot at her house. They showed several coloring books, other small writing books, paintings, and a spiral notebook where Delfina completed some coloring and writing. On one page she had written the names of all of the kids in her Spanish literacy class, on another a few simple sentences in Spanish about her family, and on yet another the letters of the alphabet. Delfina said that she likes to write stories, but Jimena and Delfina were unable to locate one of her stories to share with the researcher. Jimena explained that she tears a lot of her writing out of the notebooks and gives the

pages away. Jimena said she has many of them at work. Delfina also had several activity books that included crafts, stickers, games, and math skills for her to do and practice. Jimena shared that she writes at work, but not really anything else on her own.

According to Santino, they will work on Delfina's homework sometimes, but they don't really do any other writing at his house. However, on occasion the babysitter has Delfina do some work there. Santino said that earlier that same day Delfina had been doing some work with the baby sitter. Santino shared his support with the researcher by stating, "The babysitter sits her down, and I came home and she's got two pages of stuff, colors and numbers and adding and, I was like, okay, keep on doing that!" He said that Delfina also spends time reading, writing, and drawing with her cousins when she's at his house.

When asked by the researcher about oral storytelling, Jimena said, "I think that she [Delfina] tells me a lot of stories." Then she clarified by explaining how the stories that Delfina tells are sometimes about things that actually happened. Jimena explained:

And, eventually, from something, it will be something real. Like, oh, you know, we used to do that. Or, your dad used to run in the back of the school bus because he, um, missed it. 'Cause, something came up, and she's like, you know, she almost missed the school bus. . . . And we'll just say something that we remember, or that our parents told us. . . . That we used to do.

When Jimena and Delfina talk and tell stories, Jimena said that they still speak more in Spanish, even though Delfina is starting to ask her mother to just speak to her in English.

Santino said that they are talking a lot in English when she is with him, especially with her cousins.

Context (when and where). Jimena reads with Delfina during the week. She explained that they read together almost every night. Sometimes they'll read before Delfina does her homework, and sometimes they read after her she is finished with her homework. According to Jimena, Delfina reads her books, works, and plays with her writing and other activity books before she does her homework and when Jimena is making dinner. Then, after dinner, they work on her homework and read together.

Delfina takes her homework with her to Santino's house on the weekends. Santino explained, "When she brings her homework over then we'll sit down and do it. . . . Other times, no. Not on a weekend." Jimena further explained the situation by saying, "We call her dad the fun time, break. . . . It's her weekend time." However, Santino and Jimena explained that she has several girl cousins over at her dad's house. According to her parents, when she sees the girls working, then she'll do her work too.

Jimena said that she reads some every day at work. When she's not working, she reads magazines every once in a while. She also said that she writes at work. According to Jimena, they used to visit the public library rather often, but they haven't gone lately. Jimena said that she would go to use the computers, and that Delfina would sit down and look at her books.

Process (how and why). When Jimena and Delfina read together, Delfina chooses what they will read. The language that they use to read depends on the book that Delfina

has chosen. According to Jimena, sometimes she uses writing to discipline her daughter.

She explained that sometimes she has Delfina write as a punishment:

Yeah, she'll do, like, especially when she misbehaves, she has to do ABCs, like on a whole page. . . . Or she has to do, uh, her name, or different little things. Yeah. When she's, when she's in trouble she'll sit down and do it.

Jimena also demonstrates using literacy for many other reasons, including for pleasure, information, and for completing job or school related tasks. When asked about her reasons for reading, Jimena said that their main reasons for reading are for work or homework. When the researcher asked her about the magazines that she reads on her own, Jimena explained that they are just personal, something that she reads for fun or to get information about babies and toddlers. It also appeared to the researcher that the daughter, Delfina, uses reading and writing both for pleasure and for her school work.

When asked about factors that encourage or make it easier to engage in literacy activities at home, Jimena talked about Delfina's learning. She said, "I think it's exciting when she knows more things. She'll come home and she will know something." The issue of knowing which language to use clearly is a concern and challenge for the family. Jimena explained this concern by stating:

I think the only thing that has been [hard] is not knowing, whether I should start in English or Spanish. That has always been, you know... To us, it was always, well she needs to learn Spanish, so she can be fluent. And then, as she gets older, have English be her second language. Instead of having Spanish be her second language, and English. And yet, that was always, that was always something that has, that still concerns me.

Jimena spoke about being unsure of how Delfina would learn English when she started school. She said that she worried about how Delfina would “bring it all together”. Jimena reflected on her own learning of English as a second language. She explained, “Eventually, we all learn. But, just the process is kind of hard to go through.” According to Jimena, Delfina asks questions often to clarify the new language that she is learning. She asks her mother about new words that she hears when watching television in English, like the word popular. Jimena also shared an anecdote about a conversation that they had in the car one day when Delfina attempted to read a sign that she saw, which illustrated to the researcher what it is like as a bilingual child develops early literacy skills. Jimena told the following story:

When we are driving, she's, she's like, 'What is, you know, you know I [pronounced E in Spanish], C [pronounced 'say' in Spanish], E [in English] spell?' What is that for? You know, I don't know. I'm like, did you see it somewhere? Did you... Where did you look? She's like, 'You know, 7-11, where they have the hielo [ice].' I'm like E, C, E [in English]. I'm like, oh! It's ice! But she was telling me I [pronounced E], in Spanish, C [pronounced "say" in Spanish], E [pronounced A in Spanish]. And I was thinking E C E. Having no idea what that is!

Jimena said that she has similar difficulties at work, especially with the letter i and e.

The researcher also asked Santino about factors that encourage or make it easier to engage in literacy activities with Delfina at his home. Santino identified their living arrangement and thus limited time spent with his daughter as challenging factors. When asked about things that make it harder to read and write with Delfina, he replied, "Just the fact that she lives over here with her [Jimena]. I don't necessarily get to spend the time that I sh, I would like to spend with her reading and writing." The researcher noted that Santino's tone when making this comment did not sound resentful, but rather "matter of fact". He said that when she is at his home, she mostly plays, but he further explained that it is helpful when she brings her homework over so that it is easier for him to help her.

Triangulation with survey results. As the mother was identified to participate as a representative family for the second phase of the study, the researcher focused on comparing her survey and interview responses. In terms of access to literacy materials, the mother's responses on the survey indicated that the family possessed many literacy

supplies in their home including: paper, pencils, pens, crayons, markers, colored pencils, scissors, glue, tape, and a dictionary. The researcher saw evidence of these supplies and more during the interview. On the survey the mother reported both possessing and using a library card, however during the interview she shared that they have not used the library recently. The researcher estimated seeing about a dozen books in the home, which was consistent with the mother's survey response of owning eleven to fifteen books.

With regards to literacy practices and beliefs about literacy, the mother's survey responses indicated that, on average, she reads twenty minutes per day alone, the family reads together twenty minutes a day, she reads thirty minutes or more per day for her job, and they read thirty minutes or more per week for church. This was fairly consistent with what the researcher learned during the interview, however in the interview the mother did not discuss reading for church, and it seemed that she read alone only occasionally. On the survey the mother reported reading children's books, newspapers, magazines, recipes, letters, email, instructions, lists, labels, notes, forms or documents, the Bible, and homework. During the interview, the researcher heard evidence that children's books, homework, and magazines are read in the home. The researcher did not directly prompt the mother to share any of the other texts, though. The mother's survey responses indicated that she writes on average ten minutes alone per day, thirty minutes or more per day with her family, and thirty minutes or more per day for her job. She reported writing email, notes, forms or documents, and homework. The researcher heard evidence of the mother writing for work and with her daughter during the interview. On the survey, she was mostly in strong agreement with the beliefs about using literacy. She was mostly in

agreement with the beliefs about learning literacy, but disagreed with the belief that children begin learning to read and write before they start attending school. Her survey responses indicated that she believes it to be the parents' and teachers' responsibility to teach reading and writing to children. In the interview, the mother talked about helping her daughter with her schoolwork, providing reading materials for her children, and engaging in oral storytelling.

When replying to the free response questions on the survey, the mother described the greatest challenge in reading and writing with her children as not being sure which language to use, English or Spanish. During the interview, she also spoke about her concerns about language use and her children's literacy and oral language development. With relation to what she enjoys most about reading with her children, the mother wrote on her survey about spending time with her children. She wrote that what she enjoys most about writing with her daughter is watching her on her own. During the interview, she also talked about being excited by seeing her daughter learn and do new things.

In conclusion, the researcher noticed minimal variance between what the mother reported on the survey and what was shared and seen during the home visit and interview. The interview allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the respondent's literacy practices and beliefs about literacy and of her family's access to literacy as initially shared on the survey. Overall, the data and evidence gathered and observed in both the survey and interview appeared to be fairly consistent and reliable. The inconsistencies primarily occurred in relation to the respondent's individual reading and writing practices at home and the family's practices at church. The researcher did not find evidence for some

information included on the survey responses, however, the researcher did not in all circumstances directly ask for such evidence. The researcher did not expect the mother's responses on the survey (free response questions) and during the interview (what makes reading/writing at home easier/harder) to be identical due to the open-ended nature of the questions.

Conclusion

In the second, more qualitative phase of this study, the researcher posed the following questions:

3. How do Mexican immigrant families practice literacy in their homes and daily lives?
4. How do these beliefs and practices differ between more and lesser-accultured immigrant families?

Interview findings have answered both of these questions. The researcher identified several significant findings in the second phase of this study that helped to answer the research questions regarding how immigrants of Mexican descent practice literacy in their homes and daily lives and how those practices differ according to acculturation level. For each representative family, findings described literacy practices in detail by taking into account the users, texts, contexts, and processes used while engaging in reading and writing related activities in the home. From information gathered during the structured interviews, the researcher found that members from each of the representative families used texts, or participated in literacy activities in the home, including babies, toddlers, school-age children, and adults. However, the researcher noticed that the level of

participation seemed to move along a continuum from more passive to more active engagement as the participants' scores on the combined literacy beliefs and practices scale increased. This distinction was more pronounced for lesser-acculturated families than for more-acculturated families. Interview and observation data also showed that all representative families were in possession of some literacy materials, or texts, although the type and quantity of the possessions varied from one family to another. However, both the lesser-acculturated and the more-acculturated families scoring in the upper third of respondents on the combined survey scales (families #3 and #6, respectively) demonstrated evidence of the most access to literacy materials. As expected, with regards to the context, or frequency and location in which literacy activities take place, the researcher observed that the two families scoring in the upper third of participants on the combined survey scales reported more frequent and longer periods of engagement in literacy activities. In terms of purposes for reading, as included in the category of processes, the researcher found that more-acculturated families talked about reading for pleasure where as lesser-acculturated families did not. In lesser-acculturated families literacy activities were reported mostly or exclusively in relation to academic or religious education. A comparison of the users, texts, contexts, and processes for each of the representative families is included in Table 17.

Another finding is that the more-acculturated respondents all scored in the middle or upper third on the combined survey scales for literacy practices and beliefs, as a result of which no representative families could be identified as more-acculturated, scoring in the lower-third of respondents on the survey scales for the purposes of the second phase

of this study. Thus, based on this data and observations made during the second phase of this study, it appears that generational differences between immigrants as measured by acculturation to the U.S. education system do have some impact on Mexican immigrants' beliefs and practices related to literacy.

Table 17

Comparison of Representative Families

Representative Family	Parent's Literacy Engagement	Users ^a	Texts	Context ^b	Process or Purpose
Family #1	mostly passive;	mother,	homework,	in the bedroom;	academic and
lesser-acculturated,	supportive and	school-age children,	children's books,	nightly before going	religious education
lower third on scales	observation-based	young children	religious texts,	to bed	
	role		oral storytelling		
Family #2	mostly passive;	mother,	homework,	at the kitchen table	academic education
lesser-acculturated,	supervisory and	father,	children's books,	or in the family	
middle third on scales	encouraging role	school-age children	oral storytelling	room;	
				15 minutes every	
				evening	

Representative Family	Parent's Literacy Engagement	Users ^a	Texts	Context ^b	Process or Purpose
Family #3	mostly active;	mother,	homework,	at the dining room	academic education,
lesser-acculturated,	guiding and	father,	children's books,	table or in the	family
upper third on scales	engaging role	school-age children	poems, family generated writing, oral storytelling	family's bedroom; most afternoons, or before going to bed	entertainment
Family #5	mostly active;	mother,	homework, novels,	at the family's	pleasure,
more-acculturated,	supervisory role	school-age children,	short stories,	restaurant or in the	work,
middle third on scales	and modeled literacy in own life	young children	magazines, children's books, religious texts, letters, food orders, oral storytelling	bedroom at home; when they have time, and sometimes before going to bed	academic and linguistic education

Representative Family	Parent's Literacy Engagement	Users ^a	Texts	Context ^b	Process or Purpose
Family #6	mostly active;	mother,	homework,	in the bedroom,	pleasure,
more-acculturated,	guiding and	father ^c ,	magazines,	family room, and at	work,
upper third on scales	engaging role, and	school-age children,	children's books,	work;	getting information,
	modeled literacy	young children	activity books,	every night the	academic education
	in own life		educational toys,	daughter spends	
			family generated	time on independent	
			writing,	literacy activities,	
			oral story telling	homework, and	
				reading with mother	

Note. Family #4 was not included in this table because there were no identified cases of more acculturated families scoring in the lower third on the combined survey scales.

^aSchool-age children refers to children of any age attending school, including pre-school. Young children refers to babies and toddlers, as well as to any young children not yet attending school.

^bContext refers to the location and frequency of literacy activities. ^cThe father was mostly passive, and reported engaging in reading and writing activities with his daughter, but not alone.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Conclusions

In summation, from this study the researcher has provided a description of the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices self-reported by a sample of immigrant parents of Mexican descent. Survey results indicated a moderate, statistically significantly correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' practices associated with reading and writing, and showed that a correlation did not exist between acculturation level and immigrants' beliefs about literacy. The researcher described how Mexican immigrant families practice literacy in their homes and daily lives based on observations made during home visits and interviews, and illustrated the differences between those beliefs and practices observed for more and lesser-acculturated immigrant families of Mexican descent. Hence, the researcher has explored and answered all research questions identified in this study, with the opportunity for additional investigation and clarification in the future.

Based on research findings, the author rejected the null hypothesis regarding the relationship between acculturation and literacy beliefs and practices, as survey data indicated a statistically significant, positive, two-tailed correlation between acculturation and literacy practices. In this study, literacy practices exhibited by immigrant parents of

Mexican descent increased in frequency and importance as families became more acculturated. More-acculturated, second and third generation immigrant families, exhibited practices more typical of those considered “desirable” in the existing public school system in the United States, which tends to represent beliefs and practices characteristic of White, middle class persons, than their first generation, lesser-acculturated immigrant counterparts. This finding supports the work of other researchers (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Goldenberg et al., 2001; Holloway et al., 1995; Paratore, Melzi, & Krol-Sinclair, 2003; Reese, 2002; Reese & Gallimore, 2000) whose studies indicated that as immigrant families become more acculturated and familiar with U.S. schools, they are more likely to adopt literacy practices common to U.S. school systems, especially when educators provide sustained guidance and instruction. However, there are clearly exceptions to the generalization that as an immigrant becomes more-acculturated he or she engages in more literacy practices. When interviewing representative family #6 during the second phase of this study, the researcher observed that although both parents were identified as more-acculturated immigrants and their beliefs about literacy were similar, one of the parents reported engaging in more literacy practices than the other, as also demonstrated by survey data. While this study indicates the existence of a statistically significant, moderate relationship between acculturation level and literacy practices, the researcher cautions educators to keep in mind that such a correlation does not indicate a causation, and therefore not to expect that all more-acculturated immigrants will exhibit literacy practices typically expected and desired within the U.S. educational system. Nor would it be appropriate to assume that all first generation immigrants of

Mexican descent fail to practice literacy in the home, as representative family #3 from the second phase of this study clearly practiced literacy regularly and in a variety of ways.

One of the more significant findings of this study is that the more-acculturated respondents all scored in the middle or upper third on the survey scales for literacy practices and beliefs. This finding also supports the notion that generational differences between immigrants as measured by acculturation to the U.S. education system do impact Mexican immigrants' practices, and perhaps beliefs, related to literacy.

The author hypothesized that overall, families would exhibit generally positive beliefs about literacy, in the sense that they would view literacy as holding importance and value in their lives. Survey results supported this hypothesis, indicating that the great majority of respondents tended to either agree or strongly agree with the belief statements regarding using and learning literacy. However, as previously presented in Chapter 4, disagreement existed relevant to the belief regarding whether or not children begin learning before they go to school. Reese and Gallimore (2000) noted a similar finding in their study of immigrant Latino parents. Through interviews, these researchers found that many parents believed that their children were not capable of reasoning or understanding until age 3 at the earliest, and age 5 at the latest. Many parents that held this view did not see any value in sharing books, reading, or writing with their children until they were able to understand, and usually that was the time when they were ready to go to school and receive instruction from trained educators. However, Reese and Gallimore often found that many of these same parents did use books as tools to teach their children about morals and that books were read for religious purposes; parents just did not read to

children for the sake of teaching them to read. In the present study, the researcher noted that in the cases of the representative families, parents did report looking at books with their babies and non-school age children. Perhaps, consistent with the study of Reese and Gallimore, many immigrant parents of Mexican descent in this study engaged in some literacy practices with their non-school age children, but conceivably did not consider their children to actually be learning to read and write by participating in such activities. Future research could include more questioning during interviews to come to a better understanding of this belief. For example, future researchers could consider the specific types of reading and writing activities immigrant parents engage in with young, non-school age children, and the purposes of such literacy activities. The researcher also believes that educators can assist parents in developing this belief by holding literacy classes and events for families in which family members of all ages are encouraged to participate, and in which educators model how to interact with young children and texts. The researcher encourages the inclusion of extended families in such events and classes, with the hope of potentially impacting additional immigrant families with non-school age children.

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The author also anticipated that the families would show evidence of at least some literacy practices in the home, likely more related to functional literacy than literacy used for more academic purposes, a hypothesis based in large part on a review of literature focused on studies from Hispanic and other minority groups (Jiménez, 2001; Li, 2000; McCarthy, 1997; Monzó & Rueda, 2001; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). As indicated by survey and interview findings, the majority of participants in this study (73%) did report

engaging in at least some literacy practices in the home, with only two respondents reporting no literacy practices. The researcher found it interesting that while many other studies of minorities (Jiménez, 2001; McCarthey, 1997; Monzó & Rueda, 2001) reported the regular occurrence and use of functional literacy for day-to-day living, during the interviews conducted in this study, the participants did not really talk about using literacy to accomplish the acts of everyday living, like paying bills, making grocery lists, reading recipes, etc. Some interview participants reported using literacy skills for work, all participants talked about literacy skills in relation to their children's schoolwork and/or their own learning, and a few individuals mentioned reading for pleasure; however, nobody really discussed using literacy skills to accomplish day-to-day tasks and to fulfill immediate needs. Monzó and Rueda (2001) observed Mexican American parents often relying upon their children to assist them in reading documents written in English, such as medical forms, menus, signs, labels, maps, school forms, and so on. Likewise, Jiménez (2001) reported that immigrant families often rely on their bilingual children to translate important documents, such as bills and other complex texts. The author in the present study recognized that the interview and observation protocol did not specifically include questions that prompted for information regarding functional literacy. Future research could include more questioning during interviews regarding, for example, the reading of school documents, the mail, and other complex texts, especially those written in English.

With regards to literacy practices, the researcher also found that the participants in this study attributed greater attention to the overall meaning of texts than noted in previous studies. Other researchers (Goldenberg et al., 1992; Goldenberg et al., 2001;

Reese & Gallimore, 2000) made observations of Mexican immigrant families in which children spent very little time on reading focused on meaning, but spent considerable time decoding and completing homework. Other studies (Gillanders, 2001; Goldenberg et al., 1992; Reese & Gallimore, 2000) cited repetition, practice, and rote memorization as valued forms of learning in immigrant families of Mexican descent. In this study, the researcher noted that many participants often identified aspects of comprehension and meaning as providing the greatest challenges and enjoyment in reading. In the interviews, some families talked about dictation or copying activities, but many respondents also talked about generating texts with their children based on their own interests. The researcher found that lesser and more-acculturated immigrants both reported focusing on understanding and enjoying texts, and that some lesser as well as more-acculturated immigrants also shared evidence of engaging in activities focused more on rote learning. A focus on rote learning versus meaning did not appear to be tied to acculturation level. Perhaps most importantly, immigrants of Mexican descent in this study demonstrated greater valuation of the meaning of texts than previously acknowledged in other studies, a focus that is highly valued and encouraged in most sectors of the U.S. educational system as evidenced in literacy curriculum standards and goals.

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Also related to literacy practices and the variation between immigrants of different acculturation levels is the researcher's observation from interviews with representative families that more-acculturated families talked about reading for pleasure where as lesser-acculturated families did not. In the lesser-acculturated families literacy activities were still mostly or exclusively related to schoolwork, and/or religious education. With regards

to reading for pleasure or entertainment purposes, McCarthy (1997) reported that while both groups valued literacy activities, middle class families tended to use reading for more pleasurable purposes, such as for personal entertainment and enjoyment, while working class families engaged in reading for more functional purposes, specifically with the intentions of learning or fulfilling a need. In the present study, the researcher did not gather socioeconomic information about the participants, so it is impossible to identify the contributing factor(s) related to the participants' purposes for engaging in literacy activities. Perhaps the difference between those that read for pleasure and entertainment purposes and those that do not is related to acculturation level, perhaps to socioeconomic status, or perhaps to some other variable. However, it does appear from this study that acculturation level plays a role to some extent in the purposes for reading and writing in one's daily life.

In addition, the researcher noted the variation in participation level of respondents engaging in literacy activities. From information gathered during the structured interviews, the researcher found that members from each of the representative families used texts, or participated in literacy activities in the home, including babies, toddlers, school-age children, and adults. However, the researcher noticed that the level of participation seemed to move along a continuum from more passive to more active engagement as the participants' scores on the combined literacy beliefs and practices scale increased. This distinction seemed to be more pronounced for lesser-accultured families than for more-accultured families. Birch and Ferrin (2002) found that Mexican Americans tend to be more passively involved in activities that lead to academic success

than their Anglo American counterparts. Findings from the present study suggest that perhaps immigrants of Mexican descent become more actively engaged in literacy activities as they become more acculturated. It is the researcher's belief that encouragement and support of the active engagement of immigrant parents in literacy activities with their children by educators providing opportunities and guidance for such activities could positively impact the academic success experienced by immigrant children of Mexican descent.

With regards to participants' access to literacy materials, the researcher did not analyze the potential relationship between participants' acculturation level and level of access because neither of the two scales demonstrated sufficient reliability coefficients. However the researcher did observe that there were cases of both lesser and more-acculturated families reporting limited access to literacy materials, as well as lesser and more-acculturated families that reported having extensive access to literacy materials. This observation suggests that acculturation was not the determining factor impacting access to literacy materials. Delgado-Gaitan's (1992) research investigated the impact of poverty on access to literacy materials. Her observations addressed how lack of not only money and time, but also space available to many low-income families within their homes may also impact the amount of literacy resources owned and the use of such resources by the family. In the present study, the researcher observed space as a repeating factor impacting participants' access to literacy materials. Two of the representative families (family #2 and family #3) specifically mentioned getting rid of books, papers, and/or other literacy supplies due to a lack of space to store such items in the home. Over

one-third of the survey participants (36.5%) reported owning five or fewer books. Fortunately, the results of the current study are more hopeful than past findings, such as those made by Goldenberg, Reese, and Gallimore (1992), who observed no more than five books in any Hispanic home, and most homes in their study had fewer than that. Nevertheless, the answer may not be as simple as merely putting more literacy materials in the hands of immigrant families in instances where lack of space limits access. The researcher proposes that in such cases, it could be desirable for educators to perhaps focus on helping families to obtain public library cards and to learn about opportunities, services, and information offered at the public library, or by other local resources. Indeed, about fifty percent of the participants in this study reported not having, or not using, a public library card; only 4.7% of respondents, or four participants, expressed no desire to obtain a card. However, the researcher recognizes the increasing requirements for obtaining a public library card, including state-issued photo identification in some states, and acknowledges the unfortunate reality that access to public literacy materials will not be a possibility for all immigrant families. To increase access to literacy materials for all immigrant families, perhaps schools could consider opening their libraries and other school-based resources to families in the evenings on occasion, or according to a schedule that would accommodate families.

Another noteworthy finding from this research was the variance of scores on the construct scales for literacy practices, literacy beliefs, and access to literacy materials ($SDs = 9.77, 4.52, \text{ and } 4.01$, respectively). The variety of responses selected by respondents for the questions on these constructs possibly indicates that social desirability

effect did not play a large role in the survey sample. The overall consistency between survey findings and interview findings also demonstrated the validity and reliability of the research findings.

A significant concern in this study was that the acculturation construct had a low correlation coefficient ($\alpha = .318$) on the test for reliability. The researcher was concerned by the low internal consistency score for this construct, which was a crucial component of the second research question regarding the correlation between generational differences of immigrants in relation to respondents' beliefs and practices associated with reading and writing, and the identification of representative families in the second phase of the study. The researcher recognized the implications of this concern on the overall significance of the findings from this research. Three questions regarding whether or not the respondent and his or her parents were born in the United States and the number of years of schooling completed by the respondent in the United States combined to form the acculturation to the U.S. educational system construct. Perhaps the reliability of the acculturation construct was weakened because it consisted of a limited number of items. In the future, the acculturation construct could conceivably be strengthened by including an additional question related to the number of years that the immigrant had lived in the United States.

The author previously discussed the conceptual framework of reading acquisition, emphasizing the idea that as long as children are exposed to print in their environment and see others using print in meaningful ways, then they should naturally begin to develop an understanding of the different purposes and benefits of written language

(Smith, 2004). Furthermore, the more opportunity that a learner has to interact with writing tools and written language in his or her environment, through ambient print, listening to stories, and seeing significant others reading and writing with a purpose and interest, then the more he or she will begin to develop an awareness of how written language works and is used, as well as a desire to become a member of what Smith refers to as the "Literacy Club". The findings in this study indicate that immigrant parents report engaging in more literacy activities as they become more acculturated. Therefore, it becomes essential for educators to assist lesser-acculturated immigrants during the acculturation process by offering opportunities to learn about and engage in literacy activities. As shown in this study, most immigrant parents, regardless of acculturation level, believe in the importance and value of reading and writing. However, lesser-acculturated immigrants need opportunities to be encouraged and supported to actively engage in literacy activities, and to be able to create opportunities for such activities within their families. The researcher has found through the surveys, interviews, and observations made during this study that in almost all cases of immigrant parents of Mexican descent, strong beliefs about literacy and a desire to support children's literacy development are in place. Active engagement in literacy practices needs to be modeled, encouraged, established, and supported by educators and the greater community. The potential educational benefits for children are great when educators and other community members can support families in this way.

Future research

The researcher found that throughout all phases of completing this research, including the pilot study, survey, and interviews, almost all families contacted were very willing to participate. The researcher was grateful for not only the families' overall willingness and eagerness to help her in this endeavor, but also for their perceived genuine interest in the research topic and their willingness to share information openly while completing the survey questionnaire and also in subsequent conversations initiated by the respondents.

It is the researcher's belief that the employment of a mixed-method approach was both beneficial and essential to fully answer the research questions posed in this study. The survey questionnaire allowed for an overview of the general population under study. The interviews then allowed for a more in-depth understanding of respondents' literacy practices and beliefs about literacy and of the families' access to literacy as initially reported on the survey. The observations and interviews made during the second phase of this study added much greater detail and clarity to the literacy constructs included on the survey questionnaire. ✓

The researcher found the scheduled meetings and appointments to assist respondents in completing the survey questionnaire used in this study to be essential. Phone calls made home to encourage the completion and submission of surveys were valuable, and families seemed motivated to complete the survey and participate in the study in order to receive a book for their family. It is the researcher's belief that the aforementioned factors greatly increased the participant response rate in this study. While

conducting the study, the researcher found that many participants either contacted her via telephone to clarify specific survey questions, or that it was necessary for her to contact the participants via telephone to complete missing answers (in instances where it appeared an entire page or section had been skipped, or with specific questions that were frequently confusing to respondents). The researcher recognized the possibility of conducting the survey via telephone as an option to consider if this study were to be repeated. ✓

If using this questionnaire to gather data again in the future, the researcher would change survey question #5 regarding how many total years of schooling were completed in the U.S. or elsewhere. She would add the additional response categories of some middle school, some high school, and some college. The researcher observed that many respondents had difficulties answering this question because they had not technically completed an entire stage of schooling. This was one of the questions that respondents often left blank, and therefore one of the questions that the researcher most frequently clarified by making or receiving follow-up telephone calls. *me too*

Given the opportunity to repeat the qualitative phase of this study in the future, the researcher would select and interview a minimum of two representative families from each group surveyed during the second phase of the study. This could allow for better analysis of whether the observed and documented literacy access, beliefs, practices, and general characteristics are more representative of the overall characteristics demonstrated by the group, or whether they are more closely related to the personalities of individual caregivers and/or families. Additionally, in the second phase of the present study, all of

the survey respondents selected as representative families were mothers. In the future, the researcher would strive to include one or more fathers for the representative families when making a purposive selection from the survey sample. Fortunately, a few fathers did participate in the interviews (family #3 and family #5) in the present study, although this was perchance, as it was actually the mothers who were identified as the representative cases from the survey sample.

I don't think it's inappropriate - natural selection of most in school

With regards to conducting the interviews in this study, the researcher recognized several techniques that she would strengthen in the future. Prior to holding each interview, the researcher would review each representative family's specific survey responses in order to better guide observations of specific evidence and to look for consistency of responses. The researcher would then also be better prepared to prompt the interviewees to share the presence and usage of certain literacy materials in the home. In addition, the researcher believed that at times she was too quick to "suggest" an answer in the interviews. When interviewing respondents in the future, she would allow for a longer period of time for respondents to reply before offering guided choices, and then she would be sure to suggest several options, as opposed to one. In the first interviews of this study, the researcher also regretted not asking permission to go in and see firsthand some of the places where reading and writing happens most frequently in the home, such as in the child's bedroom. During the last interviews conducted as a part of this study, the researcher asked for and was granted such permission. In future interviews, she would again ask for that opportunity.

A review of previous research and theory illustrated the wide range of variance in acculturation levels across different generations of immigrants, and even between members within immigrant families (Arzubiaga, Rueda, & Monzó, 2002; Garza & Gallegos, 1995; Li, 2000; Ortiz, 1993; Rueschenberg & Buriel, 1995). The researcher observed in this study that often two parents from an immigrant family did not qualify in the same acculturation group on the survey questionnaire. In other words, one parent was identified as a lesser-accultured immigrant, while the other was identified as a more-accultured immigrant. However, in many instances, the data showed that both parents scored in the same tier on the combined survey scales for literacy beliefs and practices. The researcher did not analyze the variance of specific literacy beliefs and/or literacy practices of parents of different acculturation levels within the same family at this time. Nevertheless, it could perhaps be predicted from the correlation statistics run in this study that the beliefs about literacy would be similar for the parents of differing acculturation levels, but that there would be greater variation of literacy practices, based on the statistically significant correlation found between acculturation level and literacy practices. One potential area for future research could include an analysis of the similarities and differences between immigrant parents' literacy beliefs and practices within immigrant families of Mexican descent, and perhaps how those literacy beliefs and practices vary due to acculturation level and/or gender.

Perhaps differences between participants' responses on the beliefs about learning and using literacy scales, as well as their reported access to literacy materials and literacy practices, were connected to the participants' socioeconomic status. The survey used in

this study did not include measures of socioeconomic status. Future research focused on investigating the relationship between Mexican immigrant parents' beliefs and practices related to literacy and socioeconomic status could contribute important findings to the social sciences.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: English Consent Form

Dear Participant,

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Pamela Spurgeon and I am a graduate student in the Department of Education at George Fox University. I also teach Spanish Literacy at Philander Lee Elementary School in Canby, Oregon. I am conducting research as part of my master's thesis in which I aim to describe the beliefs about literacy and literacy practices held by Mexican immigrant families. I am particularly interested in studying the relationship between these beliefs and practices related to literacy and the generational differences of immigrants.

Every year more Hispanic students are entering public school classrooms in Oregon, making it essential that teachers become more knowledgeable about the home literacy practices of these students' families. In order to build upon the initial literacy exposure that Mexican immigrant students experience within their homes, educators must first have an understanding of what constitutes that exposure. Likewise, when teachers have greater knowledge about families' beliefs about literacy and literacy practices, they are better able to provide opportunities within schools to further develop literacy. Professional educators, and in turn, students and their families will benefit from the information gathered as part of this study. In addition, parents that participate will receive a book to take home in appreciation of their time.

Participation in this study is voluntary and there will be no penalties from refusal to participate for you or your child. You may also discontinue participation at any time without penalty to you or your child by informing me that you no longer wish to participate in the research. Upon completion of the study, I will hold a voluntary meeting with families in which information gathered and learned through the research process will be shared with all study participants.

Participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire can be filled out at home, or at one of several group meetings that I will facilitate. If necessary, an individual appointment can also be made in which the survey can be read aloud. Some families may also be asked to participate in additional observations and interviews.

The questions included on this questionnaire are designed to gather information about respondents' beliefs about literacy and their literacy practices. It is possible that some participants may not be able to read the information on their own, in which case I will read the questionnaire and other research materials aloud.

The data collected will be used to describe groups and no individuals will be identified. All completed questionnaires and signed consent forms will be locked in separate, secure locations for a period of no less than three years. I will be the only individual who will have access to these materials.

If you have questions about the research, please contact Pamela Spurgeon at (503) 982-3696 or Doreen Blackburn at (503) 554-2839.

Thank you for considering your participation in this study.

If you understand the use of this research and agree to participate, please sign and date below.

name

date

APPENDIX B: Spanish Consent Form

Estimado participante:

Permítame presentarme. Me llamo Pamela Spurgeon y soy estudiante de posgrado en la Facultad de Pedagogía en la Universidad de George Fox. También enseñé las clases de lecto-escritura en español en la escuela primaria Philander Lee en Canby, Oregon. Estoy haciendo un estudio como parte de la tesis del máster en lo cual pretendo describir las creencias y las prácticas con referencia a la alfabetización de las familias inmigrantes procedentes de México. Especialmente me interesa estudiar la relación entre estas creencias y prácticas con respecto a la alfabetización y las diferencias entre las varias generaciones de los inmigrantes.

Cada año más estudiantes hispanos entran los salones de educación pública en Oregon, de tal manera que es esencial que los maestros estén mejor informados sobre cómo las familias de estos estudiantes practican la alfabetización en casa. Para aumentar las primeras experiencias con la alfabetización experimentadas en casa por los estudiantes inmigrantes procedentes de México, los educadores tienen que entender primero en qué consisten esas experiencias. Además, cuando los maestros tienen un mejor conocimiento de las creencias sobre la alfabetización y las prácticas relacionadas con la misma dentro de la familia, estarán mejor preparados para proveer oportunidades en las escuelas para aumentar la alfabetización. Los educadores profesionales, así como los estudiantes y sus familias beneficiarán de la información recogida como parte de este estudio. Más aún, los padres que participen recibirán un libro para llevar a casa como obsequio de mi gratitud por su tiempo.

La participación en este estudio es voluntaria y no habrá ningún castigo ni penalidad para Ud. o su hijo si decide no participar. También puede dejar de participar en cualquier momento sin ningún castigo ni penalidad para Ud. o su hijo por informarme que no quiere continuar participando en el estudio. Cuando el estudio se acabe, tendré una junta voluntaria con las familias en la cual compartiré información recogida y aprendida durante el proceso al realizar el estudio con los participantes.

Se le pedirá a los participantes completar un cuestionario. Se puede rellenar el cuestionario en casa, o durante una de las varias juntas en grupos pequeños que yo realizaré. De ser necesario, se puede hacer una cita individual, en la cual se le puede leer el cuestionario en voz alta. También se le pedirá a algunas familias participar en observaciones y entrevistas adicionales.

Las preguntas incluidas en este cuestionario han sido diseñadas para recolectar información acerca de las creencias y prácticas sobre la alfabetización de la persona que responde. Es posible que algunos participantes no puedan leer la información por su cuenta, por lo cual yo leeré el cuestionario y otros documentos relacionados con el estudio en voz alta.

Los datos recogidos estarán usados para describir a grupos y no se identificará a ningún individuo. Todos los cuestionarios terminados y las formas de consentimiento estarán guardados bajo llave en lugares separados y seguros por un período no menor de tres años. Yo seré la única persona que tendrá acceso a estos documentos.

Si tiene preguntas acerca de la investigación, favor de comunicarse con Pamela Spurgeon al (503) 982-3696 o Deborah Berho al (503) 554-2646.

Gracias por considerar su participación en este estudio.

Si Ud. entiende el uso de este estudio y decide participar, favor de firmar su nombre completo y la fecha abajo.

nombre completo

fecha

APPENDIX C: Parent Survey in English

Instructions

Thank you for participating in this study. In this packet of papers you will find:

- this page of instructions
- an informed consent letter (if you have not already signed one)
- the survey cover letter
- the survey

Please:

1. Read the page of instructions.
2. Read and sign the informed consent form (if you have not already done so).
3. Read and fill-out the survey cover letter.
4. Complete the survey.
5. Turn in all the pages in this packet to Mrs. Spurgeon. (If you are completing the survey at home, you can send the pages back to school with your son or daughter.)
6. Enjoy that book that you will receive as a token of my appreciation for your time.

When you are answering the survey questions, please:

- Complete the survey on your own, without working together with anyone else. (I am interested in knowing each person's opinions and practices.)
- Consider your reading and writing in all languages that you use.
- Ask me if something is not clear. (You can call me, if needed, at home at 503-982-36-96, or at school at 503-263-71-50 ext. 3457.)
- Write me a note to explain an answer if you feel that would be helpful.

Thank you for your participation in this study!

Cover Sheet

**Survey of
Mexican Immigrant Parents'
Beliefs and Practices Related to Literacy**

I would like to take this moment to thank you for your participation in this study. As you answer the questions, please consider the reading and writing that you do in any and all languages that you speak. When you complete and turn in your survey, please make sure and see me to receive a children's book for your family in appreciation of your time spent answering these questions.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

I would also like to observe and interview some families in the future. Please indicate below if you would be willing to have me visit your home and talk with you more about reading and writing.

- ☐ Yes, I would be willing to have you visit my home to observe and interview my family and me.
- ☐ No, I would not be willing to have you visit my home to observe and interview my family and me.
- ☐ Maybe, but I am not sure at this time if I would like to have you visit my home to observe and interview my family and me. Please contact me with more information.

Demographic Information

(Please circle the appropriate answer.)

1. I am the:

mother

father

other (please specify) _____

2. Were you born in the United States?

yes no

3. Was one or were both of your parents born in the United States?

yes no

4. How many years of schooling did you complete as a child in the United States?

0 years 1-3 years 4-6 years 7-10 years 10 years+

5. How many total years of schooling did you complete in the U.S. or elsewhere?

none

some primary school

primary school

middle school

high school

college

don't know

6. Please circle all languages that are spoken at home:

English

Spanish

Mixteco

Other: _____

Literacy Materials

(Please circle the appropriate answer.)

7. In your home, do you have...

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----|----|
| a) paper? | yes | no |
| b) pencils? | yes | no |
| c) pens? | yes | no |
| d) crayons? | yes | no |
| e) markers? | yes | no |
| f) colored pencils? | yes | no |
| g) scissors? | yes | no |
| h) glue ? | yes | no |
| i) tape? | yes | no |
| j) a dictionary ? | yes | no |

8. Do you have a library card?

yes no

9. Do you use your library card?

yes no do not have one

10. Would you like to obtain a library card?

yes no already have one

11. How many books do you have in your home?

0 1-5 6-10 11-15 16+

Reading Practices

(Please circle the appropriate answer.)

12. How many minutes, on average, do you spend reading alone at home daily?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

13. How many minutes, on average, do you spend reading with or to your child at home daily?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

14. How many minutes, on average, do you spend reading at work daily?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

15. How many minutes, on average, do you spend reading at church each week?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

16. Please check all the different items that you read at home, work, or church:

- ☐ novels
- ☐ children's books
- ☐ textbooks
- ☐ newspapers
- ☐ magazines
- ☐ recipes
- ☐ letters
- ☐ email
- ☐ instructions
- ☐ lists
- ☐ labels
- ☐ notes
- ☐ forms/documents
- ☐ bible or religious texts
- ☐ children's homework papers

Writing Practices

Please consider writing practices to include both writing by hand on paper as well as writing done on a computer.

(Please circle the appropriate answer.)

17. How many minutes, on average, do you spend writing alone at home daily?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

18. How many minutes, on average, do you spend writing with or to your child at home daily?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

19. How many minutes, on average, do you spend writing at work daily?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

20. How many minutes, on average, do you spend writing at church each week?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

21. Please check all the different things that you write at home, work, or church:

- ☐ recipes
- ☐ letters
- ☐ email
- ☐ instructions
- ☐ lists
- ☐ labels
- ☐ notes
- ☐ journals/diaries
- ☐ forms/documents
- ☐ children's homework
- ☐ reports

Additional Literacy Practices

(Please circle the appropriate answer.)

22. Have you ever attended a literacy event at your child's school?
(ex. Family Literacy Night, Read-in, Young Author's Night, Book Fair, etc)

yes

no

23. Would you be interested in attending a literacy event at your child's school in the future?

yes

no

24. Have you taken a literacy class for adults or parents?

yes

no

25. Would you like to take a literacy class for adults or parents in the future?

yes

no

26. Would you like to learn more about reading and writing with your child?

yes

no

maybe

Beliefs About Using Literacy

(Please circle the appropriate answer.)

27. Reading is important for my job.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

28. Reading and writing are an important form of personal entertainment.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

29. Being able to read and write allows me to participate more in society.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

30. Reading and writing skills are necessary in getting and keeping a job.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

31. Reading and writing skills are useful in everyday life for going shopping, going to the bank, paying bills, seeing the doctor, etc.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

32. Reading for fun is a valuable use of time.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

33. Being able to read and write is empowering.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

Beliefs About Learning Literacy

(Please circle the appropriate answer.)

34. It is important that children spend time reading every day.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

35. Children begin learning to read and write before they start attending school.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

36. Children learn to read and write by seeing people in their family reading and writing.

strongly disagree disagree agree strongly agree

37. Who is responsible for teaching your child to read?

parents teachers parents & teachers other

38. Who is responsible for teaching your child to write?

parents teacher s parents & teachers other

Free Response

(Please write your responses to the following questions.)

39. What is most difficult about reading with your child?

40. What is most difficult about writing with your child?

41. What do you enjoy most about reading with your child?

42. What do you enjoy most about writing with your child?

APPENDIX D: Parent Survey in Spanish

Las instrucciones

Gracias por participar en este estudio. En este paquete de papeles usted encontrará:

- esta página de instrucciones
- la carta de dar consentimiento informado (si no la ha firmado antes)
- la carta de explicación sobre la encuesta
- la encuesta

Favor de:

1. Leer la página de instrucciones
2. Leer y firmar la carta de dar consentimiento informado (si no la ha firmado antes)
3. Leer y llenar la carta de explicación para la encuesta
4. Llenar la encuesta.
5. Entregar todas las páginas del paquete a la Sra. Spurgeon. (Si está haciendo la encuesta en casa, puede regresar las páginas a la escuela con su hijo/a.)
6. Disfrutar del libro que recibirá como obsequio de mi gratitud por su tiempo.

Cuando usted está contestando las preguntas de la encuesta, favor de:

- Completar la encuesta por si mismo, sin colaborar con alguien más. (Me interesa mucho saber las opiniones y prácticas de cada uno.)
- Considerar su lectura y escritura en todos los idiomas que usa.
- Preguntarme si algo no es claro. (Me puede llamar, si necesita, en casa al 503-982-36-96, o en la escuela al 503-263-71-50 ext. 3457)
- Escribirme una nota para explicar una respuesta si le parece útil.

¡Gracias por su participación en este estudio de familias!

Carta de explicación

**Una encuesta sobre
las creencias y las prácticas de los padres inmigrantes procedentes de México
con respecto a la alfabetización**

Me gustaría tomar esta oportunidad para agradecer su participación en este estudio. Mientras conteste usted las preguntas, favor de considerar su lectura y escritura en todos los idiomas que usa. Cuando termine y entregue su encuesta, por favor, pase conmigo para recibir un libro de literatura infantil para su familia como agradecimiento por el tiempo que pasó contestando las preguntas del cuestionario.

Nombre completo: _____

Dirección: _____

Número de teléfono: _____

Email: _____

También me gustaría observar y entrevistar a unas familias en el futuro. Por favor indique abajo si estaría dispuesto a recibirme en su casa y hablar conmigo más acerca de la lectura y escritura.

- ☐ Sí, estaría dispuesto a permitirle visitar mi casa para observar y entrevistar a mi familia y a mí.
- ☐ No, no estaría dispuesto a permitirle visitar mi casa para observar y entrevistar a mi familia y a mí.
- ☐ Tal vez, pero no estoy seguro en este momento si estuviera dispuesto a permitirle visitar mi casa para observar y entrevistar a mi familia y a mí. Favor de comunicarse conmigo para proveer más información.

Información demográfica

(Favor de encerrar en un círculo la respuesta adecuada.)

1. Yo soy:

la madre

el padre

otro(a) (explique, por favor) _____

2. ¿Nació Ud. en los Estados Unidos?

sí no

3. ¿Nació uno o nacieron ambos de sus padres en los Estados Unidos?

sí no

4. ¿Cuántos años escolares cursó (terminó) Ud. cuando era niño en los Estados Unidos?

0 años 1-3 años 4-6 años 7-10 años 10 años+

5. ¿Cuántos años escolares en total cursó (terminó) Ud. en los EE.UU. o en cualquier otro lugar?

ninguno

algunos años de la primaria

la escuela primaria

la escuela secundaria

la preparatoria

la universidad

yo no sé

6. Favor de encerrar en un círculo todos los idiomas que se hablan en su casa:

inglés

español

mixteco

otro: _____

Los recursos de alfabetización

(Favor de encerrar en un círculo la respuesta adecuada.)

7. En su casa, ¿tiene Ud.?...

a) papel	sí	no
b) lápices	sí	no
c) plumas	sí	no
d) crayones	sí	no
e) marcadores	sí	no
f) lápices de colores	sí	no
g) tijeras	sí	no
h) pegamento	sí	no
i) cinta	sí	no
j) un diccionario	sí	no

8. ¿Tiene Ud. una tarjeta de la biblioteca pública?

sí no

9. ¿Usa Ud. su tarjeta de la biblioteca pública?

sí no no tengo una

10. ¿Le gustaría obtener una tarjeta de la biblioteca pública?

sí no ya tengo una

11. ¿Cuántos libros tiene Ud. en su casa?

0 1-5 6-10 11-15 16+

Hábitos de lectura

(Favor de encerrar en un círculo la respuesta adecuada.)

12. ¿Cuántos minutos cada día, en promedio, lee Ud. solo en casa?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

13. ¿Cuántos minutos cada día, en promedio, lee Ud. con o a su hijo en casa?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

14. ¿Cuántos minutos cada día, en promedio, lee Ud. en el trabajo?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

15. ¿Cuántos minutos cada semana, en promedio, lee Ud. en la iglesia?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

16. Favor de marcar todas las cosas diferentes que Ud. lee en casa, en el trabajo o en la iglesia:

- ☐ novelas
- ☐ libros de la literatura infantil
- ☐ libros de texto (para estudiar)
- ☐ periódicos
- ☐ revistas
- ☐ recetas
- ☐ cartas
- ☐ email (cartas electrónicas)
- ☐ instrucciones
- ☐ listas
- ☐ etiquetas
- ☐ apuntes
- ☐ formularios/documentos
- ☐ la Biblia u otros textos religiosos
- ☐ las tareas y trabajos escolares de los niños

Hábitos de escritura

Por favor, tome en cuenta que los hábitos de escritura pueden incluir ambos la escritura realizada a mano con papel y la escritura realizada utilizando una computadora.

(Favor de encerrar en un círculo la respuesta adecuada.)

17. ¿Cuántos minutos cada día, en promedio, escribe Ud. solo en casa?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

18. ¿Cuántos minutos cada día, en promedio, escribe Ud. con o a su hijo en casa?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

19. ¿Cuántos minutos cada día, en promedio, escribe Ud. en el trabajo?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

20. ¿Cuántos minutos cada semana, en promedio, escribe Ud. en la iglesia?

0 min. 10 min. 20 min. 30+ min.

21. Favor de marcar todas las cosas diferentes que Ud. escribe en casa, en el trabajo o en la iglesia:

- ☐ recetas
- ☐ cartas
- ☐ email (cartas electrónicas)
- ☐ instrucciones
- ☐ listas
- ☐ etiquetas
- ☐ apuntes
- ☐ diarios
- ☐ formularios/documentos
- ☐ las tareas de los niños
- ☐ informes

Otros hábitos relacionados con la alfabetización

(Favor de encerrar en un círculo la respuesta adecuada.)

22. ¿Ha asistido alguna vez a un evento de alfabetización en la escuela de su hijo?
(ej. Noche de Lectura, Read-in, Noche de los Autores Jóvenes, Feria de Libros, etc.)

sí

no

23. ¿Le interesaría asistir a un evento de alfabetización en la escuela de su hijo en el futuro?

sí

no

24. ¿Ha tomado una clase de alfabetización para los adultos o padres?

sí

no

25. ¿Le gustaría tomar una clase de alfabetización para los adultos o padres en el futuro?

sí

no

26. ¿Le gustaría aprender más sobre leer y escribir con su hijo?

sí

no

quizás

Unas creencias sobre el uso de la lectura y escritura

(Favor de encerrar en un círculo la respuesta adecuada.)

27. Leer es importante para mi trabajo.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

28. Leer y escribir es un tipo de pasatiempo importante.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

29. Poder leer y escribir me permite participar más en la sociedad.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

30. Las habilidades de leer y escribir son necesarias para conseguir y mantener un trabajo.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

31. Las habilidades de leer y escribir son útiles en la vida cotidiana para ir de compras, ir al banco, pagar las cuentas, consultar el médico, etc.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

32. Leer para divertirse es un valioso uso del tiempo.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

33. Poder leer y escribir me da más autodeterminación.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

Unas creencias sobre la alfabetización

(Favor de encerrar en un círculo la respuesta adecuada.)

34. Es importante que los niños pasen tiempo leyendo todos los días.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

35. Los niños comienzan aprendiendo a leer y escribir antes de que comiencen a asistir a la escuela.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

36. Los niños aprenden a leer y escribir al mirar a los miembros de su familia leyendo y escribiendo.

completamente en desacuerdo no de acuerdo de acuerdo completamente de acuerdo

37. ¿Quiénes son responsables por enseñarle a su hijo a leer?

los padres los maestros los padres & los maestros otro

38. ¿Quiénes son responsables por enseñarle a su hijo a escribir?

los padres los maestros los padres & los maestros otro

Respuestas abiertas

(Favor de escribir sus respuestas a las siguientes preguntas.)

39. ¿Qué es lo más difícil cuando usted lee con su hijo?

40. ¿Qué es lo más difícil cuando usted escribe con su hijo?

41. ¿Qué disfruta más, o qué le gusta más con relación a leer con su hijo?

42. ¿Qué disfruta más, o qué le gusta más con relación a escribir con su hijo?

APPENDIX E: Interview and Observation Protocol in English

Level 2 questions to guide the researcher:

1. How do Mexican immigrant families practice literacy in their homes and daily lives?
2. How do these beliefs and practices differ between more and lesser-accultured immigrant families?

Level 1 prompting questions to use during interviews at site visits:

- Who typically reads/writes together in your home? How often?
 - *(evidence: who is included--especially ages of children included)*
- When do you typically read? Together/alone?
- Where do you typically read/write in your home?
 - *(evidence: table, chairs, desk, lighting, quiet area)*
- Can you show me some of the things that you read?
 - *(evidence: books, magazines, newspapers, bible, etc.)*
- How do you choose what you will read?
 - *(evidence: where these materials come from, how they are obtained)*
- What are some of your reasons for reading?
 - *(evidence: purpose- entertainment, education, information, necessity)*
- Do you visit the local library ever? Why or why/not?
 - *(evidence: library card, use of library resources)*
- Can you show me some of the writing that you do in your home?
 - *(evidence: grocery lists, notes, bills, letters, class papers, homework, etc.)*
- Do you ever tell stories orally together?
 - *(evidence: oral literacy, which language, what kinds of stories)*
- What are some of the factors that make reading/writing activities at home difficult?
 - *(evidence: lack of materials, lack of time, lack of confidence, etc.)*
- What are some of the factors that encourage or help promote reading/writing activities at home?
 - *(evidence: books sent home from school, library, private collection, parenting/literacy classes, etc.)*

APPENDIX F: Interview and Observation Protocol in Spanish

Level 2 questions to guide the researcher:

1. How do Mexican immigrant families practice literacy in their homes and daily lives?
2. How do these beliefs and practices differ between more and lesser-aculturated immigrant families?

Level 1 prompting questions to use during interviews at site visits:

- ¿Quiénes generalmente leen/escriben juntos en su casa? ¿Con qué frecuencia?
 - *(evidencia: quién está incluido--especialmente las edades de los niños incluidos)*
- ¿Cuándo lee generalmente? ¿Juntos o solo?
- ¿Dónde lee/escribe en su casa generalmente?
 - *(evidencia: mesa, sillas, escritorio, luz suficiente, un lugar quieto)*
- ¿Podría enseñarme algunas de las cosas que ustedes leen?
 - *(evidencia: libros, revistas, periódicos, Biblia, etc.)*
- ¿Cómo decide Ud. lo que leerá?
 - *(evidencia: de dónde son los materiales, cómo fueron obtenidos)*
- ¿Cuáles son algunas de las razones por las cuales lee Ud.? ¿Por qué lee?
 - *(evidencia: propósito- entretenerse, educación, información, por necesidad)*
- ¿Visita Ud. la biblioteca pública a veces? ¿Por qué sí? O, ¿por qué no?
 - *(evidencia: tarjeta de biblioteca, uso de recursos de la biblioteca)*
- ¿Podría enseñarme algunas de las cosas que escribe usted en casa?
 - *(evidencia: listas de compras, apuntes, cuentas, cartas, papeles para clases, tarea, etc.)*
- ¿A veces cuentan cuentos ustedes en voz alta?
 - *(evidencia: la alfabetización oral, cuál idioma, qué tipo de cuentos)*
- ¿Qué son unas de las cosas que hacen que las actividades de leer/escribir sean difíciles en casa?
 - *(evidencia: falta de útiles, falta de tiempo, falta de seguridad, etc.)*
- ¿Qué son unas de las cosas que apoyan o animan las actividades de leer/escribir en casa?
 - *(evidencia: libros mandados a casa de la escuela, la biblioteca, una colección privada, clases de ser padre o de la alfabetización, etc.)*

APPENDIX G: Pilot Study Findings

The researcher field-tested the informed consent form and survey questionnaire with five families from a neighboring school to check for instrument reliability and validity prior to using the instrument to answer the research questions in this study. First, the researcher will discuss demographic information to provide a profile of the pilot study respondents. Then the researcher will discuss the reliability of the research instrument using Cronbach's alpha. Finally, the researcher will explain observations made during the pilot study and specific changes to the research instruments as a result of these observations.

Demographic information

A total of seven respondents, representing five families, completed surveys during the pilot study conducted to determine the effectiveness of the survey questionnaire. Two fathers and five mothers filled out surveys. Of the respondents, three families designated Spanish as the language used in the home, and the other four families indicated that both English and Spanish are spoken in the home. All of the respondents, as well as their parents, were born outside of the United States. All respondents reported having completed some schooling; however 66.7% of respondents that answered the question indicated that they had completed no schooling in the United States (see Table 18). In terms of acculturation to the U.S. educational system determined by considering the country of birth of the respondent and their parents, as well as by the number of years of schooling completed by the respondent in the United States, 83.3% of the survey

respondents classified as lesser-acculturated immigrants while 16.7%, or in this case one respondent, classified as more-acculturated immigrants. Due to the limited sample size, the researcher elected not to run any other descriptive statistics nor investigate the correlation between acculturation and beliefs and practices related to literacy for the purposes of this pilot study.

Table 18

Pilot Sample: Years of Schooling Completed in the U.S.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 years	4	57.1	66.7	66.7
	1-3 years	1	14.3	16.7	83.3
	7-10 years	1	14.3	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	85.7	100.0	
Missing	no response	1	14.3		
Total		7	100.0		

Reliability statistics

The researcher used Cronbach's alpha (α) to test for reliability by assessing internal consistency between survey questions from the pilot study designed to measure specific constructs. Cronbach's alpha could not be calculated for the acculturation construct because more than one component variable had zero variance. Nor could it be calculated for the constructs of participation and interest in literacy events and classes for

the aforementioned reason. As shown in Table 19, the researcher noted that the correlation coefficients were particularly strong for the beliefs about using literacy construct ($\alpha = .870$), the beliefs about learning literacy construct ($\alpha = .910$), and the responsibility for teaching literacy construct ($\alpha = 1.000$). Based on the correlation coefficients calculated, the researcher determined that the survey questionnaire employed in the pilot study demonstrated acceptable internal consistency and would therefore be reliable to serve the purposes of answering these research questions.

Table 19

Pilot Study Reliability Statistics

Construct	Cronbach's α	Cronbach's α Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Access to Literacy Materials	0.730*	0.737	5
Beliefs About Learning Literacy	0.910*	0.940	3
Beliefs About Using Literacy	0.870*	0.925	7
Literacy Practices	0.798*	0.865	10
Reading Practices	0.526	0.701	5
Responsibility for Teaching Literacy	1.000*	1.000	2
Writing Practices	0.640	0.777	5

* $\alpha > .700$

General observations

The researcher made the following observations regarding the general effectiveness of the questionnaire and the subsequent changes to the survey instruments as a result of the pilot study using the survey questionnaire in Spanish:

- Each of the respondents in the pilot study requested the research materials in Spanish. As a result, the researcher did not pilot the English version of the questionnaire. Nevertheless, the researcher believed the insight from observing the instrument used in Spanish generally applied to the potential effectiveness of the survey in English as well.
- The researcher found it helpful that some families wrote notes or offered further commentary following their responses to certain questions to provide further explanation. For example, after completing the questionnaire, pilot respondent #2 talked about how it is difficult for her to help her children because she did not really have much schooling. She went to primary school through 3rd grade in Mexico. However, she explained that she wasn't really in school all that time. Her father was a farmer. So, she had to help during the harvest in the fall. Therefore, she would miss classes in September, October, and part of November. Then, school was out in Mexico in December and January. Hence, she really felt like she was only in school half of each year. As a result of the potential benefit of having such information to clarify responses and provide additional insight, the researcher encouraged participants to write notes, ask her, or call her if they needed to clarify any survey questions on an additional instruction letter

accompanying the research documents sent home in English and Spanish (see Appendix C and D).

- The researcher noticed that often one parent was more dominating and tried to influence the other parent's answer. She was surprised to find that the social desirability effect didn't appear to be perpetuated as much by the presence of the researcher/teacher, but more by the spouse. On the instruction letter for the survey, the researcher included an encouragement for respondents to please complete the survey on their own without consulting with one another.
- Pilot respondent #1 asked the researcher about whether he was supposed to respond to the questions based on what he did in English or Spanish. Thus, the researcher added a statement on the survey instruction letter that respondents should answer questions based on any and all languages that they use to read and write.
- While completing the questionnaire, the researcher noted that one woman, pilot respondent #3, kept saying that for her the answer was "no", but that for her husband it would be "yes". The researcher encouraged her to mark what she felt was accurate for herself. This illustrated to the researcher the importance of having as many willing adults from the family complete the questionnaire as possible to account for variance of beliefs and practices amongst family members.
- Two women were very candid while filling out the questionnaires; however the researcher noted that they seemed rather self-conscious. The women made several comments, such as, "You're going to think I don't know anything." The researcher

assured them that she was not judging anyone based on their answers. But, rather all the information they could share was going to help her to understand the families better and work with the children better at school. The researcher noted that the respondents seemed to answer honestly, even though they did not appear to be very confident about their own abilities as readers and writers. It was apparent to the researcher that she would need to assure future participants of the value of all types of answers.

Changes to specific questionnaire items

The researcher made the following observations regarding the general effectiveness of specific questionnaire items and the resulting changes to the survey instruments as a result of the pilot study using the survey questionnaire in Spanish:

- Question 4: Pilot respondent #1 was unsure how to answer this question because he completed his GED in the United States in one year. The researcher encouraged him to just mark one year of studies in the U.S., but to go ahead and write "GED" as a note for the researcher. Another two respondents weren't sure about whether they should respond by indicating how many years they actually completed, or what level of schooling they completed. The researcher decided not to reword this question,¹ but encouraged future participants to ask her, or call her, if they have the need to clarify any questions on an additional instruction letter that will accompany the research documents sent home.

¹As it turned out, this question proved difficult for many of the survey respondents throughout the study. If given the opportunity to use the questionnaire again in the future, the researcher would revise the answer categories for this question.

- Questions 8, 9, & 10 in Spanish: After observing that the majority of pilot respondents did not initially understand the meaning of these questions, the researcher changed the word "carnet" to "tarjeta" to describe a library card on the Spanish questionnaire, as the latter word is more commonly recognized by native Spanish speakers in this area.
- Question 11- Pilot respondent #2 wasn't sure which books she should count; she didn't know if she should count baby books, too. The researcher decided not to alter the question.
- Question #13- One woman, pilot respondent #3, said that she listened to her children read, but that she doesn't read. So, she marked "0" for minutes read. The researcher found it interesting that this mother did not feel that she was reading "with her children" if she was only listening to them. The researcher noted a similar view that reading only counts if the participant is active rather than passive when this respondent also mentioned in passing that she likes "looking" at the newspaper, but not actually reading it. The researcher did not change the question, but noted the thinking expressed by the respondent.
- Questions 14 & 19- The researcher noticed on two occasions that if the respondent did not work, then he or she often was not sure how to answer these questions. In both cases observed, the respondents selected "0 minutes" as their response. The researcher did not change the questions.
- Questions 16 & 21- Pilot respondent #3 was not sure how to mark the boxes. She thought she needed to make a mark if she didn't do these things. The researcher

considered rewording the questions, but decided that the vast majority of the respondents in the pilot study understood this task, and that it would potentially be more confusing if the directions for these items were expanded.

- Question 25: One pilot respondent, #5, asked for clarification about literacy classes, wanting to know if they were just for people that didn't know how to read. The researcher clarified this to the respondent as relating to any level of literacy class, but decided not to change the question.
- Questions 27-38: Two respondents (#2 and #3) were confused by the terminology used with the Likert scales. The researcher rephrased the terms used in the scale by saying, "absolutamente que no [absolutely not]", "no [no]", "sí [yes]", and "absolutamente que sí [absolutely yes]" and found that doing so normally helped respondents to understand the format. The researcher considered changing this terminology on the questionnaire, but decided against doing so, opting to use the standard "Likert scale" language, with the ability to clarify these terms for respondents as requested.
- Question #33: The term "autodeterminación [self-determined or empowered]" was confusing to pilot respondent #2. The researcher clarified this concept as "participar más en la comunidad [to participate more in the community]." The researcher chose not to change this question.

APPENDIX H: Information Letter

The Survey:

This fall, as part of my studies at the university, I would like to learn more about Spanish speaking families' beliefs and practices related to reading and writing. I would like all families to answer some survey questions that I have written. I am also asking that both fathers and mothers participate because I suppose that their answers will be different. Everyone that completes and turns in a survey will receive a book in appreciation of their time.

If you would like to help me with this project, please fill out the information below and return the page to school with your son or daughter.

Mother's name: (if she wishes to participate) _____

Father's name: (if he wishes to participate) _____

Other's name: (if he/she wishes to participate) _____

Mark the language in which you would prefer to receive the survey:

Mother:	English	Spanish
Father:	English	Spanish
Other:	English	Spanish

Mark your preference for where you would like to complete the survey:

at home at a meeting at an individual appointment

Mark your language preference for the book you will receive:

Mother:	English	Spanish
Father:	English	Spanish
Other:	English	Spanish

Thank you in advance for your participation!

APPENDIX I: Carta de información

La encuesta:

Este otoño, como parte de mis estudios universitarios, quiero aprender más sobre las creencias y las prácticas relacionadas con la lectura y la redacción de las familias hispanohablantes. Me gustaría que todas las familias contesten las preguntas de una encuesta que he escrito. También estoy pidiendo que ambos los padres y las madres participen porque supongo que sus opiniones serán diferentes. Todas las personas que completan y entregan una encuesta recibirán un libro como muestra de mi gratitud por su tiempo.

Si le gustaría ayudarme en este proyecto, favor de rellenar la información abajo y regresar esta página a la escuela con su hijo/a.

nombre de la madre: (si quiere participar) _____

nombre del padre: (si quiere participar) _____

nombre de otra persona: (si quiere participar) _____

Marca el lenguaje que prefiere para recibir la encuesta:

madre:	ingles	español
padre:	ingles	español
la otra persona:	ingles	español

Marca su preferencia para donde quiere hacer la encuesta:

en casa	en una junta	en una cita individual
---------	--------------	------------------------

Marca su preferencia para el lenguaje del libro que recibirá:

madre:	ingles	español
padre:	ingles	español
la otra persona:	ingles	español

¡Gracias en adelante por su participación!