THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SHARED READING INTERVENTIONS WITH FAMILIES OF HISPANIC PREKINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

A Dissertation

by

TRACEY COVINGTON HASBUN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2011

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Hersh Waxman
Committee Members,	Yolanda Padrón
	Robin Rackley
	Dennie Smith
Head of Department,	Dennie Smith

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ABSTRACT

The Effectiveness of Shared Reading Interventions with Families of Hispanic Prekindergarten Students. (December 2011)

Tracey Covington Hasbun, B.S.; M.I.S., Stephen F. Austin University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Hersh Waxman

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of parent or caregiver shared-reading interventions on Hispanic prekindergarten students' language and literacy scores. In addition, this study investigated the effects of shared reading interventions on Spanish-speaking parents' home literacy behaviors with their children. Teacher perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the intervention were also examined. The present mixed-methods study was similar to research conducted by Jiménez, Fillipini, & Gerber (2006) and Whitehurst, Falco, Lonigan, Fischel, DeBaryshe, Valdez-Manchaca, & Caulfield (1988) in that shared reading strategies were conducted with parents or caregivers and their children. Differing from previous research, the current study utilized an experimental pretest-posttest control group design, sessions were conducted over a 20-week period, students' language and literacy scores were examined in both English and Spanish, and Hispanic preschool children and their parents or caregivers served as participants.

Statistically significant results were found in students' oral language scores in English and Spanish. The treatment group scored higher in both languages. Statistically significant results were also found in several aspects of parent or caregiver home literacy

behaviors. Parents or caregivers in the treatment group reported reading more to their children in both English and Spanish. The treatment group also reported reading with greater frequency and for greater periods of time with their children. Additionally, children in the treatment group asked to be read to more often and possessed a greater enjoyment for being read to during sessions. Finally, parents or caregivers in the treatment group indicated that they held a greater enjoyment for reading, at the end of the intervention. Teachers in the study perceived the program to be a success and attributed positive changes within the parents or caregivers and children to the intervention.

DEDICATION

To my family: I thank God each day for letting me be a part of you.

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Throughout this doctoral process, I have learned several important lessons. (1) The more you learn, the more you realize how much you have to learn. (2) You can achieve more than you ever imagine when you surround yourself with great people.

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Lastly, I want to thank God. I feel more than blessed that You have placed all of the people mentioned above into my life.

NOMENCLATURE

ANCOVA	Analysis of Covariance
BBCS-R	Bracken Concept Scale-Revised
CEEE	Center for Equity and Excellence in Education
CELF-P	The Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-Preschool
DDST	Denver Developmental Screening Test
ECLS-B	Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Birth Cohort
ELL	English Language Learner
ELM	Early Language Milestones Scale
ENNI	Edmonton Narrative Norms Instrument
EOWPVT	Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test
EVT	Expressive Vocabulary Test
FACES	Family and Child Experiences Survey
FIS	Family Information Survey
FRED	Families Reading Everyday
HLPI	Home Literacy Practices Inventory
IDRA	Intercultural Development Research Association
IES	Institute of Education Sciences
ITPA	Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities
LEP	Limited English Proficient
LI	Language Impaired

NCELA	National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition
NEA	National Education Association
NHES	National Household Education Survey
PALSPreK	Phonological Literacy Awareness Screening: PreK
PEOPLE	Pruebas de Expresion Oral y percepción de la Lengua Española
PPVT-R	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised
PPVT-III	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III
PRBI	Parental Reading Belief Inventory
PWPA	Preschool Word and Print Awareness Scale
QVRB	Questionnaire for Verbal and Reading Behavior
RTR	Get Ready to Read! Screen
SAAS	School Attendance Area Surveys
SAAS-L	School Attendance Area Surveys-Language
SESAT	Stanford Early Achievement Test
SLI	Specific Language Impairment
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRC	School Readiness Composite
STSG	Screening Test of Spanish Grammar
TACL-3	Test for Auditory Comprehension of Language-3rd Edition
TAKS	Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
TD	Typically Developing
TEA	Texas Education Agency

TELPAS	Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System
TERA	Test of Early Reading Ability
TERA-2	Test of Early Reading Ability-2nd Edition
TL	Typically Developing Language Skills
WJ-R	Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised
WLPB-R	Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery-Revised
WMLS-R	Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised
WPPSI-R	Weschler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Revised
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Enrollment data for the United States and Texas, specifically, indicates growth in the number of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. Between 1995 and 2006, the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) reported that LEP enrollment increased 57.17%, to 5,074,572 students in the United States, with 44% of this enrollment being concentrated between prekindergarten and third grades (Kindler, 2002; NCELA, 2007). By 2008, Texas, which ranked second in overall LEP enrollment, (California ranked first) reported an even greater concentration between prekindergarten and third grades with 61% of LEP students being served in these grades (Intercultural Development Research Association, 2008; NCELA, 2008). It was also reported that 93.4% of these LEP students spoke Spanish as their primary native language (Kindler, 2002). With the growing number of Limited English Proficient students in Texas, particularly in the earlier grades, how to best meet the language needs of these young learners must be addressed.

One critical area of focus concerning the future school success of Spanish-speaking LEP students is the development of language and vocabulary in the early stages of the child's life (Tamis-Lemonda & Rodriguez, 2008). Due to the large number of LEP students in the younger grades, it is important to focus on early childhood class-

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This dissertation follows the style of *American Educational Research Journal*.

rooms. More specifically, it is important that we investigate methods for developing the language and vocabulary skills of young, LEP/English Language Learners (ELLs) in prekindergarten. "Increasingly, English Language Learner (ELL), is used in place of LEP" (Massachusetts Department of Education, 2005, p. 2) and, thus, the term ELL will be used throughout the remainder of this dissertation.

According to the National Education Association, (NEA) ELLs often face difficult and unique challenges and have higher high school dropout rates than many other ethnic groups (NEA, 2008). Additionally, it has been noted that two-thirds of ELLs come from low-income families or settings (NEA, 2008). Children who live in poverty often lack exposure to print-rich and language immersed environments and children with limited vocabulary skills by the age of 3 are often at significant risk for failure in later language and vocabulary development (Gambrell, Mandel Morrow, & Pressley, 2007; Hart & Risley, 2003). For minority children such as Hispanic, Spanish-speaking ELL's, future school success significantly depends upon the language that is acquired in their early childhood years (Tamis-Lemonda & Rodriguez, 2008).

Early Engagement with Text

Early experiences with language, print, and literacy at home have been found to lay a firm foundation for future literacy success (Tabors & Snow, 2001). Shared reading between parents and children is one approach examined in this study since research has indicated it improves the language and vocabulary of young children (Whitehurst, Arnold, Epstein, Angell, Smith, & Fischel, 1994). Shared reading involves parents or teachers reading to and with a child providing the child with opportunities to experience

various aspects of the reading process including talking about the relationships between pictures and text and hearing text read with expression (Hall & Williams, 2000). Shared reading experiences can also support the acquisition of many future literacy skills such as concepts of print, story structure and vocabulary, letter identification, as well as motivation and interest in reading (Baker, Fernandez-Fein, Scher, & Williams, 1998; Laakso, Poikkeus, Eklund, & Lyytinen, 2004; Sénéchal & Lefevre, 2002; Snow & Ninio, 1986). Laakso, Poikkeus, Eklund, and Lyytinen (2004) also suggested that children who are read to and with at an early age, tend to have more interest in reading at later ages.

Shared reading and other literacy approaches are especially important for children at-risk for developing future reading and language difficulties (Scarbrough, Dobrich, & Hager, 1991). In Wells' (1986) landmark study, he found that reading aloud to children and engaging in the interactive process of shared reading was "the single most important factor associated with childrens' success in school" (Heald-Taylor, 2001, p. 53; Wells, 1986). Yet, while numerous studies outline the importance of the home and family in the development of language, as well as the effects of shared reading on a child's literacy and language development, many of these studies are conducted with English monolingual students (Jimènez, Fillipini, & Gerber, 2006; McDonnell, Friel-Patti, & Rollins, 2003; Sénéchal & Lefevre, 2002; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Little empirical research exists regarding the shared-reading interactions between parents and children learning English as a second language

(Jimènez, Fillipini, & Gerber, 2006). Unfortunately for educators, even less research is available on shared reading between parents and preschool ELL's.

Theoretical Framework

While several theoretical frameworks could be readily applied to the areas of language, vocabulary, and pre-literacy development, this study is based upon the theories of social interactionists such as Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner. While Bruner initially was identified as a cognitive theorist and sided with Piaget's thoughts regarding discovery learning, his later work aligned with Vygotsky and included more of the social aspects of cognition. Vygotsky (1978) contended that there is a distance between the actual developmental level of a child and the level which can be reached by collaboration with an adult or more-able peer. This distance, which he termed as the zone of proximal development (ZPD), offers significant possibilities for increasing vocabulary and language when combined with theorist Jerome Bruner's idea of scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1978). Scaffolding, which involves having a child involved in a joint-problem solving task with an adult, echoes many of the ideas presented by social interactionists who stress the importance of the interaction between a parent and child (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

Purpose of the Study

According to the Intercultural Development Research Association, (IDRA) over the past several years Texas classrooms have seen an increase in the enrollment of ELL students, with most of these students being concentrated between prekindergarten through third grades (IDRA, 2008). Because language is critical to the future academic

success of most students, bilingual students in particular, teachers, parents, and educators must be prepared with the most effective ways to assist students (Tamis-Lemonda & Rodriguez, 2008). While the value of shared reading sessions could be examined to determine multiple aspects of literacy and learning, the purpose of this study is to examine the effects of parent or caregiver shared-reading interventions on Hispanic prekindergarten students' language and literacy scores. In addition, this study investigates the effect of shared reading interventions on Spanish-speaking parents' home literacy behaviors with their children. Teacher perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the intervention will also be examined. This study contributes to the limited research available on shared reading with ELL's, particularly with younger children (Lambert, 1991; Robbins & Ehri, 1994). Research about shared reading activities and the enhancement of language and literacy development is important for students who are learning English as a second language, particularly for those in the early grades.

Finding pertinent, relevant research on shared reading interventions with young children and their families is difficult. While there are a large number of studies that analyze the benefits of shared reading and early parental involvement with English monolingual children, the empirical studies on children learning English as a second language is not as extensive (Jiménez, Fillipini, & Gerber, 2006). For the purpose of this dissertation, studies targeting both monolingual English-speaking children and Spanish-speaking children who are learning English as a second language are reviewed. The contributions of literacy practices within the home are detailed.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed in this present study:

1. Are there significant differences between the treatment group (i.e., shared reading interventions) and comparison group (i.e., those not receiving shared reading interventions) on prekindergarten students' oral language and literacy scores on the *Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised* (*WMLS-R*)?
2. Are there significant differences between the treatment group (i.e., shared reading interventions) and comparison group on parents' self-reported home reading behaviors on the *Shared Reading Practices Survey*?
3. What are the parents' perceptions of the intervention as measured by the *Shared Reading Practices Survey*?
4. Do teachers perceive the intervention was effective for their students?

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined and utilized in the present study:

1. *After Reading*: In the after reading portion of a shared reading session or experience, the teacher, parent, or caregiver extends the text by asking questions about the story, engaging the child in an activity to target a particular strategy, or focusing on particular aspects of the text such as letters, words, or sentences (Hall & Williams, 2000).
2. *Before Reading*: In this portion of the shared reading session, the teacher, parent, or caregiver takes the child on a picture walk of the text, discussing what is seen, eliciting personal connections to the text, predictions, and drawing upon prior knowledge (Hall & Williams, 2000). Discussions of the front cover, author, illustrator, title, and title page may also take place.
3. *Dialogic Reading*: As defined by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), dialogic reading "is an interactive shared picture book reading practice designed to enhance young children's language and literacy skills" (2007, p. 1). As the parent or caregiver and the child engage in a shared reading session, "the adult and the child switch roles so that the child learns to become the storyteller with the assistance of the adult who functions as an active listener and questioner" (U. S. Department of Education, 2007, p. 1).
4. *During Reading*: During this shared reading segment, the teacher, parent, or caregiver reads the text and models concepts of print, expression, and other foundational literacy skills (Hall & Williams, 2000). In subsequent readings, the

child becomes more progressively and actively involved in the reading, by echo or choral reading (Hall & Williams, 2000).

5. *Emergent Reader*: According to Justice and Kaderavek (2002), children between birth and six years of age are referred to as emergent readers. In this stage of reading, the children display non-conventional reading behaviors, observe, and participate in literacy, informally (Justice & Kaderavek, 2002). Through this participation and observation, children learn concepts of print, vocabulary, phonological awareness, and knowledge of the alphabet (Justice & Kaderavek, 2002).
6. *English Language Learners (ELL)*: As defined by the Center for Equity and Excellence in Education (CEEE), "Students whose first language is not English, and encompasses both students who are just beginning to learn English (often referred to in federal legislation as "limited English proficient" or "LEP") and those who have already developed considerable proficiency" (2005, p. 1).
7. *Limited English Proficient (LEP)*: As defined by the U.S. Department of Education, "LEP persons are those whose proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English, as a result of national origin, is such that it would deny or limit their meaningful access to programs and services provided by the Department if language assistance were not provided" (2005, p. 2).
8. *Shared Reading*: Shared reading takes place when parents or teachers read to and read with their student, providing the child the opportunities to "experience print, take notice of what print is doing, experience words, experience pictures,

experience and talk about the relationships between pictures and text and experience reading with expression" (Hall & Williams, 2000, p. 41). Shared reading includes materials such as big books or repetitive texts, and is often conducted with an emergent reader (Hall & Williams, 2000). The reading of the text often involves three distinct segments. These segments are labeled as the before reading, during reading, and after reading components (Hall & Williams, 2000).

9. *Literacy Scores*: Literacy scores are defined as the letter and word identification scores of children, as measured by Task 3 (i.e., letter-word identification) of the *Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised* (*WMLS-R*; Woodcock, Muñoz-Sandoval, Ruef, Alvarado, & Schrank, 2005).
10. *Oral Language Scores*: Language scores are defined as the expressive and receptive language scores of children, as measured by Task 1 (i.e., picture vocabulary) and Task 2 (i.e., verbal analogies) of the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock et al,, 2005).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RESEARCH

In this chapter, previously conducted research on shared reading with English monolingual students, shared reading with English Language Learners, and the contributions of home literacy behaviors are reviewed. Studies in each area of interest are presented in detail and presented in table format, in order to highlight key findings. The tables display the purpose, samples, and methodology that were utilized in each research component contributing to the present study. Figure 1 provides an overview of the research framing the current study.

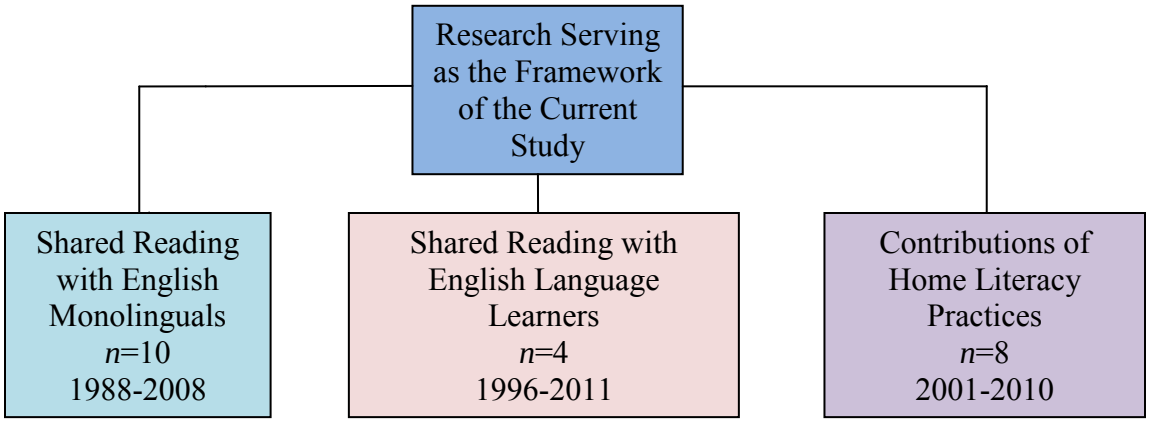

Figure 1. **Research Serving as Framework of Current Study.**

Shared Reading with English Monolingual Students

Reading with children has long been regarded as valuable and important in promoting competence as a reader. Because it is a widely-held belief that reading sessions between parents or caregivers and their children are beneficial, examining the specific outcomes of these sessions is of interest. The research examining shared reading with English monolingual students is extensive. However, in this initial review, seven studies from 2000-2011 are reported, as they present the most recent findings regarding shared reading and literacy outcomes with children. In addition, three studies from the 1980s and 1990s are also described since they are considered to be seminal works in the field of shared reading. All 10 studies were selected based on their direct relation to the first research question presented in the current study which addresses the language and literacy outcomes of children, in English, after parents or caregivers receive training on shared reading strategies. This review of prior studies is presented in alphabetical order.

In one of the most referenced seminal works examining shared reading, Bus, van IJzendoorn, and Pellegrini (1995) conducted a meta-analysis "to test the empirical evidence regarding the importance of joint book reading as the single most important activity for developing the knowledge required for eventual success in reading" (p. 1). This quantitative seminal study examined over 30 years of empirical data on the effects of the frequency of shared book reading sessions between parents or caregivers and their preschoolers. The researchers selected 29 studies, which focused on the frequency of parent/child reading sessions with consideration given to the socioeconomic status of the

children's families that contributed to the results. Researchers were cautious to mention that many of the studies involved parental reports, possibly containing socially desirable responses. They noted that social desirability often leads parents to exaggerate the number of book reading sessions reported, which, in turn, could minimize the frequencies of shared reading sessions reported between families. They also noted the possibility that stronger effects could be found from observation versus questionnaires and that effect sizes could be stronger in experimental designs.

Their results indicated significant relationships between joint book reading sessions with parents or caregivers and preschoolers and growth in language, emerging literacy skills, and achievement in reading. The researchers noted that effect sizes appeared to be greatest in samples of younger children. The effects from the frequency of the shared book reading sessions were not dependent upon the socioeconomic level of the parents or caregivers, thus, contradicting prior research that suggested most language measures were invalid instruments for examining the effects of shared reading between parents and children from low-income families (Debaryshe, Huntley, Daley, & Rodarmel, 1992).

In 2006, Deckner, Adamson, and Bakeman undertook a longitudinal study to investigate the effects of home literacy behaviors, children's reading interest, and mother's metalingual speech during shared reading on children's developing language and literacy skills. Language and literacy development was measured by children's knowledge of letters, receptive and expressive vocabulary skills, and concepts of print. Fifty-five mother-child dyads were observed and assessed from 18 months to 42 months.

According to the results, letter knowledge was predicted by the child's interest, receptive language was predicted by home literacy behaviors, and expressive language was predicted by the interest of the child, the pace of the mother's utterances, as well as home literacy behaviors.

Lachner, Zevenbergen, and Zevenbergen (2008) examined the frequency with which parents or caregivers and their preschool children referred to letters outside of the text, while engaging in a shared reading session of an alphabet book. The researchers also investigated the relationship between letter reference frequency and the child's letter knowledge and age. Parents were administered a questionnaire to gather demographic data and to garner information regarding the child's social skills, behaviors, and the interactions taking place between the parents or caregiver and the child. Children were assessed on the *School Readiness Composite (SRC) of the Bracken Concept Scale-Revised* (*BBCS-R*; Bracken, 1998) followed by researchers observing a shared reading session between the parents or caregivers and children. The observational data was transcribed and coded into 14 possible letter and speech-related categories. Of these categories, nine were labeled as parent categories and five were referred to as child categories. The researchers found that the child's age significantly correlated with parent labels and the child's knowledge of letter names significantly correlated with parent corrections, naming requests, and repetitions and with child initiations and answers.

In 2008, Mol, Bus, de Jong, and Smeets analyzed years of research through a meta-analysis that assessed the value of an interactive, dialogic reading approach, as

opposed to a non-interactive approach, when parents or caregivers and their children engaged in shared reading sessions. A total of 16 studies were reviewed that utilized dialogic reading as an intervention, reported conventional shared reading approaches as a control group, and listed children's vocabulary as a measurable outcome. Of the 16 studies, eight examined both receptive and expressive vocabulary measures, seven assessed receptive vocabulary, and one study tested expressive vocabulary. Participants included 626 parent and child or parent and caregiver dyads and children's mean ages ranged from 27.8 to 70.2 months. Mol, Bus, de Jong, and Smeets reported that, for all of the studies, d=.42, which is a small but significant effect size. Although the effect size appeared small for receptive vocabulary, d=.59, the effect size for expressive vocabulary was moderate at d=.59.

A review of the literature was conducted by Phillips and Norris in 2008. They reviewed studies that posited shared reading, in many instances, does not produce the positive outcomes expected. They found that children's attention is often captured by the illustrations of the book being used in the shared reading session and parents or caregivers, typically, do not shift the children's attention or focus to the print or text itself. Findings from the review of the research supported the idea that while shared reading often encourages the development of oral language, other early literacy outcomes, such as letter identification, could be affected in a positive manner when parents or caregivers explicitly implemented skills and strategies regarding the print.

Scarborough and Dobrich's (1994) meta-analysis was similar to Bus, van IJzendoorn, and Pellegrini's (1995) research in that three decades of empirical data were

reviewed. In this seminal work, 31 research studies were evaluated, 20 of which were correlational and 11 of which were intervention studies. Again, the results highlighted the language and literacy benefits of parents or caregivers reading to and with their young children. The researchers, however, noted the variability between and within samples and underscored the modest effects suggested in many studies. For instance, in many of the correlational studies reviewed, they found student outcomes were more strongly predicted by the frequency of the shared reading sessions, rather than the quality of the shared reading sessions. In comparison, when intervention studies were reviewed, the researchers indicated the trend was less evident. Many of the intervention studies appeared to affect the quality and frequency of the parent and child reading sessions. The data indicated that, in the intervention studies, when parents or caregivers were provided with texts, guidance, and accompanying feedback, the programs were likely to influence the quality and frequency of shared reading sessions, either of which could have affected the outcomes. They also concluded that shared reading sessions between parents or caregivers and their preschool children did not appear to be "more strongly related to oral language development than to the acquisition of print- specific literacy skills" (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994, p. 271). Both outcomes appeared to be associated with shared reading.

Sénéchal and Lefevre (2002) provided data on shared reading sessions between middle- and upper-class English monolingual parents or caregivers and their kindergarten and first grade children when they conducted a longitudinal study that is often referenced in the literature. Participants were recruited from three Canadian

schools which utilized multi-age classrooms. In Canada, 4-year-olds are allowed to attend kindergarten for two years and, thus, were included in the kindergarten sample.

At the beginning of kindergarten and first grade, students were pretested on the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (PPVT-R)* (Dunn & Dunn, 1981) to determine vocabulary abilities. Listening comprehension and phonological awareness were assessed through a subtest of the *Stanford Early Achievement Test (SESAT*; Psychological Corporation, 1989), print concepts were assessed through *Concepts About Print* (Clay, 1979), and letter identification was assessed by having children name 15 random letters. Invented spelling and decoding were additional areas of interest assessed by having children read basic consonant-vowel-consonant words and spell select words. Finally, children were administered a subtest of the *Weschler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Revised (WPPSI-R*; Weschler, 1989) to measure analytic intelligence.

At the onset of this study, the children's parents or caregivers were asked to complete a survey regarding home reading behaviors identifying items such as how often the parent or caregiver reads to the child and the number of books that were present in the home. The parents or caregivers were also asked to report the frequency of times they taught their child to read or print words and to complete a checklist of children's books and authors they recognized. Additionally, the parents or caregivers were also assessed on a form of the *Author Recognition Test,* which indicated their exposure to adult literature (Stanovich & Cunningham, 1992).

Students in the kindergarten cohort were tested at the end of first grade on word reading and story comprehension through subtests of the *Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised* (*WJ-R*; Woodcock & Johnson, 1989). Students in the first grade cohort were tested on word recognition and story comprehension at the end of first grade but were tested on a subtest of the *Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests* (Level A, Form 3; MacGinitie & MacGinitie, 1992). At the end of third grade, all cohorts were tested on vocabulary and comprehension through subtests of the *Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests* (Level C, Form 3; MacGinitie & MacGinitie, 1992).

According to the results, "children's exposure to books was related to the development of vocabulary and listening comprehension skills, and that these language skills were directly related to children's reading in grade 3" (Sénéchal & Lefevre, 2002, p. 445). Other findings included that early literacy development was related to parents or caregivers being involved in the teaching of writing and reading words to children and early literacy skills or development was also related to word reading abilities at the end of first grade. Early exposure to books showed positive effects in regards to children's literacy.

In 2008, Sénéchal, Pagan, Lever, and Ouellette tested the value of parent literacy and shared reading to various outcome measures such as narrative ability, syntax comprehension, morphological comprehension, and expressive vocabulary. Because narrative ability and expressive vocabulary are more directly-related to the research questions in this study, the results and measures for syntax comprehension, and morphological comprehension will not be discussed. The parents from the 106 parent

and child dyads completed a questionnaire on home literacy behaviors. The parents also completed two checklists assessing exposure to children's storybooks and one checklist indicating the parents' exposure to adult books. *The Expressive Vocabulary Test* (*EVT*; Williams, 1997) was used to measure the children's expressive vocabulary but narrative ability was assessed through several measures. Children's storytelling was assessed through the *Edmonton Narrative Norms Instrument* (*ENNI*; Schneider, Dubé, & Hayward, 2002) and personal narratives were evaluated through an adapted version of a task constructed by Purcell-Gates (1988). Children's nonverbal intelligence was measured through the Animal Pegs subtest of the *WPPSI-R* (Wechsler, 1989). The researchers found that children's expressive vocabulary was significantly related to shared reading but was not related to any narrative measures. Specifically, "shared reading accounted for unique variance in children's expressive vocabulary and morphological knowledge after controlling for child nonverbal intelligence, parent education, and parent literacy (i.e., book exposure)" (Sénéchal et al., 2008, p.27).

Investigating the effects of family reading practices on the emerging literacy skills of preschool children from low-income homes, Storch-Bracken and Fischel (2008) conducted a 3-year, longitudinal study. One of the questions they sought to answer was how the literacy practices of families related to children's literacy outcomes focusing, specifically, on the examination of shared reading. At the onset of school, approximately 223 Head Start children were tested on five various assessments in order to determine their reading readiness, receptive vocabulary, letter knowledge, and story and print concepts. The primary caregivers of these children completed the *Family*

Reading Survey (Storch-Bracken & Fischel, 2008) to assess home reading behaviors. The questions were grouped into three factors, which will be discussed further in the third review of the literature. However, in this first review, it is important to note that two of the five questions presented in the parent-child reading interaction component related to shared reading. Results indicated that parent-child reading interactions significantly contributed to emerging literacy skills in children, specifically in receptive vocabulary and in concepts of print, suggesting that shared reading possibly plays an important role in the receptive vocabulary acquisition of children.

In 1988, Whitehurst, Falco, Lonigan, Fischel, DeBaryshe, Valdez-Menchaca, and Caulfield conducted one of the first studies to examine the effects of using the more interactive, shared reading approach, often referred to as dialogic reading. In this particular study parents or caregivers randomly placed in the treatment group were trained to use various techniques during shared reading sessions with their children. Training strategies included the parents posing more open-ended and "wh"-questions such as who, what, when, where, and why, repeating, recasting, and expanding upon the child's speech, and correcting and praising the child's speech attempts. Whitehurst and colleagues found statistically significant differences between groups on children's oral language outcomes. The experimental group scored significantly higher at the end of the intervention. All children were retested nine months later, and, although the mean scores for the experimental group were still as large as they were at the end of the intervention, the scores were no longer statistically significant, which was attributed to a decrease in the sample size.

To summarize, the findings present compelling evidence that outlines the benefits of parents and children engaging in shared reading sessions (Ninio, 1983; Sénéchal & Lefevre, 2002; Wells, 1986). While the strength of the effects vary from study to study, the data consistently suggests a positive correlation between shared reading and children's growth in language and literacy skills, with increased language or vocabulary scores being one of the most reported positive outcomes (Bus, van IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994; Sénéchal & Lefevre, 2002; Storch-Bracken & Fischel, 2008). The effects of these joint reading sessions also appear to be greater in young children and to have a direct correlation to literacy success in later grades (Bus, van IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995; Sénéchal & Lefevre, 2002). The results suggest that when parents are provided with books, guidance, and feedback, the frequency and quality of shared reading sessions with their child is affected, thus, affecting the child's literacy and language outcomes. Much of the data, however, have been conducted with monolingual English-speaking samples. More research is needed regarding shared reading interactions between parents and children who are learning English as a second language. Key findings from the studies reviewed in this section are highlighted in Table 1.

Table 1

Research on Shared Reading with English Monolingual Students

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Bus, van IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini (1995)	To "test empirical evidence regarding the importance of joint book reading as the single most important activity for developing the knowledge required for eventual success in reading" (p. 1)	Quantitative meta-analysis of 29 studies. Of the studies, 16 focused on language, 16 on emerging literacy skills, and 9 on achievement in reading Studies were correlational, retrospective, longitudinal, and experimental Overall effect size: *d*=.59 Language effect size: *d*=.67 Emergent literacy effect size: *d*=.58 Reading achievement effect size: *d*=.55	Shared reading between parents or caregivers and their preschoolers appears related to growth in language, emergent or pre-literacy skills, and achievement in reading The results provide "a clear and affirmative answer to the question of whether or not storybook reading is one of the most important activities for developing the knowledge required for eventual success in reading" (p. 1)
Deckner, Adamson, & Bakeman (2006)	To examine the effects of mother's metalingual speech during reading, children's reading interest, and home literacy behaviors on children's knowledge of letters, print concepts, and receptive and expressive	55 mother-child pairs, largely European-American Dyads were observed at 27 months and home literacy behaviors were reported through a modified version of *Stony Brook Family Reading*	Receptive language was predicted by home literacy behaviors Expressive language was predicted by child interest, home literacy practices, and the pace of metalingual speech by mothers

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Deckner, Adamson, & Bakeman (2006) continued	vocabulary	*Survey* (Whitehurst, 1992) Children's language was tested at 30 months and at 42 months through *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III-(PPVT-III;* Dunn & Dunn, 1997*)* and *EVT* (Williams, 1997*)* Letter knowledge and print concepts were tested at 42 months through a letter identification and discrimination task (Bialystok, Shenfield, & Codd, 2000) and through Clay's *Concepts About Print* (Clay, 1993)	Knowledge of letters was predicted by child interest Strong association between child interest and the pace of mother's metalingual speech
Lachner, Zevenbergen, & Zevenbergen (2008)	To examine the frequency with which parents or caregivers and their preschool children made references to letters, outside of the text, during the shared reading of an alphabet book To investigate the relation-	44 preschool children and their parents or caregivers The children's mean age was 48.91 months and 98% were European American. The parent's mean age was 34.48 years	Statistically significant correlations were found between the age of the child and labels by parents Statistically significant correlations were found between child letter knowledge

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Lachner, Zevenbergen, & Zevenbergen (2008)	ship between letter reference and the child's age and letter knowledge	Children were assessed on the *SRC* of the *BBCS*-R (Bracken, 1998) Parents completed questionnaires regarding the child's behavior, socials skills, child and parent interaction, and demographic information	and parental corrections, naming requests, repetitions, and child initiations and answers
Mol, Bus, de Jong & Smeets (2008)	To investigate the value of utilizing an interactive approach in shared reading sessions versus a non-participatory approach as measured by children's vocabulary outcomes	Meta-analysis of 16 studies Effect size for all studies: *d*=.42 Effect size for receptive vocabulary: *d*=.22 Effect size for expressive vocabulary: *d*=.59	Interactive reading sessions, or dialogic reading sessions, showed modest, positive effects on children's expressive vocabulary scores Effect sizes decreased when children were at risk for literacy or language impairments and when children grew older
Phillips & Norris (2008)	To review the literature regarding the benefits of shared reading between parents or caregivers and children and to answer the	Literature review	Shared reading, typically, does not produce the literacy benefits that are expected, due to the child focusing on the illustrations, rather than the

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Phillips & Norris (2008) continued	following: (1) What takes place during shared reading sessions between children and caregivers? (2) When caregivers and children engage in shared reading, what are the outcomes? (3) How can shared reading sessions between caregivers and children be enriched?		print Parents can promote greater literacy outcomes, through shared reading, when they focus on explicit literacy strategies and skills These results were indicated for children of low-income, as well
Scarborough & Dobrich (1994)	The purpose of this research was to determine how important shared reading with preschoolers is on their developing language and literacy skills	Meta-analysis of 31 research studies 20 correlational studies 11 intervention studies	There is an association between shared reading and developing language and literacy skills of preschoolers Researchers noted the variability between and within samples and underscored the modest effects suggested in many studies In correlational studies, outcomes were predicted more by quantity of shared reading. In intervention studies,

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Scarborough & Dobrich (1994) continued			outcomes appeared to be altered by both quantity and quality of shared reading sessions In intervention studies, data indicated that when parents were given books, guidance, and feedback, programs were likely to influence the quality and quantity of shared reading
Sénéchal & Lefevre (2002)	To determine the importance of parent or caregiver read aloud sessions on children's language and literacy outcomes To determine the relationship between reading and children's early experiences with literacy To determine the long-term effects of early literacy experiences at home on reading achievement	168 kindergarten and first grade children enrolled in multiage classrooms in Canada All from middle to upper-class families who spoke English Four parental report measures : (1) The frequency of teaching their child to read and write words (2) Parental exposure to children's stories (3) Canadian equivalent (Sénéchal, Lefevre, Hudson, & Lawson, 1996) to *Author Recognition Test* (Stanovich & Cunningham, 1992) (4) Parent questionnaire	Book exposure is related to children's vocabulary and listening comprehension development Parental teaching of word reading and writing was related to literacy skill development Word reading abilities by the end of first grade was directly predicted by early literacy skill development Word reading abilities by the end of third grade were indirectly predicted by early literacy skill development

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Sénéchal & Lefevre (2002)		regarding literacy experiences at home Children were assessed on measures: (1) Exposure to print checklist (Sénéchal et al., 1996) (2) *PPVT-R* (Dunn & Dunn, 1981) (3) Listening comprehension-Subtest of *SESAT* (Psychological Corporation, 1989) (4) Phonological awareness-*SESAT*'s sound categorization task (Psychological Corporation, 1989) (5) Items 1-9 and 11 on *Concepts About Print*, (Clay, 1979) (6) Alphabet knowledge-Naming 15 letters(7) Decoding-Reading 5 simple consonant, vowel consonant words (8) Invented Spelling-Children are asked to spell 10 words (9) Analytic intelligence- Animal House subtest of *WPPSI-R* (Weschler, 1989)	"Children's exposure to books was related to the development of vocabulary and listening comprehension skills, and that these language skills were directly related to children's reading in grade" (p. 445).

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Sénéchal & Lefevre (2002) continued		(10) Word Reading-Vocabulary subtest of *Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests* (Level A, Form 3, MacGinitie & MacGinitie, 1992) (11) Word reading and reading comprehension-Letter word identification and passage comprehension subtests of *WJ-R* (Woodcock & Johnson, 1989) (12) Reading-Vocabulary and comprehension subtests of *Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests* (Level C, Form 3; MacGinitie & MacGinitie, 1992)	
Sénéchal et al., (2008)	To assess the predictive ability of shared reading frequency on literacy skill and vocabulary skills and to investigate whether or not two various genres of narrative story-telling were related	106 kindergarten children and their primary caregivers, from on city in Canada Children's mean age was 4 years and 8 months Parent measures: (1) Questionnaire on home literacy	Statistically significant relationship between shared reading and expressive vocabulary but shared reading was not related to narrative measures After statistically controlling for

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Sénéchal et al., (2008) continued		behaviors (2) checklists to assess exposure to children's books (3) checklist to assess exposure to adult books Children's measures: (1) *EVT* (Williams, 1997) (2) Morphological comprehension-Grammatical Morphemes subtest of the *Test for Auditory Comprehension of Language-3rd Edition (TACL-3*; Carrow-Woolfolk, 1999) (3) Syntax comprehension-Elaborated Phrases and Sentences subtest of the *TACL-3* (Carrow-Woodfolk, 1999) (4) Book narrative-*ENNI* (Schneider, Dubé, & Hayward, 2002) (5) Personal narrative-Adapted from a task created by Purcell-Gates (1988) (6) Nonverbal intelligence-Animal Pegs subtest of *WPPSI-R* (Wechsler,	parent education, parent literacy, and children's nonverbal intelligence, "shared reading accounted for unique variance in children's expressive vocabulary and morphological knowledge" (p. 27).

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Sénéchal et al., (2008) continued		1989)	
Storch-Bracken & Fischel (2008)	To investigate the literacy practices of preschool families focusing on the variations in those behaviors, the relationships between those variables, and the contribution of the family's literacy practices to children's emerging literacy skills	223 preschool children enrolled Head Start in southeastern New York and their caregivers Children's test measures: (1) Print knowledge, emergent writing, and linguistic awareness-*Get Ready to Read!* screen (*RTR*; National Center for Learning Disabilities, 2002) (2) Receptive vocabulary-*PPVT-III* (Dunn & Dunn, 1997) (3) Letter naming task created for *Family and Child Experiences Survey* (*FACES*; Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, 2003) (4) Letter word identification subtest of the *Woodcock Johnson-Revised Tests of Achievement* (*WJ-R*; Woodcock & Johnson, 1989) (5) Print and story concepts task	"Parent–Child Reading Interaction and Child Reading Interest were significantly related to children's early literacy skills" (p. 45). "Parent–Child Reading Interaction was a small yet significant predictor of children's receptive vocabulary, story and print concepts, and general emergent literacy skills, above and beyond the influence of demographic variables" (p. 45). Child Reading Interest predicted knowledge of letters

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Storch-Bracken & Fischel (2008) continued		developed for *FACES* (Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, 2003) Parent measure included the *Family Reading Survey* (Storch-Bracken & Fischel, 2008)	
Whitehurst et al., (1988)	To experimentally test the effects of dialogic reading interventions, between groups, on children's expressive language skills	29 children, between the ages of 21 and 35 months, and their mothers All participants were middle class families in New York Children were randomly selected to be placed into the experimental or control groups Childrens' measures: Screened on *Denver Developmental Screening Test* (*DDST*; Frankenburg, Dodds, & Fandal, 1973) and the *Early Language Milestones (ELM) Scale* (Coplan, 1982). Post- assessed on the Verbal Expressive	Children scored significantly higher on expressive language measures, in the experimental group, after their parents or caregivers received training on dialogic reading strategies Children in the experimental group also displayed higher mean scores for length of speech, utilized a greater number of phrases, and used less single-word responses

Table 1 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Whitehurst et al., (1988) continued		subscale of the *Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities* (*ITPA*; Kirk, McCarthy, & Kirk, 1968), *PPVT-R* (Dunn & Dunn, 1981), and *Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test* (*EOWPVT*; Gardner, 1981) Parents were interviewed at the beginning of the study	

Shared Reading with English Language Learners

While there is much literature investigating the value of shared reading sessions between parents or caregivers and monolingual English-speaking children, there is limited research that examines this practice with students speaking a language other than English. There is even less data available on this practice with ELLs. In this second review of the research, four studies from 1996-2011, related to shared reading between parents or caregivers and the language and literacy outcomes of their ELLs are presented. The studies were selected based on their relevance to the first research question in the current study which examines the literacy and language outcomes of the children, in Spanish, after parents or caregivers attended training sessions on shared reading strategies. Table 2 provides a summation of each study's key elements.

In 2002, Hancock conducted a quasi-experimental study to investigate the literacy outcomes of using native language books during shared reading sessions between parents and pre-literate kindergarten students. Students were all part of a read-at-home program entitled *Families Reading Everyday* (FRED). Students were placed into three groups that included Spanish-speaking students who received Spanish books for shared reading sessions, Spanish-speaking students who received English books, and English-speaking students who received English books. Of the 56 students who spoke Spanish, 26 were randomly selected to serve as the treatment group.

During the semester-long study, students were provided with a book each day, for a total of 75 days. Books logs were sent home to record the number of joint reading experiences. While no pretesting occurred, students were posttested on the *Test of Early*

Reading Ability-Second Edition (*TERA-2*; Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1991) in English, only. The results indicated that Spanish-speaking students who received shared reading sessions with Spanish texts scored significantly higher than their Spanish-speaking peers who received books in English. The results also indicated no significant differences in scores between Spanish-speaking students who were read to in Spanish and English-speaking students who were read to in English. Book log data suggested that no statistically significant differences were present for the number of reading sessions that occurred between groups.

Huennekens and Xu (2010) performed a case study to study the effects of shared reading interventions between two preschool, Spanish-speaking, English Language Learners and their parents or caregivers. The purpose of the study was to determine the value of the shared reading sessions, delivered in the child's native language, on the child's emerging literacy and language skills in English. After observing the children in their classrooms, the researchers recorded baseline data that included all of the children's responses. The rate of each child's utterances was determined, per minute, and then parent training began on dialogic reading strategies.

After the children were read a book in class, parents were provided with a new Spanish book each week. The books read in class were the English versions of the books sent home. All parent training sessions lasted between 20-30 minutes and were held prior to each new book that was given. Strategies were modeled during the training sessions and parent questions were answered. Parents were also provided with a sheet to remind them of the dialogic reading strategies that were introduced, specific questions to

pose during sessions, and reading logs. The first child and her family received the intervention for seven weeks while the second child and his family received the intervention for five weeks. Children were observed three times per week, in their classrooms, where their utterances were recorded. Researchers reported a possible positive relationship between the intervention and the child's acquisition of a second language.

Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber's (2006) study served as the framework in which the current study is situated and, thus, deserves further review. Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber (2006) examined the effects of shared reading, through home-based interventions, with 16 families or caregivers of 7-and 8-year-old Latina/o students. Parents and caregivers were trained on six shared reading strategies including (1) expanding upon student language, (2) asking quality questions, (3) praising children for verbalization, (4) making connections, (5) making predictions, and (6) defining new vocabulary, as based on Whitehurst's *dialogic reading* program (Jiménez, Fillipini, & Gerber, 2006; Whitehurst, Falco, Lonigan, Fischel, DeBaryshe, Valdez-Menchaca, & Caulfield, 1988).

At the beginning of Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber's (2006) study, a frequency count was taken to determine the number of times that a parent or caregiver used a strategy as they read to the child. The pretest scores suggested that none of the parents or caregivers utilized the strategies of making predictions or connections as they read and four of the parents and/or caregivers did not use any of the strategies outlined previously. After the training and interventions, Jiménez and colleagues found that

parents and caregivers displayed an increase in strategies used during shared reading interactions, with quality questions and making connections displaying the highest number of frequencies. The findings also showed that children's language production grew as a result of the strategies used by the parents. In particular, the children's word tokens increased as did the types of words they used. It was also reported that children took a greater number of conversational turns, indicating that the sessions became more conversational.

In 1996, Vivas analyzed the effects of reading stories on the comprehension and language expression scores of preschool and first grade, Spanish-speaking students. The four schools from which these students were randomly selected served parents of low-socioeconomic status. In this study, there were two experimental groups and one control group. Of the two experimental groups, one was Home-Based and one was School-Based. The Home-Based group received read aloud sessions at home with parents and the School-Based group received daily read-aloud sessions with the teacher at school. The parents and teachers in the experimental groups received printed information regarding read alouds, suggestions on how to read the book, and five new books each week. All groups had preschool and first grade students as participants but the control group did not receive read alouds at home or at school.

Results indicated read-alouds, both by parents and teachers, had significant effects on children's language scores, particularly in understanding language, memory for sequencing events, and language expression. Results also indicated that as the

children got older, socio-economic status appeared to play more of a factor in language and in language gains.

In summary, it is clear more research must be conducted on the effects of shared reading between parents or caregivers and their young English Language Learners but the research, to date, points to the positive benefits of shared reading. Shared reading was indicated to improve the English literacy scores of Spanish-speaking students, when they received texts in their native language (Hancock, 2002; Huennekens & Xu, 2010). The language that children produced, as well as the types of language they used was noted as a benefit of shared reading and, as with monolingual English speakers, the expressive language scores of English Language Learners appeared to improve as a result of shared reading sessions with their parents or caregivers. Findings from the research outlined in this section are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Research on Shared Reading with English Language Learners

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Hancock (2002)	To determine if using native language books in shared reading sessions between parents and children would affect children's early literacy outcomes	77 kindergarten students, enrolled in two elementary schools located in the southeastern portion of the United States 52 children were Spanish-speaking and 25 were English-speaking Quasi-experimental design that included no pretest Children were posttested on the *TERA-2* (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1991)	Children who spoke Spanish and were given books in their native tongue scored significantly higher on early literacy outcomes than their Spanish-speaking peers who received books in English There were no differences in scores between English-speaking children receiving books in English and Spanish-speaking children receiving books in Spanish
Huennekens & Xu (2010)	To examine the effects of shared reading interventions between parents and preschoolers, when the books utilized the child's native language, on the children's second language acquisition	2 Spanish-speaking preschool English Language Learners and their families Single subject design that utilized several baselines Observations of children in the classroom	Results indicated a possible positive relation between the training delivered to parents and the child's acquisition of his or her second language

Table 2 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Jiménez, Fillipini, & Gerber (2006)	To determine whether providing Spanish-speaking families with training on shared reading strategies in their native language would increase their strategy use and their language participation To determine if the training would increase the variety and quantity of language used by the children in the sessions	16 7-and 8-year old Hispanic or Latina/o children from southern California and their families Parental measures: (1) Interviews (2) Videotaped observations which were transcribed and coded Children's measures included the same videotaped observation which was coded and transcribed	Parents' use of strategies increased as did their participation, verbally Children displayed an increase in language
Vivas (1996)	To examine the effects of shared reading on the language comprehension and expressive language scores of preschool and first grade, Spanish-speaking students	222 preschool and first grade students, and their families in Caracas, Venezuela The mean age for preschoolers was 6 and the mean age for first graders was 7 Experimental design with two treatment groups; school-based and home-based treatment groups	Shared reading, by parents and teachers, had significant effects on expressive language and language comprehension scores

Table 2 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Vivas (1996) continued		Child measures: (1) *Screening Test of Spanish Grammar (STSG*; Toronto, 1973) (2) Story comprehension subtest of the *Pruebas de Expresion Oral y percepción de la Lengua Española* (*PEOPLE*; Toronto, 1986) (3)Memory for Sentences subtest of *PEOPLE* (4)Teacher's reported children's language skills through the *Questionnaire for Verbal and Reading Behavior* (*QVRB*) Parents' demographic data was collected through the *Modified Graffar Method* (Mendez-Castellanos & Lopez-Contreras, 1981)	

Home Literacy Practices

Young children often come to school with varying levels of language and literacy abilities. Because one could question whether these differences are due to nature, nurture, or a combination of both, it is reasonable to investigate what home factors contribute to these differences. In this third and final review of previously conducted research, studies examining variations within the home, particularly in regards to literacy practices are described. Research published between 2001 and 2010 are examined, resulting in the evaluation of eight studies in all. The studies were selected based on their relevancy to the second research question in the current study which evaluates the home literacy behaviors of families that do and do not receive training on shared reading strategies. The findings are highlighted in Table 3.

Boudreau (2005) conducted a study to evaluate the relationship between parental reports of the emerging literacy skills of their language impaired preschoolers and formal assessments of these skills. Parents of preschoolers without impairments were also evaluated and comparisons were made between groups regarding their home literacy behaviors. Participants included 17 Language Impaired (LI) children and 20 Typically Developing (TD) preschoolers and their families. Regarding the assessment of home behaviors, parents completed researcher-created questionnaires that included items such as: How often does your child watch television? How often do you take your child to the library? Does your child have access to a computer? How often does your child use the computer? How many children's books are in your home? And, at what age was your child when you first read to him or her?

The results for the home literacy portion of the study indicated differences between groups. While not found to be statistically significant, parents of LI children reported their children spent more time watching television and watching videos than did the parents of children in the TD group. LI parents reported owning fewer books and taking their children to the library less than did the parents of TD children. Statistically significant differences were found between the amount of time parents engaged their children in rhyming games and the age at which the parent first began reading to their child. TD parents reported engaging more in rhyming games with their child as well as reading to their child at a much younger age.

In 2003, Hammer, Miccio, and Wagstaff analyzed the home literacy practices of Hispanic families and how these practices related to the developing English literacy skills of their bilingual Head-Start preschoolers. This 2-year investigation was conducted with 42 Puerto Rican mothers and their children and the children were grouped according to type of exposure to language. Students who, by age 3, were exposed to Spanish and English simultaneously were labeled as SI and students who were exposed to language sequentially, Spanish first and English second, were labeled as SE. A questionnaire based on Snow, Burns, and Griffin's (1998) home literacy model was used as a point of reference and was administered to all mothers in the winter of their child's first year at Head Start. The questionnaire was divided into four components of the home literacy atmosphere that included book reading between parents and children, press for achievement, value placed on reading, and the availability of reading materials. Children were also assessed in the middle of their first year at Head

Start and in the beginning of their second year on the *TERA-2* (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1981).

The findings showed differences in press for achievement between the mothers in the SI and SE groups but no differences in the other areas. Mean scores of the children in the two groups were comparable in regards to emerging literacy skills but mean scores for all of the children were significantly higher in year one than in year two. The lower scores in year two suggest "that children's literacy development would benefit from increased exposure to literacy materials and literacy events during the preschool years" (Hammer, Miccio, & Wagstaff, 2003, p. 20).

Kirby and Hogan (2008) investigated home literacy practices and socioeconomic status to determine which characteristics contribute most to later differences in successful and struggling readers. Participants included 49 first grade children from Ontario, Canada and their families. Students were chosen for the study based on results of 12 early literacy outcome measures. Students scoring both high and low on the measures were included. Parents completed a questionnaire addressing home literacy behaviors and included questions such as: What is the frequency with which children are read to at home? How many books are in the home? What is the amount of reading by adults that takes place? And, what is the education level of the parents?

Results suggested differences in the home literacy practices and environments of successful and struggling readers. Parents of more successful readers reported higher maternal education levels and a greater number of books within the home. Parents of more proficient readers also indicated significantly higher instances of reading to their

child, teaching their child letters and sounds, reading words, as well as playing more games to facilitate memorization. Between groups, the mother's education level and letter teaching appeared to be the best discriminators between struggling and non-struggling readers.

In 2008, Reese and Goldenberg addressed the extent to which socio-demographic factors, language of the community, and availability of literacy materials affected literacy practices within the home. The relationship between literacy practices within the home, in Spanish and English, and children's early literacy outcomes in Spanish and English was also examined. As many as 35 schools in Texas and California were selected, all of which reported serving large numbers of ELL or Latino students. From these schools, 1,418 students were randomly selected and the students and their families served as participants. Researchers conducted interviews with the parents, teachers, and school principals, as well as administered surveys to the parents and principals. Additionally, students were assessed on the *Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery-Revised (WLPB-R*; Woodcock, 1991; Woodcock & Muñoz-Sandoval, 1995), in Spanish and in English. Census data, neighborhood surveys, and attendance data was also utilized.

According to the results, communities or neighborhoods with higher numbers of Latino families often had less access to literacy materials. The materials typically available were in Spanish. In neighborhoods where education and income levels were reported to be higher, more materials were available in English. The data indicated there was little association between the number of times children engaged in home literacy

activities, the literacy resources within the community, and the literacy scores of children. The researchers attributed the lack of association between these variables to the variation of literacy practices within the homes, within each community, and the impact of the schools on home literacy behaviors or practices. The associations noted were noted were in respect to language. The data suggested "that at least in the early stages of literacy development, communities' influence on Spanish-speaking children's literacy development is through language-learning opportunities rather than literacy-learning opportunities" (Reese & Goldenberg, 2008, p. 110).

Roberts, Jurgens, and Burchinal (2005) conducted a study to determine which literacy practices predicted the emerging language and literacy skills of preschool children. Additionally, researchers sought to determine how "the quality and the responsiveness of the home environment" (p. 345) predicted these same skills. The participants included 72 African-American preschoolers enrolled in child care centers in the south who, predominantly, came from families of low socioeconomic status. The children's mothers or their guardians also served as participants. This longitudinal study involved the tracking of the children's development as well as their home literacy environments. From 18 months to age 5, children's mothers or guardians were interviewed annually to determine how often they read to their child, the extent to which their child enjoyed these shared reading sessions, and their perceptions regarding the responsiveness and quality of their home environment. The mothers or guardians were also observed in shared reading sessions with their children at age 2, age 3, and age 4 for frequency of strategy usage and for levels of sensitivity.

Beginning at age 3, children's receptive language was assessed through the *PPVT-R* (Dunn & Dunn, 1981). They were assessed, again, at the beginning of kindergarten on this measure. *The Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-Preschool* (*CELF-P*; Wiig, Secord, & Semel, 1992) was used to determine the receptive and expressive language skills of the children at age 4 and again at the onset of kindergarten. Lastly, the *Test of Early Reading Ability* (*TERA*; Reid, Hresko, & Hammil, 1981) was administered at age 4 and upon entry to kindergarten to assess children's emerging literacy development in letter knowledge and concepts of print.

Roberts and colleagues found significant associations between mothers who displayed higher levels of maternal sensitivity and greater strategy use during shared reading sessions and children who scored higher on the *PPVT-R* (Dunn & Dunn, 1981) at age 3 and upon entry to kindergarten. Roberts, Jurgens, and Burchinal (2005) also reported that the measure used to represent the quality and responsiveness of the home environment was also indicated to most consistently predict children's literacy and language outcomes on all measures. Moderate, positive associations were found between the extent to which the child enjoys reading and the frequency of the shared reading sessions and between maternal strategy use and sensitivity. Moderate to high, positive correlations were found between the overall home environment measure and all four literacy practices within the home. Mild, positive correlations were found between the mother's education and sensitivity as well as the mother's education and how often shared reading sessions occurred. The results indicated child interest in reading and how

often the mother read to the child appeared to have no correlation to children's literacy or language outcomes.

Skibbe, Justice, Zucker, and McGinty (2008) compared the home literacy behaviors and beliefs of mothers of children with typically developing language skills (TL) and specific language impairment (SLI) and assessed how these variables predicted the children's letter knowledge and concepts of print. The participants included 108 children and their mothers recruited from various Head Start centers, preschools, day care centers, and pediatrician offices. Children with TL and SLI were recruited for two separate but simultaneous studies that utilized similar criteria for inclusion. The one criteria that differed for inclusion or exclusion in the studies was that children labeled as TL were required to score within typical ranges on the standardized language measure administered and children labeled as SLI, when assessed, must have demonstrated "clinically depressed skills" (Skibbe, Justice, Zucker, & McGinty, 2008, p. 72).

Mothers completed the *Parental Reading Belief Inventory* (*PRBI*; DeBaryshe & Binder, 1994) to assess their beliefs regarding literacy. They also completed an inventory on home literacy practices (Bennett, Weigel, & Martin, 2002) and answered questions such as how often do you read to your child and how often do you engage in rhyming activities with your child. Children's print knowledge outcomes were assessed through the uppercase alphabet knowledge subtest of the *Phonological Literacy Awareness Screening: PreK* (PALSPreK; Invernizzi, Sullivan, & Meier, 2001) and the *Preschool Word and Print Awareness* scale (*PWPA*; Justice & Ezell, 2000; Justice, Bowles, & Skibbe, 2006).

The results indicated that, overall, the literacy practice of mothers was significantly correlated to their beliefs. Mothers of children labeled SLI reported fewer frequencies of engagement in literacy activities at home and less favorable beliefs regarding literacy. The results indicated significant differences between groups on letter identification and knowledge of print outcomes with the TL group scoring higher in both areas. However, it is important to note there were differences between groups in regards to maternal education levels. When both groups were combined, results indicated the maternal beliefs and practices of both predicted children's outcomes but when the education level of the mother was incorporated into the model, practices and beliefs did not predict the letter and print outcomes. When the SLI group was examined alone and maternal education was controlled for, "findings suggested that presence of SLI was associated with differences in maternal beliefs and home literacy practices" (Skibbe, Justice, Zucker, and McGinty, 2008, p. 77).

As noted in the first review of literature, Storch-Bracken and Fischel (2008) investigated the home literacy practices of the families of 223 children enrolled in Head Start centers in New York and how those practices related to children's literacy outcomes. In the first review of the literature, the focus of the discussion pertained to shared reading and children's literacy outcomes. In this third review of the literature, the same study will be presented but the relationship between demographic characteristics and home literacy behaviors, as well as the relationship amongst different types of home literacy practices, will be reviewed.

In Storch-Bracken and Fischel (2008), parents or caregivers reported demographic information and completed the *Family Reading Survey* which was an adapted version of the *Stony Brook Family Reading Survey* (Whitehurst, 1992). The 10 survey items were grouped into three components including Child Reading Behaviors, Parent Reading Interest, and Parent-Child Reading Interaction. The Child Reading Behaviors component included three items and asked questions such as how much does your child enjoy you reading to him or her or with what frequency does your child look at books alone. The Parent Reading Interest component included two items and presented questions such as how much do you, the parent, enjoy reading. The Parent Child Reading Interaction component included 5 items that asked questions such as: How many books are in your home? How often do you take your child to library? And, how often do you read with your child?

Storch-Bracken and Fischel reported positive significant correlations between Parent Reading Interest and Child Reading Interest, Parent–Child Reading Interaction and Child Interest, Parent–Child Reading Interaction and Parent Interest. The results also suggested a significant correlation between several dimensions and parent or caregiver's education level and age. More educated parents appeared to have more interest in reading, children who showed a greater interest in reading, and higher levels of parent–child reading interactions. Furthermore, parents who were older displayed more reading interest and more parent–child interaction. Overall, children's age and the number of family members within the home showed no significant correlations with the

dimensions. The one item that was of significance was parent reading interest and the size of the family.

Wu and Honig (2010) undertook a study to examine maternal beliefs regarding shared reading with young children and to evaluate the literacy practices taking place within these caregiver's homes. Participants included 731 Taiwanese children enrolled in public and private kindergarten programs, in a city in Taiwan, and their mothers. Maternal beliefs were determined through the use of a translated version of the *PRBI* (DeBaryshe & Binder, 1994). Along with the *PRBI*, mothers also completed a *Family Information Survey* (*FIS*) to report their demographic information and a *Home Literacy Practices Inventory* (*HLPI*) to examine the number of times mothers engaged with their children in literacy practices. Although the researchers created the items presented on the *FIS* and the *HLPI*, the questions were based on previous research (Durkin, 1966; Leseman & de Jong, 1998; Senechal, LeFevre, Thomas, & Daley, 1998). After conducting a factor analysis on the original *PRBI*, which was used with families in America, 24 items were retained. These items were grouped into five components including verbal participation, knowledge, reading instruction, teaching efficacy, and positive affect.

Findings showed significant correlations between the reading beliefs scores of Taiwanese mothers and their education, family income, and mother/child literacy practices. Mothers with higher levels of education reported higher belief scores, overall, and in knowledge and teaching efficacy. Those with higher incomes also reported higher belief scores, as a whole. After controlling for the mother's education and family

income, belief scores and mother/child literacy practices remained significantly correlated. A positive association was also reported between maternal education and literacy resources within the home. Mothers with more education reported significantly greater numbers of books at home. The researchers noted that many concepts regarding parental beliefs were similar between American and Taiwanese cultures.

Yarosz and Barnett (2001) sought to identify various family characteristics that could predict reading behaviors or literacy practices at home with children. Participants included 7, 566 children below age 5 whose parents were interviewed as part of the National Household Education Survey conducted in 1995 (*NHES:95*; US Department of Education,1995). Through telephone surveys, demographic data was collected and parents were asked to answer questions such as how often they read to their child.

The results suggested that reading frequency between parents and young children varied according to the primary language used in the home, ethnicity, level of maternal education, number of siblings within the home, and the age of the child. Languages spoken in the home, besides English, were negatively related to the number of times children were read to with Hispanic families and ethnicities deemed as "Other". Additionally, significant negative effects were reported for Hispanic and African American ethnicities, in regards to reading frequency. Data also indicated a significant decrease in reading frequency when parents reported siblings in the home. Larger decreases with frequency were noted when 0-2 siblings were reported, and lesser decreases were noted with 3 or more siblings. Mothers who were less educated reported less frequent reading with their child and increases in reading were indicated as children

increased in age, but that "most of the increase occurs up to age 3" (p.73). The researchers in this study wrote that "the development of more culturally sensitive adult and/or family literacy education may be called for, and parent education programs targeting those with the least education might be especially valuable" (Yarosz & Barnett, 2001, p. 67).

In summary, research on home literacy behaviors suggests differences in the homes of children who are more successful with language and literacy acquisition and those who are less proficient or who struggle in acquiring these skills. Maternal education, the number of times the parents or caregivers read to their children, greater use of strategies during shared reading sessions, and the number of literacy materials within the home all appear to be correlated with children's language and literacy success. The results also indicate that, often, Latino families possess fewer literacy materials in the home. Additionally, the findings suggest that maternal beliefs are associated with literacy practices that taking place in the home and family size, as well as the presence of siblings, can affect the frequency of shared reading sessions.

Table 3

Research on Home Literacy Practices

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Boudreau (2005)	To determine relationships between formal evaluation measures and parental reports of children's literacy abilities, for children with and without language impairments, and to examine the differences of home literacy behaviors between groups	37 preschool children, enrolled Head Start with and without language impairments, enrolled in private and public preschool programs. The parents or caregivers of the children also served as participants. All children spoke English only. Parent measure: researcher-created questionnaire Child measures*: Rhyme Production* (Warrick & Rubin, 1981), *Rhyme Oddity* (Maclean, Bryant, & Bradley 1987), *Letter Identification* (Clay, 1979), *Concepts of Print* (Clay, 1979), environmental print task, and narrative retelling task	A strong association was noted between formal literacy assessment measures and parent reports with LI children. Differences between parent reports of home literacy behaviors of LI and TD children were found in time watching television, children's books within the home, and the age at which the child was first read to at home

Table 3 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Hammer, Miccio, & Wagstaff (2003)	To investigate the relationship between literacy practices at home and the emerging English literacy skills of bilingual preschoolers	42 Puerto Rican mothers and their bilingual preschool children enrolled in 2 Head Starts in central Pennsylvania Mothers completed the *Home Activities Questionnaire* (Hammer, Miccio, & Wagstaff, 2003) Children were assessed on the *TERA-2* (Reid, Hresko & Hammill, 1991)	"The mothers of the SI learners engaged more frequently in teaching pre-academic and early literacy abilities and taking their children to the library" (p.27) Both groups had limited literacy materials in the homes Children in both groups had comparable reading scores Both groups scored lower at the end of the second year, compared to the end of the first year
Kirby & Hogan (2008)	To determine the differences in home behaviors and socioeconomic status that contribute to successful and	49 children enrolled in first grade in six schools in Ontario, Canada and their parents Children were tested on 12 measures that included: Sound isolation, Phoneme Elision,	Parents of proficient readers reported significantly more books in the home, higher education levels of mothers,

Table 3 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Kirby & Hogan (2008) continued	struggling readers in first grade	Blending Onset-Rime, and Blending Phonemes tasks (Torgeson, Wagner, & Rashotte, 1994), Word Series and Sentence Repetition and Questions tasks (Naglieri & Das, 1997), Nursery Rhyme Knowledge and Rhyme Production tasks (modified from Maclean et al., 1987), Colour and Picture Naming tasks (modified from Wolf, Bally, & Morris, 1986), and the Word Identification and Word Attack subtest of the *Woodcock* (Woodcock, 1998) Parents completed a questionnaire	and greater frequencies of shared reading, the teaching of letters and sounds, word reading, and playing memorization games with their child. Maternal education levels and instruction in letters were the best discriminators between groups
Reese & Goldenberg (2008)	To determine the relationship between the availability of literacy and language	1, 418 kindergarten and first grade students enrolled in 35 schools in California and Texas	"Communities with greater concentrations of Latinos are less likely to have printed

Table 3 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Reese & Goldenberg (2008) continued	resources in a community and socio-demographic factors, the relationship between literacy practices in the home, in Spanish and English, and the language of and literacy resources within the community, and the relationship between literacy practices in the home, in Spanish and English, and children's early literacy outcomes in Spanish and English	were randomly selected from classrooms with a minimum of 50% ELL's, who spoke Spanish. Their families also served as participants Parent measures: Parent surveys to collect demographic data and parent interviews with a subset of the sample Teacher participated in focus group interviews, principals completed surveys and were interviewed and students were assessed on the *WLPB-R* in English and Spanish (Woodcock, 1991; Woodcock & Muñoz-Sandoval, 1995). Additional measures: U.S Census data, School Attendance Area Surveys (SAAS) and School Attendance Area Surveys-Language (SAAS-L) was collected	materials, and available materials are more likely to be in Spanish" (p. 110). Areas with higher education and income levels reported having more English literacy materials Associations were noted between children's English and Spanish literacy outcomes and family and community language characteristics. This suggests that "in the early stages of literacy development, communities' influence on Spanish-speaking children's literacy development is through language learning opportunities rather than literacy learning opportunities" (p. 110).

Table 3 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Roberts, Jurgens, & Burchinal (2005)	To determine the correlations between "4 specific measures of home literacy practices and a global measure of the quality and responsiveness of the home environment during the preschool years predicted children's language and emergent literacy skills between the ages of 3 and 5 years" (p. 345).	72 African-American preschooler and their mothers. The children were enrolled in child care centers in southern cities and came, primarily, from low-income families Children's measures included *TERA* (Reid, Hresko, & Hammill, 1981), *PPVT-R* (Dunn & Dunn, 1981), and the *CELF-P* (Wiig, Secord, & Semel, 1992) Parent measures included interviews and observations	The global home measure most consistently predicted children's language and literacy outcomes. Significant associations were also found between maternal sensitivity and strategy use and children's *PPVT-R* (Dunn & Dunn, 1981) scores
Skibbe, Justice, Zucker, & McGinty (2008)	To compare the home literacy behaviors and beliefs of mothers of children with typically developing language (TL) and specific language impairment (SLI) and how those beliefs and practices affect letter knowledge and print concepts	108 children, between the ages of 48 and 60 months, and their mothers. Children were recruited from preschools, day care centers, Head Start centers, and pediatrician offices Parent measures: *PRBI* (DeBaryshe & Binder, 1994)	Mothers' literacy practices were significantly correlated to their beliefs Mothers of SLI children reported less frequent engagement in home literacy activities and their beliefs were less favorable towards literacy

Table 3 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Skibbe, Justice, Zucker, & McGinty (2008) continued		Childrens' measures included PALSPreK (Invernizzi, Sullivan, & Meier, 2001) and *PWPA* (Justice & Ezell, 2000; Justice, Bowles, & Skibbe, 2006)	When both groups were combined, results suggested the beliefs and practices of mothers' predicted children's outcomes When maternal education was controlled for, beliefs and practices did not predict the print or letter outcomes
Wu & Honig (2010)	To determine maternal beliefs regarding shared reading and to determine literacy practices taking place within the home	731Taiwanese children enrolled in licensed private and public kindergartens, in a city in Taiwan, and their mothers Parent measures included a translated version of the *PRBI* (DeBaryshe & Binder, 1994), the *FIS* and the *HLPI*	Significant correlations were found between mother's reading beliefs and income, education, and the literacy practices of mothers and children. Mother/child literacy practices and belief scores remained significantly correlated after the controlling for education and income. An association was noted between literacy resources within the home and education

Table 3 (continued)

Study	Purpose	Sample/Method	Results
Yarosz & Barnett (2001)	To investigate the factors that determine how often young children are read to at home	7, 566 children below the age of 5 and their parents who participated in 1995's NHES Survey (US Department of Education, 1995) Telephone interviews/surveys with parents	Statistically significant results were found for mother's education, age of the child, the number of siblings within the home, primary language spoken within the home, and ethnicity

Summary

In this chapter, research related to shared reading with English monolingual children, shared reading with ELLs, and the contributions of home literacy practices was reviewed. After noting the extensive literature available regarding shared reading with English monolingual students and the limited research present on shared reading between ELL's and their caregivers, it is clear more research must be conducted. In particular, the review of the research in this chapter supports future investigations into differences between the language and literacy skills of young ELL's whose parents or caregivers receive shared reading strategies and materials and those who do not, as well as the difference between these groups' home literacy practices.

The current study expounds upon previous research as it investigates the effects of parental or caregiver shared reading sessions on children's language and literacy outcomes with young ELLs. Due to the high concentration of ELLs in Texas in prekindergarten through third grade, and due to the importance of becoming proficient with language at an early age, this study focuses on children in prekindergarten and their parents or caregivers (Intercultural Development Research Association, 2008; NCELA, 2008; Tamis-Lemonda & Rodriguez, 2008). While the current study is situated primarily in the study conducted by Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber (2006), it also differs in several ways. All six reading strategies examined in the original study were implemented, but additional strategies were also incorporated. Also, rather than only including a small sample of 16 participants, a much larger sample of, approximately, 100 four-year-old English Language Learners and their families served as participants in the

present study. Furthermore, the current study utilized a mixed methods approach that included random selection of participants, as well as an experimental and control group that were pre and posttested on several measures. This intervention took place over a longer period of time as the interventions spanned a 20-week time-frame. The current study also assessed home literacy practices through an adapted version of the *Family Reading Survey* (Storch-Bracken & Fischel, 2008).

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Setting

This study was conducted to examine the effects of shared reading interventions with Hispanic families of prekindergarten ELLs. The primary purpose was to evaluate the effects of the intervention on the children's language and literacy scores. Additionally, the study also sought to determine how these interventions affected the home literacy practices of the parents or caregivers with their children. The district in which the study was conducted is located in an eastern portion of Texas. During the 2009-2010 school year, the district served 8,630 students and was listed as being academically recognized by the Texas Education Agency (TEA, 2010). Of those students, 29.2% were African American, 35.6% were Hispanic, 33.8% were White, 0.1% were Native American, and 1.3% were Asian/Pacific Islander (TEA, 2010). TEA reported that 73.5% of the district's students were economically disadvantaged, 15.5% were classified as LEP, and there were a total of 705 students enrolled in prekindergarten in the 2009-2010 academic year (TEA, 2010). The district was selected because of its accessibility to the principal investigator.

Participants

The primary campus from which the participants were selected is designated as a Title I campus and houses all prekindergarten bilingual students in the district. In order

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Portions of this chapter were modified from the Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009).

to qualify for Title I funds, a school's student poverty rates must be above 40 % (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). There were a total of six bilingual prekindergarten classes on this campus. All of the students in this study were selected from Hispanic families of low-income, qualifying economically to attend the district's prekindergarten program. Based on conversations with the campus's Curriculum Specialist, the children were admitted into the bilingual program due to economic need or language, as determined by free and reduced lunch forms and a home language survey.

The four participating prekindergarten teachers were randomly selected from the six bilingual prekindergarten classrooms located on this rural, East Texas school campus. The children and families in these classrooms served as the experimental group. The four classroom teachers attended a one-day training session on the Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009) and, as a group, delivered 10 shared reading training sessions to the parents of children in the experimental group. The teachers also received a classroom lending library consisting of nine various bilingual book titles. Each teacher in the experimental group was provided with 22 copies of each of the nine titles, for a total of 198 books per teacher. Parents and children in the two remaining teachers' classrooms served as the comparison group. The comparison group received no materials or training during the study, but the district agreed to provide the same training for this group at the completion of the study. All of the teachers were female, three of which were bilingual, speaking English and Spanish, and three of which spoke English only. All teachers in the study followed the Gómez and Gómez one-way dual language model (Gómez & Gómez, 1999). Each bilingual teacher was paired with an English-

speaking teacher and all classrooms contained bilingual aides for support. The classrooms contained only Spanish-speaking ELL's that received literacy instruction, in Spanish, from the bilingual teacher and math and science instruction, in English, from the English-speaking teacher. Although the teachers were randomly selected, the comparison group was comprised of the two teachers originally partnered together by the campus principal. Thus, the same held true for the experimental group.

There were a total of 96 students and their families in this study. The parents in the experimental group agreed to attend shared reading training sessions and implement shared reading strategies at home during weekly read-aloud sessions. Sign-in sheets were used at each parent meeting to record attendance and book logs were provided to document daily reading sessions.

At the beginning of the study, all parents or caregivers in both groups completed and returned permission forms, indicating they agreed to participate in the study. Initially, there were 81 students in the experimental group and 40 students in the comparison group, for a total of 121 students and their families. However, only 57 of the children's parents or caregivers in the experimental group attended at least one or more of the training sessions. Data from the remaining 24 children and their families were not included. Additionally, during the course of the intervention, a parent from the comparison group asked district administrators to move her child into one of the experimental classrooms, so that she could attend training sessions and receive materials. All data from this family were excluded.

Design

This study used a mixed-methods approach with primary emphasis on results being analyzed through quantitative measures. The quantitative portion was conducted using an experimental, pretest-posttest, control group design. Quantitative data was gathered through the *Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised* (Woodcock, Muñoz-Sandoval, Ruef, Alvarado, & Schrank, 2005) and the researcher-created *Shared Reading Practices Survey*. Qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured teacher interviews, conducted by the researcher.

Independent Variables

The primary independent variable in this study is the group (i.e., the treatment group consisting of the Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009) training, books, and literacy materials and the comparison group consisting of "practice as usual.") Practice as usual refers to the established preschool curriculum delivered at the campus as well as ongoing parental training typically presented to all parents in all classrooms. Additional independent variables include the gender of the child in prekindergarten and the number of parent training sessions attended.

Dependent Variables

The language and literacy scores on the *Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised (WMLS-R)* served as the primary dependent variable for the children (Woodcock, et al., 2005). The dependent variable for the parents consisted of their responses on the *Shared Reading Practices Survey*.

Instruments and Materials

Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised

The children's outcomes were measured by the *Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised (WMLS-R;* Woodcock et al., 2005). The *WMLS-R* is a standardized, norm-referenced assessment, comprised of seven tests that measure "a broad sampling of proficiency in oral language, language comprehension, reading, and writing" (Woodcock et al., p. 1). The district in which the study was conducted currently administers the first four tests within the *WMLS-R* to all prekindergarten bilingual students. Students are assessed in both Spanish and English. For the purpose of this study, both the Spanish and English forms were utilized, but prekindergarten students were only assessed on the first three tests within the *WMLS-R,* which includes Picture Vocabulary, Verbal Analogies, and Letter-Word Identification. The fourth test, Writing Abilities, did not directly relate to the research questions being investigated in this study, and, thus, was not of interest.

The first task, Picture Vocabulary, assesses oral language through the identification of pictures of objects (Woodcock et al., 2005). While there are "a few receptive vocabulary items at lower levels of difficulty, it is primarily a semantic task at the single-word level" (Woodcock et al., 2005, p.11). Because the parents in this study received training on eight various shared reading strategies and to implement those strategies during picture book read aloud sessions with their children, all of the strategies implemented could be considered to encourage vocabulary, or the use of language, in relation to pictures. Thus, all of the strategies relate to picture vocabulary. The second

task, Verbal Analogies, assesses "the ability to reason using lexical knowledge" (Woodcock et al., 2005, p.1). The individual listens to three analogous terms and responds with a fourth word that is appropriate. In this study, one of the eight strategies that the parents were taught was how to encourage their child to make predictions, based on pictures, words, and sentences in the book. The skill of predicting directly relates to the assessment of verbal analogies. According to the *WMLS-R* manual (Woodcock et al., 2005), tasks one and two, combined, are used to broadly assess oral language. For this reason, these two tasks will serve as the measure for oral language in the current study. The third and final task, Letter-Word Identification, assesses the skills of word recognition, and letter identification (Woodcock et al., 2005). Letters are presented first, then words. Parents were trained, at one meeting, on how to encourage their child to identify letters, within the read aloud sessions, and also received a book that encouraged the use of letter identification. Within Picture Vocabulary, Verbal Analogies, and Letter-Word Identification, all items are presented with increasing difficulty levels (Woodcock et al., 2005). See Table 4 for reliability statistics for each task, by age, from the norming sample.

Table 4

Reliability Statistics for Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised

Note. From Woodcock, et al., (2005).

Test	Age 4	Age 5
Picture Vocabulary		
M	460.57	468.22
SD	17.45	16.68
r^{11}	.91	.90
Verbal Analogies		
M	454.57	460.58
SD	12.11	14.06
r^{11}	.75	.83
Letter-Word Identification		
M	327.29	353.54
SD	27.56	34.18
r^{11}	.92	.97

Shared Reading Practices Survey

Home literacy behaviors were measured through an adapted version of the *Family Reading Survey* created by Storch-Bracken and Fischel (2008). In the *Family Reading Survey,* Storch-Bracken and Fischel formulated 10 questions to assess reading behaviors that take place in the home and divided the ten questions into three dimensions. The dimensions included: Child interest in reading, parent interest in reading, and parent/child interaction in reading. Sample statements such as "Frequency of Parent Reading with Child" (Storch-Bracken & Fischel, 2008, p. 52), would be answered through frequency scales such as "hardly ever," "1-2 times per month," 1-2 times per week," or "almost daily" (Storch-Bracken & Fischel, 2008, p. 52). Principal component analyses were conducted for each dimension and item loadings were found to range between .46 and .82 (Storch-Bracken & Fischel, 2008). No reliability measures were reported and although contact was initiated to secure those findings from the authors, no response was given.

Of the 10 original questions developed by Storch-Bracken and Fischel (2008), nine were used on the presurvey instrument. The item regarding the number of times parents took their child to the library was added to the postsurvey instrument. In addition to the nine questions posed by Storch-Bracken and Fischel, demographic information was included on the researcher-created *Shared Reading Practices Survey.* Items such as age and gender of the child in prekindergarten were included. The number and ages of children residing in the home were of interest as research has indicated less frequent reading sessions take place between parents or caregivers and children, when

siblings are present in the home (Yarosz & Barnett, 2001). Two questions that address the availability and amount of computer usage taking place in the home were also added. These questions were based on an item included in the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Birth Cohort (ECLS-B) Parent Instrument and Parent Self-Administered Questionnaire Item Matrix[1] (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007). These questions were of relevance as research has noted ELLs often have less access to computers in the home and having materials such as books and computers in the home environment has been associated with success in reading (Colorado Department of Education, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 1995). All 15 items were presented in English and Spanish and were administered before the intervention began.

The posttest survey data for parents included four additional questions absent on the pretest. The first question investigated the language(s) in which the parent read/discussed the book with the child. The second examined the frequency with which the parent or caregiver took the child to the library. This question was of importance as research has indicated that libraries are often less accessible families of low-income and the ones that are located in these low-income communities often have a lower ratio of books available per child (Neuman & Celano, 2001). The remaining items evaluated the parents' perceptions of the intervention and are modified versions of questions taken from the Latino Family Literacy Project's© (2009) post-questionnaire. (See Appendix A).

Interviews

At the end of the intervention, semi-structured interviews were conducted with all the teachers in the experimental group. The purpose of the interviews was to gain more information regarding teacher attitudes towards the effectiveness of the parent training sessions. Evaluating teacher perspectives was of interest because the feedback could offer the principal investigator insight into perceived limitations of the training sessions that should be addressed as well as strengths that should be replicated. The same questions were presented to each teacher, but the researcher utilized additional probing questions, as necessary, to gain more information from this sample. (See Appendix B).

Qualitative methods were used for this portion of the data collection in order to glean patterns in the teachers' responses and to analyze the data from multiple perspectives. The approximate length of each interview was 30 minutes and all interviews were conducted within a two-day period. Interviews were recorded and transcribed in order to analyze results using coding and investigating trends across data. Once themes emerged from the data, the researcher conducted member checks in order to verify correct information was represented.

Curriculum and Instructional Materials

As dictated by the framework of the Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009), a total of nine books were provided to each child in the experimental group. These books were written in Spanish and in English as empirical data has indicated the value of using materials or texts in the primary language of the child (August & Shanahan, 2006).

Informational handouts and reading logs were also provided to this group. Informational handouts presented an overview of the program and offered parents tips for reading with their child. Reading logs were given to the families to record the number of times a family member read with their child during the biweekly period and to highlight key strategies targeted in the training session. The parents returned the reading logs at each training session, where they were immediately collected by the researcher to ensure confidentiality and security of the data. All materials were provided in Spanish and English.

The Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009), also requires the purchase of additional literacy materials in order to implement the program. These materials include items such as literacy memory albums, cameras, markers, pens, drawing templates, drawing paper and construction paper. For the purpose of this study, the memory albums were provided to the parents in the experimental group to record the title, author, and illustrator of the book under study, as well as items targeted during each shared reading sessions with their child. For example, when the strategy for the biweekly session was making connections, the parents recorded a personal connection their child made to the text or a favorite moment they shared with their child during one of their reading sessions. The cameras were used to complete an after reading activity that was included in the memory album. Other materials distributed, but not a part of the Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009), included book pointers to track print while reading and literacy manipulatives such as magnetic letters to use as after reading extensions.

Procedures

A district in rural, East Texas was chosen as a sample of convenience. The six prekindergarten, bilingual classrooms within this district are all located on one campus. The campus is labeled as a Title I school as they report serving 84.9% low-income students (TEA, 2009). This campus houses only prekindergarten and kindergarten students and the prekindergarten classes are full-day.

From the six, prekindergarten bilingual teachers on the campus, four were randomly selected to receive training on the Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009). The parents and children in these four teachers' classrooms served as the experimental group. The teachers from the two remaining classrooms were also randomly selected but were to receive no training until after the study. The children and parents in these two classrooms served as the comparison group. All students were pretested on the *WMLS-R,* within a three-week window, by the classroom teachers (Woodcock et al., 2005). The teachers conducted the assessments inside their classrooms. All teachers have been trained to administer the assessment measure with fidelity. The classroom teachers turned in all assessment data to the campus Reading Coach, who then gave the pretest data to the researcher. An independent t-test was conducted to determine if there were significant differences ($p<.05$) between group means on the pretest. See Table 5 for children's pretest variable means for both the experimental and comparison groups.

Table 5
Variable Means for Sample at Pretest

	Treatment		Comparison		*t*-value	*p*-value
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Child Age						
Age in Months	59.7	3.70	60.8	3.30	1.42	.157
Age of Children in Home						
Age of Oldest	8.9	5.73	10.1	4.16	1.08	.279
Age of Youngest	3.3	1.90	3.3	1.67	0.06	.957
English Oral Language	6.32	5.04	9.61	9.27	2.25	.027*
Spanish Oral Language	20.59	7.06	22.72	9.17	1.27	.204
English Literacy	3.25	1.97	3.85	3.69	1.03	.304
Spanish Literacy	7.51	4.00	7.49	5.15	-0.02	.982

* $p<.05$

Background and Demographic Data

According to the pretest data, children in both groups were similar in regards to age, age of the children within their home, literacy scores in Spanish and English, and oral language scores in Spanish. The mean age of children in the study was approximately 60 months. The mean age for the oldest child in the home ranged from 8-years-of-age in the experimental group to 10 years-of-age in the control group and the mean age for the youngest child in the home was 3-years-old for both groups. In regards to literacy, both groups scored higher in Spanish ($M = 7$) than English ($M = 3$). The means scores for Spanish oral language were 20 for the experimental group and 22 for

the comparison group. The only significant difference between the treatment and comparison group was in English oral language. The comparison group scored significantly higher (M = 9.61, SD = 9.27) than the treatment group (M = 6.32, SD = 5.0, t(94); = 2.25, p = .027) on the English oral language portion of the *WMLS-R* at pretest (Woodcock et al., 2005). This finding is important because it is a threat to internal validity.

Shared Reading Practices Presurvey Data

Parents from the experimental group completed the *Shared Reading Practices Survey* at the first parent training session held at the end of September. When language was determined to be a barrier, the teachers read the survey to the parents and their responses were collected by the researcher, who was also attending the training session. In order to preserve the integrity of the data collection, parents unable to attend and complete the survey at the first session, were sent home surveys in envelopes, which were returned to the classroom teachers. The researcher collected the sealed survey data from the classroom teachers. Surveys were administered to parents in the control group by sending the surveys home for completion. The sealed data was also collected by the classroom teacher and delivered to the researcher. All pretesting and parent surveys were completed by the end of September. A chi-square was conducted to determine if there were statistically significant differences (p<.05) between groups on parent or caregiver responses to the *Shared Reading Survey* (i.e., home literacy practices). See Table 6 for sample characteristics of the parent responses, from both groups, on the presurvey measure.

Table 6

Sample Characteristics, Frequencies of Variables

	Treatment		Comparison		Chi Square	*p*-value
	n	Percentage	*n*	Percentage		
Student Gender					.512	.474
Male	25	44%	20	51%		
Female	32	56%	19	49%		
Children in Home					2.529	.470
1 child	3	5%	2	5.12%		
2 children	17	30%	16	41.02%		
3 children	20	36%	15	38.36%		
4 or more children	16	29%	6	15.38%		
Do you have a computer in your house?					3.73	.066
Yes	36	68%	18	49%		
No	17	32%	19	51%		
How often does your child use the computer?					.987	.804
Hardly ever	31	59.6%	20	64.5%		
1-2 times per month	3	5.76%	3	9.67%		
1-2 times per week	13	25%	6	19.35%		
Almost daily	5	9.6%	2	6.45%		
Parent Child Reading Interaction						
How often do you read with your child?					3.930	.140
Hardly ever	4	7.5%	8	21%		
1-2 times per month	13	24.5%	10	26%		
1-2 times per week	36	68%	20	53%		
At what age did you first read to your child?					1.547	.818
Before 6 months	5	10%	4	11%		

Table 6 (continued)

	Treatment		Comparison		Chi Square	*p*-value
	n	Percentage	*n*	Percentage		
6 months to 1 year	13	25%	10	28%		
1-1.5 years	11	22%	8	22%		
1.5-2 years	4	8%	5	14%		
After age 2	18	35%	9	25%		
How many minutes did you read to your child yesterday?					4.164	.244
0 minutes	9	18%	12	32%		
1-10 minutes	21	41%	15	39%		
11-20 minutes	16	31%	6	16%		
More than 20 minutes	5	10%	5	13%		
How many children's books do you have in your home?					3.267	.514
0-2 books	19	37%	17	45%		
3-10 books	27	53%	15	39%		
11-20 books	4	8%	5	13%		
More than 20 books	1	2%	1	3%		
Child Reading Interest						
How often does your child ask to be read to?					5.067	.167
Hardly ever	8	16%	10	26%		
1-2 times per month	7	14%	4	11%		
1-2 times per week	16	32%	17	45%		
Almost daily	19	38%	7	18%		
How much does your child enjoy being read to?					12.17	.007*
A little	11	21%	14	37%		
Pretty much	10	19%	0	0%		

Table 6 (continued)

	Treatment		Comparison		Chi Square	*p*-value
	n	Percentage	*n*	Percentage		
Very much	11	21%	14	37%		
Loves it	20	39%	10	26%		
How often does your child look at books by himself or herself?					3.765	.288
Hardly ever	27	51%	14	39%		
1-2 times per month	4	7.5%	3	8%		
1-2 times per week	11	20.75%	14	39%		
Almost daily	11	20.75%	5	14%		
Parent Reading Interest						
How many minutes do you read per day					4.686	.321
0 minutes	9	17%	7	19%		
1-10 minutes	33	62.26%	19	51%		
11-20 minutes	6	11.32%	7	19%		
More than 20 minutes	5	9.43%	4	11%		
How much do you enjoy reading?					3.929	.269
Not at all	6	11.32%	9	25%		
Some	7	13.20%	6	17%		
Moderately	23	43.39%	14	39%		
Very much	17	32.07%	7	19%		

* $p<.05$

Presurvey data indicated that, in the experimental group, 44% of the children were male and 56% were female. In the comparison group, 51% of the children were male and 49% were female. There were a greater percentage of males in the comparison group than in the experimental group but the differences were not statistically significant. In both groups, 5% of the families reported having only one child in the

home while 95% reported having 2 or more children at home. Although not statistically significant, there were differences between groups in the percentage of families who owned a home computer. In the experimental group, 68% owned a home computer whereas only 49% of the families in the comparison group reported owning a home computer. However, 59.6% of the experimental group and 64.5% of the comparison group reported that their child hardly ever used the computer and less than 10% from both groups reported that their child used the computer, daily.

Parent Child Interaction Component

In the Parent-Child Reading Interaction component of the survey, differences between groups were found in some areas but none were statistically significant. Parents first responded to the frequency with which they read to their child. Data indicated that the experimental group read with more frequency to their children. In the experimental group, 7.5% of the parents noted that they hardly ever read to their child while 21% of the comparison group recorded this response. Approximately 25% of both groups read to their child 1-2 times per month, but 68% of the experimental group indicated that they read 1-2 times per week with their child and only 53% of the comparison group read to their child with this frequency.

When assessing the age at which the parents first read to their child, 10% of the experimental group and 11% of the comparison group read to their child before 6 months. While reports were also similar for both groups at 6 months to 1 year and from 1-1.5 years, there were differences at the later ages. Of the experimental group, 8% reported reading to their child between 1.5-2 years and 35% read after age 2. Of the

comparison group, 14 % reported reading to their child between 1.5-2 years and 25% read after age 2. For the experimental group, the greatest percentage of parent began reading to their child after age 2. For the comparison group, the greatest percentage of the parents began reading to their child between 6 months and 1 year.

For the third question, parents were asked to record how many minutes they read to their child on the prior day. The parents in the control group reported reading less minutes to their children as 32% of the comparison group did not read at all, 39% read 1-10 minutes, 16% read 11-20 minutes and 13% read more than 20 minutes. In the experimental group, 18% did not read at all, 41% read 1-10 minutes, 31% read 11-20 minutes, and 10% read more than 20 minutes.

The last question in this component assessed the number of children's books within the home. In the experimental group, 90% of the parents or caregivers reported owning 0-10 books while 84% in the comparison group reported owning the same amount. The experimental group also reported that 8% of the parents had 11-20 books in the home and only 2% had 20 or more. The comparison group reported 13% owned 11-20 and 3% owned 20 or more children's books. The comparison group had more children's books in the home than the experimental group.

Child Reading Interest Component

In the Child Reading Interest portion of the survey, parents were first reported how often their child asked to be read to at home. The experimental group reported 16% hardly ever asked to be read to while the comparison group reported 26%. Although both groups were similar in the percentage of children who asked to be read to 1-2 times

per month, the experimental group recorded 32% asked to be read to 1-2 times per week and 38% asked almost daily as compared to 45% and 18% in the comparison group. It appeared as though children in the experimental group asked to be read to more than the children in the comparison group. However, the difference between group responses was not statistically significant.

What was found to be statistically significant were the responses to how much the child enjoyed being read to at home. The experimental group had a greater number of children who enjoyed being read to than did the comparison group ($\chi 2$ [1, 89] = 12.17, $p<.005$).

The parents were also asked to respond to how often their child looks at books alone. In the experimental group, 51% of parents reported their child hardly every looked at books alone while 39% of parents in the control group indicated the same.

Percentages of children in both groups were similar in regards to viewing books by themselves 1-2 times per month but 20% of the experimental group and 39% of the comparison group had children who looked at books alone, 1-2 times per week. Additionally, 20.75% of the experimental group indicated their children viewed books by themselves daily whereas only 14% of the comparison group indicated the same.

Parent Reading Interest Component

The last component of the survey was Parent Reading Interest. Again, while there were no statistically significant differences found in this section, there were some differences between group responses. When asked how many minutes the parent or caregiver read each day, approximately 18% of parents or caregivers in both groups

reported they read none. In the experimental group, 62% reported reading 1-10 minutes, 11% reported reading 11-20 minutes, and 9% reported reading more than 20 minutes each day. In the comparison group, 51% noted reading 1-10 minutes, 19% noted reading 11-20 minutes, and 11% noted reading more than 20 minutes, daily. A high percentage of both groups reported not reading at all, or only reading 1-10 minutes each day.

The final question evaluated the extent to which the parents or caregivers enjoy reading for pleasure. In the experimental group 11% indicated they did not enjoy reading at all while 25% of the comparison group reported the same. For both groups, approximately 56-57% of the participants reported enjoying reading some or a moderate amount. However, the experimental group had 32% of its participants enjoying reading for pleasure very much while 19% of the comparison group displayed the same response.

Posttesting of Students

Posttesting took place at the completion of the intervention, near the end of February. All students were posttested on the *WMLS-R,* (Woodcock, et al., 2005) within a three-week window, by trained assessors provided by the researcher. The assessors were trained on the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock, et al., 2005) by a certified trainer provided by Riverside Publishing. The English-speaking assessor holds a doctorate in education and is an early childhood education faculty member at a university. The Spanish-speaking assessor holds a bachelor's degree in Spanish and is fluent in the dialect spoken by the families within the school setting. As in pretests, all posttests were conducted in the child's classroom. The researcher immediately collected all postassessment data from

the assessors. The parents in the experimental group completed the postsurvey at the last parent training session and the data was administered and collected in the same manner as the presurvey. Surveys were sent home in envelopes to the parents in the control group, were returned in envelopes to the classroom teacher, and the data was given to the researcher.

Teachers in the experimental group participated in semi-structured interviews, as an additional postassessment measure. The interviews were conducted by the lead researcher and examined the effectiveness of the intervention, from the teacher's perspective. This was done in order to examine what aspects of the program went well, what portions of the program need to be changed, and to determine if the program should be continued on this campus.

Experimental Group

The experimental group consisted of parents and children from four randomly selected teachers' classrooms. The teachers in the experimental group attended a half-day training session on the Latino Family Literacy Project © (2009). Experienced consultants from the project provide teachers with "workshops and seminars expressly designed to establish a family reading routine for Latino parents and their children" (p. 1). In these workshops, teachers are introduced to classroom sets of culturally sensitive, age-appropriate books, and are shown how to implement a 10-week parent training program, promoting shared reading interactions between parents and children. The principal investigator also attended this workshop. The teachers were then provided with a lending library of nine different book titles introduced in the workshop. Each

teacher received 22 copies of each title, so that parents and children in each classroom could participate in the parent training sessions and could implement the strategies taught at each session with the particular book of focus. All books were written in Spanish and in English.

The Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009) offers age-specific programs which are categorized as toddler/infant, preschool, elementary, and middle school/high-school. Each program within the project provides books and scripted formats of components that are to be included in each parent training session. For example, in the second session of the preschool program, the session begins by discussing the experiences taking place during the reading of the book from week one. Parents are asked if they remembered to read each night and what interactions occurred during the reading. The new book for the week is introduced and a volunteer is asked to read a page from the book. The volunteer is reminded to track the print as he or she reads and to focus on the title, author, and illustrator. After volunteers take turns and complete the reading of the book, discussion about the book begins. Questions are asked such as, "What do you think about the book?" "What do you notice about the illustrations?" "Do you have a favorite nursery rhyme from childhood?" Parents are then introduced to a literacy "memory album." In the literacy memory album, parents are asked to write and illustrate their favorite nursery rhyme and to add it to their memory album. Discussion takes place as to how children learn language through rhymes and, at the end of the session, parents are sent home with a new book to read to their child.

Typically, the parent training sessions for the Latino Family Literacy Project © (2009) are provided over a consecutive 10-week period. However, the training sessions in this study were provided every other week over a span of 20 weeks. This provided an opportunity for longer implementation of the strategies taught. An additional benefit was that it allowed the children more interaction with each book. This is important as Phillips and McNaughton (1990) noted that children, progressively, asked more questions when rereading the same book. All teachers in the experimental group assisted in each parent training session, but the two fluent Spanish-speaking teachers were the primary facilitators of the sessions. The first parent training session was held in late September and the last session was held in mid-February. The principal investigator attended all sessions to ensure fidelity to the program.

The Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009) offers as many as 26 training sessions in California, Florida, Texas, Illinois, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and New York (Latino Family Literacy Project, 2009). However, to date, there are no empirical data on its effects. For this reason, the framework of the Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009) was used as the basis of lessons for parent training sessions, but was modified in some ways. Primarily, six additional literacy strategies from Whitehurst's *dialogic reading* program were implemented as they have empirical data to support their use (Whitehurst et al., 1988). These six strategies were also utilized in the study conducted by Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber (2006) and were indicated to improve the language skills of children when used in picture book reading sessions with their parents or caregivers. These strategies include: (1) expanding upon student language,

(2) asking quality questions, (3) praising children for verbalization, (4) making connections, (5) making predictions, and (6) defining new vocabulary (Whitehurst et al., 1988; Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber, 2006).

Describing was an additional strategy that was included in the framework as it has also been noted to be a key component in developing language (HighScope, 2010). With describing, parents focused on the illustrations in the text and had their child describe what they saw. The eighth and final strategy introduced in the shared reading training sessions was rhyming. Rhyming was chosen as an area of focus as phonological awareness, specifically rhyming, has been correlated with general abilities in language and or vocabulary (Avons, Wragg, Cupples, & Lovegrove, 1998; Bryant, Maclean, & Bradley, 1990).

The framework was modified to include a before reading, during reading, and after reading portion with all new books as these segments are often present in shared reading sessions conducted with emerging readers. Each PowerPoint training session was created by the principal investigator and included all items previously outlined. Materials and information were available in English and in Spanish. While the parent training sessions were conducted, primarily in Spanish, English support and translations were also available, if needed.

All parent training sessions were held in the school's cafeteria, between 2:15 and 3:15 p.m. An afternoon time was chosen to hold the sessions as the prekindergarten students were released from school at 2:00 p.m. and many parents picked their children up from school at this time. The teachers' conference period was also scheduled during

this time and all instructional aides were still present on campus. This was important as parents would not have to travel back to school in the evenings, the teachers would not have to spend 10 additional nights providing training to the parents, and bilingual aides were available to provide childcare for the prekindergarten students and their siblings. A local grocery store community liaison also attended each session and provided all of the parents and children with refreshments and snacks.

Session 1

As an incentive to attend the first parent training session, families were provided with a $20 gift card to a local grocery store. Parents were also informed that their names would be placed in a drawing for $150 if they attended five of the ten meetings, would be placed in a drawing for $250 if they attended six of the ten meetings, and would have their name added to the $250 drawing for each additional meeting they attended over six. The English-speaking teachers assisted parents in signing-in on their child's teacher's attendance sheet and in collecting the informational handout and book log for the week. The Spanish-speaking teachers conducted the training session, with the English-speaking teachers and primary investigator present for additional support. Parents were introduced to the program, were taught how to conduct the before, during, and after sections of reading, and were provided with tips on how to conduct an effective reading session. An explanation was also given to the parents regarding the book logs. It was explained that the handout included a reminder of all of the skills presented in the training session and the parents should record each shared reading session conducted with their child and return the book log at the next scheduled meeting. The parents

completed the *Shared Reading Practices Survey* as a pretest measure, at this first training session, and received the first book.

Session 2

The second training began in the same manner as the first. Parents signed-in, collected the new book log for the week, and then training began by reviewing what went well during the previous book reading sessions with their child and what could be changed to make it more effective. The strategies from the first meeting were also reviewed. After discussion took place, parents were given a literacy memory album and supplies such as construction paper, scissors, pens, markers, and drawing templates. Parents created a front cover and made the first entry in their album. For entry one, parents were asked to record the title, author, and illustrator of the first book. Parents were also asked to record their favorite part of the book or to record a special memory they shared with their child during a shared reading session. As the parents created their entries, the teachers and the researcher collected all book logs used to record reading sessions from the first meeting. Door prizes were also given. Parents were then trained on a new skill to use in shared reading sessions with their child, discussed how this skill could be valuable in encouraging the language development of their child, were given time to practice the new skill, and were provided with the new book for the week.

Sessions 3-9

Procedures used in session 2 were repeated in sessions three through nine. While the strategy taught each week was to be focused on in the before, during, and after segments of reading, in some sessions, materials were provided so that parents could

extend this skill through the use of an activity in the after portion. For example, in week three, parents were asked to have the children describe what they saw on the front cover of the book in the before portion, describe what they saw in the pictures in the during portion, and in the after portion, they were given a camera to take their child on an actual "picture walk." Children were asked to describe what they saw on the walk, but when the parents returned the film to the researcher to be developed, the children then described what they saw in the photographs they took.

Session 10

At the final session, books and book logs from session nine were returned. All skills presented during the course of training were reviewed and parents discussed what they enjoyed about the program as well as the benefits it provided to their child and to themselves. The final entry was made into their literacy memory albums and all of the albums were displayed for parents to view and peruse. The parents then completed the *Shared Reading Practices Survey* as a posttest, which was administered and collected in the same manner as the pretest. Afterwards, the parents celebrated the final session with food they had brought from home to share with all of the other participants. Drawings were held for the cash prizes and door prizes were given. See Table 7 for a listing of the strategies, books and instructional materials provided at each session.

Table 7
Strategies and Books for Training Sessions

Session	Strategy	Book	Materials
1	Before, during and after reading segments	*De Colores and Other Latin American Folk Songs for Children* by Jose-Luis Orozco (cd included)	Tips for Reading handout Book logs
2	Rhyming	*Grandmother's Nursery Rhymes/Las Nanas de Abuelita* by Nelly Palacio Jaramillo	Spanish and English Rhyming Words blank handout, to be completed by parents and children in the after portion Book logs
3	Describing	*See What You Say/Ve Lo Que Dices* by Nancy María Grande Tabor	Disposable camera to take pictures and have the child describe what they see in the after portion Book logs
4	Praising children for their verbalizations	*Fun With ABC's: Lotería Style/El Abecedario con Lotería* illustrated by Luciano Martinez	Alphabet manipulatives to be used in the after portion Book logs
5	Predicting	*The Spots on the Jaguar/Las Manchas en el Jaguar* by Tom Luna	Blank, laminated, prediction chart and erasable pen to be used for the child to make predictions before and during book reading Book logs

Table 7 (continued)

Session	Strategy	Book	Materials
6	Defining new vocabulary	*My house: A book in two languages/Mi casa: Un libro en dos lenguas* by Rebecca Emberley	Book logs
7	Expanding upon a students' language	*Colors All Around/Colores en Todas Partes* by Bo Young Kim	Book logs
8	Asking quality questions	*Just Like My Sister/Igual Que Mi Hermana* by Katherine Del Monte and Max Benavidez	Book logs
9	Making personal connections and letter identification	*Amazing Mama/Mamá Maravillosa* by Daniela Del Monte	Book logs
10	Review skills	No book	No materials

Attendance

Attendance at the parent training sessions was important as materials and books were not provided to parents who did not attend the sessions. In the first letter that was sent home to parents about the training sessions, the dates of all meetings were listed so that parents could plan ahead for the meetings and ask off of work, if necessary. Attendance from the four classrooms was consistent, except for one session where there

was inclement weather. See Table 8 for attendance numbers, book log return rates, and the number of days in each specific reading period.

Table 8
Parent Attendance and Book Log Return Rates

	Number of Parents Attended	Number of Returned Book Logs	Mean Frequency of Reading Sessions	Total Number of Days in Reading Period
Session 1	50	40	10.2	14
Session 2	43	36	10.1	14
Session 3	39	32	10.0	15
Session 4	38	36	12.5	12
Session 5	35	33	8.9	20
Session 6	41	36	12.6	12
Session 7	33	29	9.9	23
Session 8	37	26	8.8	12
Session 9	24	21	11.3	16
Session 10	39	*	*	*

* No book logs were collected for Session 10

Students in the experimental group were posttested in English and in Spanish on the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock et al., 2005). As noted prior, the children were tested in their classrooms by one English-speaking and one Spanish-speaking assessor, trained on the

instrument. All of the children were tested within a 3-week window, beginning the Monday after the last parent training session held in mid-February.

Teacher interviews were conducted, by the researcher, the week following the last parent training session. The interviews took place in the cafeteria, during the teacher's conference period, and were completed within two days. Each interview lasted, approximately, 30 minutes. The semi-structured interviews assessed the teachers' perceptions of the program and were tape-recorded. The data was immediately transcribed and coded for themes. The themes were then listed, by teacher, by question. Member checks were conducted to ensure that all information was represented accurately.

Comparison Group

The comparison group consisted of parents and children in two randomly selected bilingual, prekindergarten classrooms. Teachers in this group received no training and books from The Latino Family Literacy Project© (2009), during the course of the study. Any parent interaction or training that took place was what typically occurs on the school's campus. Parent training that is common to all prekindergarten, bilingual classrooms includes a Literacy Training Night, Fall Festival, and mid-year parent-teacher conferences. Parents in the control group were pre-and posttested on the *Shared Reading Practices Survey*. These surveys were sent home, by the teacher, in sealed envelopes. The teacher collected the surveys and then gave them to the researcher. Pre- and posttests were also administered to the students participating in the study. Students

were assessed in English and Spanish on the *WMLS-R* in the same manner and by the same assessors as the experimental group (Woodcock et al., 2005).

Data Analysis

All quantitative data from the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock et al., 2005) and the *Shared Reading Survey* were analyzed through the computer software program, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were also computed to determine parent attendance at training sessions, book log return rates, and the mean frequency of reading sessions.

A chi-square analysis was conducted to determine pretest and posttest differences between the treatment and comparison groups on the *Shared Reading Survey*. This analysis was used to identify sample characteristics of the groups and the frequency of their responses to variables regarding demographics and home literacy behaviors. This non-parametric test utilized categorical data.

An Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to analyze differences between the treatment and comparison group on students' oral language scores in Spanish and English. The ANCOVA was also conducted to determine differences between these groups on students' literacy scores in Spanish and English. Covariates used were student pretest scores and the age of the child.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine if the number of training sessions attended affected the student variables. Again, dependent variables included the posttest language and literacy scores of student on the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock

et al., 2005), in Spanish and English. The independent variables were student pretest scores and parent attendance.

Qualitative data was analyzed after teacher interviews were conducted. The principal investigator transcribed the data, identified themes within each question, across the teachers, and summarized the findings. Finally, for responses with a clear yes/no answer, percentages were calculated.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the current study are presented. The results are organized to answer each of the four research questions, sequentially. The primary purpose of the study is to evaluate the effects of parental or caregiver shared reading training sessions on their Hispanic prekindergarten students' language and literacy scores. This study also examines the effects of the intervention on the home literacy behaviors of these Spanish-speaking parents or caregivers with their children and the parental evaluations of the program, itself. Additionally, the study investigates the teachers' perceptions of the intervention.

Research Question 1

1. Are there significant differences between the treatment group (i.e., shared reading interventions) and comparison group on prekindergarten students' oral language and literacy scores on the *Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey-Revised* (*WMLS-R*)?

Data were collected, in Spanish and in English, on the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock et al., 2005) in order to answer the first research question. As previously noted, tasks one and two on the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock et al., 2005) are used to measure oral language in a broad manner. Thus, the scores on these two tasks, Picture Vocabulary and Verbal Analogies, were combined and served to represent students' oral language scores in the current study. The scores on task three, Letter-Word Identification, were used to

represent students' scores on literacy. ANCOVA was used to analyze the data. After controlling for gender and pretest scores, the results indicated statistically significant differences between groups in oral language in both English and Spanish. The experimental group scored significantly higher than the comparison group in English oral language ($F[1, 92]=6.58$, $p<=0.012$). The experimental groups also scored significantly higher than the comparison group in Spanish oral language ($F[1,92]=26.98$, $p<=0.001$) at the end of the intervention.

Effect sizes are also reported. According to Cohen (1992), effect sizes of .2 or less are considered small, .5 is considered medium, and .8 or more is considered large. Based on these parameters, the treatment in this study had a small effect on English oral language ($\eta_p^2 =.067$). While larger, the treatment also had a small effect on Spanish oral language ($\eta_p^2 =.227$). There were no statistically significant differences between groups on literacy scores in English or Spanish (see Table 9).

Table 9
ANCOVA of WMLS-R

	Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	*p*	*ES*
English Oral Language						
Pre- English Oral Language Score	2703.15	1	2703.15	85.89	<.001*	.483
Treatment	207.28	1	207.28	6.58	.012*	.067
Gender	2.40	1	2.40	.07	.783	.001
Error	2895.22	92	31.47			
Total	5738.62	95				
Spanish Oral Language						
Pre- Spanish Oral Language Score	3388.04	1	3388.04	47.11	<.001*	.339
Treatment	1940.60	1	1940.60	26.98	<.001*	.227
Gender	102.89	1	102.89	1.43	.235	.015
Error	6615.43	92	71.90			
Total	136878.00	95				
English Literacy						
Pre-English Literacy Score	530.30	1	530.30	70.58	<.001*	.434
Treatment	10.81	1	10.81	1.43	.233	.015
Gender	.031	1	.03	.01	.949	<.001
Error	691.16	92	7.51			
Total	5021.00	95				
Spanish Literacy						
Pre-Spanish Literacy Score	1454.28	1	1454.28	42.45	<.001*	.316
Treatment	75.81	1	75.81	2.21	.140	.023
Gender	4.34	1	4.34	.127	.723	.001
Error	3151.15	92	34.25			
Total	20880.00	95				

** $p<.001$, * $p<.05$

Table 10 presents the mean scores of students in both groups after the intervention. The variables examined were oral language in English and Spanish and literacy in English and Spanish. The mean scores for the experimental and comparison groups were similar in English oral language (*M*=15.38, *M*=14.98) and English literacy (*M*=6.35, *M*=6.18), but higher adjusted mean scores were reported for the experimental group when the same variables were used (*M*=16.44, *M*=13.35; *M*=6.56, *M*=5.87). Large standard deviations were noted for both groups in the areas of English oral language and literacy, indicating a variation of scores within groups.

Greater differences were seen in the mean scores of the experimental and comparison groups in Spanish oral language (*M*=39.21, *M*=31.72) and Spanish literacy (*M*=13.74, *M*=11.87) and in the adjusted mean scores for these variables (*M*=39.94, *M*=30.66; *M*=13.72, *M*=11.90). The experimental group displayed higher mean scores and higher adjusted mean scores than the comparison group. However, high standard deviations were also noted for both groups in Spanish oral language and literacy, once again, suggesting a large range of scores within groups on these variables.

Table 10

Variable Means for Sample at Posttest

	Pretest Treatment		Pretest Comparison		Posttest Treatment		Posttest Comparison		Posttest Treatment Adjusted Mean		Posttest Comparison Adjusted Mean	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
English Oral Language	6.32	5.04	9.61	9.27	15.38	7.63	14.98	8.07	16.44	0.75	13.35	0.92
Spanish Oral Language	20.59	7.06	22.72	9.17	39.21	11.77	31.72	7.70	39.94	1.13	30.66	1.37
English Literacy	3.25	1.97	3.85	3.69	6.35	3.71	6.18	3.49	6.56	0.36	5.87	0.44
Spanish Literacy	7.51	4.00	7.49	5.15	13.74	8.18	11.87	4.81	13.72	0.77	11.90	9.39

A regression analysis was also conducted for the experimental group, only, to investigate the effect of parent attendance on students' language and literacy scores in English and Spanish. The dependent variables were English oral language, Spanish oral language, English literacy and Spanish literacy and the independent variables were pretest scores and attendance. For each regression equation, student pretest scores were significant predictors of posttest scores. However, parent attendance was only a statistically significant predictor of posttest Spanish oral language (β=.39, p<.001). The regression equations accounted for 69.3% of the variance in English oral language, 39% of Spanish oral language, 44.7% of English literacy, and 34% of Spanish literacy. Table 11 displays the regression results.

Table 11

Regression Results Examining Effects and Implementation on Students' Language and Literacy Gains

	R^2	*B*	*SE*	β	*t*-value	*p*-value
English Oral Language	.693					
Constant		8.98	1.12		7.35	<.001**
Pre-Language		0.77	0.83	0.71	9.26	<.001**
Attendance		0.28	0.15	0.48	1.92	.058
Spanish Oral Language	.390					
Constant		17.93	2.65		6.76	<.001**
Pre-Language		0.66	0.11	0.48	5.98	<.001**
Attendance		1.04	0.22	0.39	4.78	<.001**
English Literacy	.447					
Constant		2.88	0.52		5.54	<.001**
Pre-Literacy		0.85	0.99	0.66	8.52	<.001**
Attendance		0.11	0.68	0.13	1.66	.101
Spanish Literacy	.340					
Constant		5.55	1.23		4.50	<.001**
Pre-Literacy		0.84	0.13	0.54	6.27	<.001**
Attendance		0.28	0.15	0.17	0.19	.056

** p<.001, *p<.05

Research Question 2

2. Are there significant differences between the treatment group (i.e., shared reading interventions) and comparison group on parents' self-reported home reading behaviors on the *Shared Reading Practices Survey*?

In order to answer research question 2, data was collected from parents or caregivers, in both groups, at the end of the intervention. Parents or caregivers reported their home literacy practices through 17 questions presented on the *Shared Reading Survey*. A Pearson's chi square test was conducted to analyze data. The results indicated that there were statistically significant differences between groups in the language in which the parents read to the child ($\chi^2[1, N = 94] = 16.10, p = .001$). Approximately 48% of the parents in the experimental group reported reading to their child in Spanish, while 50% reported reading in both Spanish and English. The remaining parent or caregiver in this group indicated that he or she read in English, only. In the comparison group, however, the majority reported reading to their child in Spanish (87%) and the remaining parents or caregivers reported reading in both languages (13%).

In regards to the Parent Child Reading Interaction component, statistically significant differences were found in how often parents or caregivers read with their child ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 14.71, p = .001$) and in the number of minutes they read to their child on the previous day ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 22.65, p = .001$). Parents or caregivers in the experimental group read more often to their child during the week and for a greater number of minutes on the day prior to completing the survey. Statistically significant

results were also found in the Child Reading Interest component. It was reported that children in the experimental group asked to be read to more often ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 22.54$, $p = .001$) and enjoyed being read to more ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 12.02$, $p = .007$) than children in the comparison group. On the third and final component of the survey, Parent Reading Interest, the results indicated statistically significant differences between groups on how much parents enjoyed reading ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 8.15$, $p = .043$). Parents or caregivers in the experimental group reported enjoying reading more than the parents or caregivers in the comparison group. See Table 12.

Table 12
Frequencies of Variables After Intervention (Both Groups)

	Treatment	Comparison	Chi Square	*p*-value
In which language do you read?			16.104	.001*
Spanish	27	33		
English	1	0		
Both Spanish and English	28	5		
How often do you take your child to the library?			3.146	.207
Hardly ever	43	35		
1-2 times per month	11	4		
1-2 times per week	2	0		
Parent Child Reading Interaction				
How often do you read with your child?			14.711	.001*
Hardly ever	1	3		

Table 12 (continued)

	Treatment	Comparison	Chi Square	*p*-value
1-2 times per month	2	11		
1-2 times per week	53	25		
At what age did you first read to your child?			1.849	.763
Before 6 months	5	2		
6 months to 1 year	17	13		
1-1.5 years	7	8		
1.5-2 years	7	5		
After age 2	20	11		
How many minutes did you read to your child yesterday?			22.648	<.001*
0 minutes	1	14		
1-10 minutes	30	18		
11-20 minutes	13	5		
More than 20 minutes	12	2		
How many children's books do you have in your home?			3.584	.310
0-2 books	7	10		
3-10 books	34	18		
11-20 books	9	8		
More than 20 books	3	6		
Child Reading Interest				
How often does your child ask to be read to?			22.537	<.001*
Hardly ever	1	10		
1-2 times per month	4	7		

Table 12 (continued)

	Treatment	Comparison	Chi Square	*p*-value
1-2 times per week	21	16		
Almost daily	30	6		
How much does your child enjoy being read to?			12.020	.007*
A little	1	8		
Pretty much	18	15		
Very much	16	9		
Loves it	21	7		
How often does your child look at books by himself or herself?			4.441	.218
Hardly ever	2	3		
1-2 times per month	4	7		
1-2 times per week	19	14		
Almost daily	31	15		
Parent Reading Interest				
How many minutes do you read per day			7.239	.065
0 minutes	2	7		
1-10 minutes	24	19		
11-20 minutes	15	8		
More than 20 minutes	14	5		
How much do you enjoy reading?			8.151	.043*
Not at all	2	8		
Some	17	13		
Moderately	22	12		
Very much	15	6		

** $p<.001$, * $p<.05$

Research Question 3

3. What are the parents' perceptions of the intervention as measured by the *Shared Reading Practices Survey*?

Research question 3 was also answered through data collected on the *Shared Reading Practices Survey*. While 17 questions were presented to both groups in order to answer research question 2, two additional items were presented to parents or caregivers in the experimental group in order to determine their evaluation of the intervention. The first item contained multiple questions regarding strategies that were learned within the training sessions. The majority of the parents or caregivers reported that they learned several shared reading strategies during the program. Specifically, parents or caregivers reported that they learned how to implement the following strategies: Ask the child questions as they read (95%), allow the child to ask questions as they read (96%), talk about the meaning of new words with the child (100%), talk about what might happen next in the story (91%), ask the child to discuss what they see in the pictures (96%), ask the child to make personal connections to the story (88%), ask the child to make rhymes with words in the story (93%), and praise the child for their verbalizations (93%). The second item also contained multiple questions assessing how the sessions helped the parents or caregivers. Again, a majority of the parents or caregivers indicated that the sessions had been beneficial their learning in several ways. They stated that the sessions helped them to accomplish the following: Establish a reading routine with the child (96%), interact more with the child (96%), communicate more with the child's school (95%), and increase the child's interest in reading (91%). See Table 13.

Table 13
Evaluation Questions (Experimental)

	Yes		No	
	n	%	*n*	%
In these sessions I learned to	53	95	3	5
Ask my child questions as we read				
Allow my child to ask questions as we read	54	96	2	4
Talk about new words with my child	56	100	0	0
Talk about what might happen next in the story	51	91	5	9
Ask my child to talk about what they see in the pictures	54	96	2	4
Ask my child to make personal connections to the story	49	88	7	13
Ask my child to make rhymes with words in the story	52	93	4	7
Praise my child for their answers	52	93	4	7
These sessions helped me to				
Establish a reading routine with my child	54	96	2	4
Interact more with my child	54	96	2	4
Communicate more with school	53	95	3	5
Increase my child's interest in reading	51	91	5	9

Research Question 4

4. Do teachers perceive the intervention was effective for their students?

   Data used to answer research question 4 were collected through semi-structured

interviews with teachers in the experimental group. At the completion of the interviews, data were transcribed by the primary investigator and themes were identified within questions. Member checks were then conducted to ensure all data had been accurately analyzed and reported. Percentages were calculated for questions requiring a yes/no response.

The results indicated that teachers felt very successful in implementing the training sessions. Although half of the teachers believed parents or caregivers were nervous or unsure in the beginning, they offered several reasons as to why they believed the training was ultimately a success. Primarily, they felt the program's effectiveness was due to parents' wanting to help their child learn, teachers having a specific role at each meeting, and Spanish and English support being provided at all of the sessions. When asked what the teachers would have changed about how the parents were taught, Teacher A stated that training sessions could have been held in a quieter environment and Teacher C felt as though organizing parents into smaller groups might have been beneficial. The remaining teachers stated no changes were needed.

On questions regarding attendance, teacher responses varied. Teacher A reported that between 18 and 22 of her students' parents attended at least one of the sessions and that most were present at all ten sessions. Teachers C and D recalled 10-12 of their students' parents or caregivers participating in the program and noted that these families attended at least eight or more of the sessions. Although Teacher D had difficulty recalling the exact number of her parents or caregivers from her classroom that were involved in the program, she reported that several attended at least seven of the

meetings.

Teachers were then asked to discuss what changes they had seen in the parents or caregivers during the course of the program. As mentioned previously, half of the teachers stated that the parents appeared shy or uncertain at the initial sessions. However, they felt that the parents gradually seemed to make friends at the sessions, gained more confidence, asked more questions, and expressed a greater desire to be informed about their child's progress and how they could assist at home. The remaining half of the teachers stated that parents in the program became more involved with their child in the classroom. Specifically, they noted that the families involved in the training asked more questions about their child's work, visited the school more often, participated more in projects sent home, and initiated more contact with the teacher.

Teachers were also asked to discuss changes they observed in the children during the intervention. Again, one teacher noted that her students were quiet and did not speak often at the beginning of the program but, now, were now much more talkative. A second teacher felt as though her students displayed a greater interest in school and in classroom activities, throughout the intervention. In a similar statement, a third teacher perceived participants from her classroom as exhibiting a greater excitement for checking out books from the school library, a greater respect for books, and an increased frequency of pointing to the words in the book and tracking the print. The remaining teacher believed that her students became more proficient in rhyming and asking questions and also displayed a larger vocabulary, at the conclusion of the intervention.

Although teachers described the changes they had seen in the students during the course of the intervention, it was also important to know what specific changes they had observed in the students' oral language and literacy skills (letter identification). This was of interest because the students had been assessed in these two areas on a standardized instrument and the researcher felt as though a qualitative measure could provide a fuller picture as to what changes had taken place.

In regards to oral language, the teachers stated the students were stronger in their communication skills, not only with the teacher but also with their peers. One teacher mentioned that her students were excited to use their vocabulary, were more involved in classroom discussions, and began to use English more often. Another teacher discussed how her students displayed greater participation during story time, listening more and providing more input as stories were read. A third teacher noted that her students used a larger vocabulary in conversations, rhymed more often, and continually posed questions within the classroom.

The teachers also perceived that students made growth in their letter identification skills. Teacher C simply stated that students were recognizing and identifying a greater number of letters. Teacher D pointed to the fact that several of her children could now write their first and last name, which she felt corresponded to the skill of letter identification. Teacher A, however, made an important observation when she noted that her children were not only identifying letters in isolation, but were also applying them in context, such as identifying letters during book reading time, small group instruction, and in other periods of the day. Teacher B also discussed this letter-

to-world connection when she stated her students began to recognize letters in their names, in friends' names, and in words posted around the room.

Aside from stronger oral language and letter identification skills, the teachers believed the children made gains in specific strategies taught within the training sessions. All four of the teachers observed student growth in describing pictures and objects, two made mention of growth in vocabulary skills, and two discussed increased proficiency in predicting. Concepts of print such as holding the book properly, identifying the front and back of a book, tracking the text, and in understanding that print holds meaning, was also mentioned by two teachers as an area in which the children progressed. While concepts of print was not a primary focus of any of the sessions, it was introduced and modeled at all of the sessions. Rhyming, questioning, speaking in complete sentences, and communicating in both English and Spanish were also mentioned as areas in which the children displayed greater proficiency.

Teachers were asked to outline what they believed to be the strengths of the program. Results indicated that parent involvement and the building of parent confidence were perceived to be the main strengths of the intervention. Teacher A also mentioned the importance of the skills that were taught. She believed that the skills were of value but found it more important that the skills were appropriately matched to books and that they were taught in a clear, concise manner to parents so that they understood and could replicate those skills in read aloud sessions with their child.

In order to gain feedback on how to improve the training sessions, teachers were asked what difficulties were encountered during the implementation of the program.

Three of the teachers stated that no difficulties were faced during the course of the program. However, two of the three teachers provided a caveat and stated that they wished more parents could have participated but due to circumstances out of everyone's control, such as an inclement weather day and parent work schedules, not all of the parents were able to attend the sessions. The remaining teacher felt that one problem or difficulty that was encountered in the program was time. She mentioned that some of the parents or caregivers possibly had work schedules that conflicted with reading each night and, thus, could not fully implement the strategies or training.

Finally, the teachers were asked what changes they would like to see made in the program, particularly if they were to implement it, again. Teacher A stated that the only change she would like to see is for the families to keep the books that were introduced at the sessions. She mentioned that several of the families have few or no Spanish and English books and felt that this would help to increase their literacy materials at home. Teacher C stated she would like more time to spend with the parents and more programs like the one that was implemented, so that parents could continue to assist their child. Teachers B and D stated that they could not think of any changes that needed to be made to the program. See Table 14.

Table 14
Summary of Teachers' Perceptions

Teacher Interview Question	Teacher	Emergent Themes
1. How successful were you in implementing the training sessions?	A	• Parents and teacher were nervous at first but familiarity made it successful • Parents wanted to learn how to help their child at home
	B	• English and Spanish-speaking teachers had differing roles, which made the sessions go smoothly
	C	• Teacher involvement with parents and training being conducted in Spanish made it successful
	D	• Role as one of the English-speaking teachers was to greet and sign-in parents. "I think it was very successful." • Parents wanting to attend and help their child made it successful
2. Was there anything you would have changed about the way parents were taught?	A	• A more quiet environment
	B	• No changes
	C	• Smaller groups of parents within the session
	D	• No changes
3. How many parents attended?	A	• 18 or 19 parents of 22 students
	B	• Half of those attending came to every session
	C	• 10-12 parents showed up at most of the meeting
	D	• Quite a few parents came.
4. How often did they come?	A	• Several parents came to all 10 sessions
	B	• 10 or 11 parents came every time
	C	• They attended 80% of the meetings
	D	• They attended 70-80% of the meetings

Table 14 (continued)

Teacher Interview Question	Teacher	Emergent Themes
5. What changes did you observe in your students' parents during the program?	A	• Initially, parents were shy which she believed reflected the Hispanic culture. As sessions progressed, parents asked more questions and expressed a desire to be informed. Parents were learning specific skills alongside their child (i.e. rhyming and vocabulary)
	B	• As sessions progressed, she could identify which parents were attending the sessions and which were not. Those attending were more involved with projects sent home, student work and daily schedule, came to school more often, and talked to the teacher more often
	C	• Parents in the study were more involved with the teacher and their student. They asked questions about classroom work and student progress
	D	• Parents were shy, at first. The parents became more confident and wanted to attend , making friendships during the sessions

Table 14 (continued)

Teacher Interview Question	Teacher	Emergent Themes
6. What changes did you observe in your students during the program?	A	• Students began showing proficiency in rhyming, using questioning, and vocabulary at school
	B	• Students began to show excitement for acquiring books from the school library and began respecting and showing more interest in the books they had chosen. They were pointing to words on pages, tracking the text
	C	• Students were more interested in and enthusiastic about school and activities in the classroom
	D	• Prior to the program they were quiet and now they are talkative
7. What types of changes have you seen in your students' oral language proficiency?	A	• Students are talking more, questioning, communicating with each and with the teacher, independently problem solving, using vocabulary, and rhyming
	B	• Students are communicating more in English, reading and discussing books, and are more willing to discuss and participate. They are excited to share what they are learning and using the vocabulary
	C	• They have learned how to communicate better
	D	• Students talked more when we read books, they listen to the books, and they give their input on the stories

Table 14 (continued)

Teacher Interview Question	Teacher	Emergent Themes
8. What types of changes have you seen in your students' abilities to identify letters?	A	• They are making connections between letters and what they are reading in books, to names in print, in Learning Centers, and they recognize books they see at school that they also have at home
	B	• They recognize their names, peer's names, and words on the Word Wall, and during Learning Centers
	C	• Recognize and identify letters
	D	• They can write their first name now and some can write their last name
9. In which of the other skills taught have your students become proficient?	A	• Rhyming and extensions of rhyming, talking when being questioned, speaking in complete sentences, describing, questioning, and vocabulary
	B	• Describing, vocabulary, speaking in both languages, concepts of print such as how to hold the book, track print, see that letters represent words, they are telling the story, and they know that the story and the letters are important so they follow along
	C	• They can describe things in the book and make predictions about what will happen in the book
	D	• Concepts of print such as the front and back of the book, looking at the pictures and telling about them, describing, they want to talk about what is happening

Table 14 (continued)

Teacher Interview Question	Teacher	Emergent Themes
10. What were the strengths associated with the program?	A	• Skills for the parents and students, parent communication in the sessions, skill sets matched to books, skills were taught in a way that made them easy for the parents to use and demonstrate to their child
	B	• Parent involvement. Before they were unsure and lacked confidence in how to help their child but know they possess the knowledge and confidence
	C	• Parent involvement and the desire to educate their child
	D	• Increased talking by both students and parents and building confidence with students and parents
11. What were the difficulties associated with the program?	A	• None except that the teacher wished more parents could have attended
	B	• None except working around things that were out of the teachers and researchers control such as parents being unable to attend due to work and to the low attendance at one session during inclement weather
	C	• Time for parents to implement the training at home due to work schedules
	D	• None

Table 14 (continued)

Teacher Interview Question	Teacher	Emergent Themes
12. What changes would you like to see with the program?	A	• None except that the teacher wished the families could have kept the books to increase their personal libraries at home
	B	• None
	C	• More time and programs like this program to better educate their child
	D	• None

After themes were identified from the more open-ended questions presented in the teacher interviews, percentages were calculated on closed questions that required a yes or no answer. According to the results, teachers believed the program was responsible for the positive changes observed in the parents or caregivers involved in the study as well as changes seen in the children. For each of the questions posed, 100% of the teachers responded yes, meaning that they believed all changes in the participants were a result of the program. Table 15 displays the interview responses.

Table 15
Percentage of Yes/No Teacher Responses

	Yes		No	
	n	percentage	*n*	Percentage
Do you believe the changes you observed in your students' parents were due to the program	*4*	100%	*0*	0%
Do you believe the changes you observed in your students were due to the program	*4*	100%	*0*	0%
Have you seen an increase in your students' oral language proficiency	*4*	100%	*0*	0%
Do you think the change was associated with the program's activities	*4*	100%	*0*	0%
Have you seen an increase in your students' abilities to identify letters?	*4*	100%	*0*	0%
Do you think the changes were associated with the program's activities	*4*	100%	*0*	0%
Have your students become more proficient in any of the other skills that were taught in the program	*4*	100%	*0*	0%

Summary

To summarize, this chapter presented the results of the current study. Findings were organized around the four research questions under investigation and were presented according to the order of the questions. In answering research question1, results from the ANCOVA indicated significant differences between the treatment and comparison groups on prekindergarten students' oral language and literacy scores on the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock, et al., 2005). Students in the experimental group scored significantly higher than students in the comparison group in both English and Spanish

oral language (F[1, 92]=6.58, p<=0.012; (F[1,92]=26.98, p<=0.001). No statistically significant differences were found between groups in literacy, in English or Spanish. Results also suggested higher adjusted mean scores for the experimental group in English oral language and literacy and higher mean scores and adjusted mean scores in Spanish oral language and literacy. Standard deviations were high for both groups for variables. Furthermore, the results from the regression analysis indicated that students' posttest scores could be significantly predicted by their pretest scores. Parent attendance at training sessions had no statistically significant effect on student scores with the exception of Spanish oral language (β=.39, p<.001).

Regarding research question 2, the results indicated that there were significant differences between the treatment and comparison groups on parents' self-reported home reading behaviors on the *Shared Reading Practices Survey*. Specifically, in the Parent Child Interaction component of the survey, statistically significant differences were noted between groups in which language the parents used to read to their child (χ^2[1, N = 94] = 16.10, p = .001), the frequency with which parents read to their child (χ^2[1, N = 95] = 14.71, p = .001), and the number of minutes the parents read to their child on the day, prior to the survey (χ^2[1, N = 95] = 22.65, p = .001). The experimental group read more in both English and Spanish, read with greater frequency to their child, and read for longer periods of time to their child. Pertaining to the Child Reading Interest segment of the survey, statistically significant differences were found between groups in the frequency with which children asked to be read to (χ^2[1, N = 95] = 22.54, p = .001) and the extent to which children enjoyed their parents or caregivers reading to them

($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 12.02, p = .007$). Children in the experimental group asked to be read to more frequently and displayed a greater enjoyment for reading than children in the comparison group. Additionally, statistically significant differences were found between groups on the Parent Reading Interest component of the survey. Parents or caregivers in the experimental group enjoyed reading more than participants in the comparison group ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 8.15, p = .043$).

Parental perceptions of the intervention were also examined. Parents from the experimental group responded to additional items on the *Shared Reading Practices* in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the training sessions. Results indicated that, during the program, parents or caregivers learned specific strategies to use in shared reading sessions with their child. The results are listed from highest to lowest percentages reported: Talk about new words with my child (100%), allow my child to ask questions as we read (96%), ask my child to talk about what they see in the pictures (96%), ask my child questions as we read (95%), ask my child to make rhymes with words in the story (93%), praise my child for their answers (93%), talk about what might happen next in the story (91%), and ask my child to make personal connections to the story (88%). Results also indicated that the intervention helped the parents or caregivers to: Establish a reading routine with their child (96%), interact more with their child (96%), communicate more with their child (95%), and increase their child's interest in reading (91%).

Finally, research question 4 sought to examine the effectiveness of the intervention from the teachers' perspective. Themes emerged from the open-ended

questions presented and results indicated teachers' felt successful in their implementation of the program. This was primarily due to parent support, clear-cut roles of the teachers, and all of the sessions and materials being provided in English and Spanish. Suggestions for changing how parents were taught included holding the sessions in a quieter location and organizing the parents into smaller learning groups within the sessions.

The results indicated that there was strong parental attendance at the sessions. Two of the teachers reported having 50% or more of their parents attending 80% or more of the sessions. One teacher was uncertain of the exact number of her parents that participated but reported those involved attended 70% of the meetings. The final teacher reported, approximately, 80% of her parents attended all ten of the meetings.

The data also indicated observable changes in the parents or caregivers and children, throughout the course of the program. While the parents or caregivers and children appeared shy and timid at the beginning, teachers perceived them to ask more questions, to become more involved at school, and to express a greater interest in their child's progress. Furthermore, they believed parents made more contact with the teacher and asked more frequently for additional ways to help at home. Similar to the parents, the teachers also felt the children progressed from being shy and reserved to being more talkative, asking more questions, and displaying a greater love of and respect for books.

The results indicated changes in the children's oral language and literacy skills as well as greater usage of the strategies taught. Teachers thought that the children communicated more with their peers and teachers, participated more in classroom and

story time discussions, displayed increased vocabularies, and offered more rhyming words at the end of the intervention. They also perceived that children could identify more letters of the alphabet, particularly in their name and friends' names, and could apply the letters in meaningful ways, rather than just in isolation. In regards to the strategies taught, teachers perceived the skills were transferred from the parents to the students as they observed growth in students describing what they saw in picture books, predicting, rhyming, questioning, concepts of print, and using both English and Spanish. All teachers believed that observable changes in the parents or caregivers and the children were due to the program.

The results described teacher perceptions regarding the strengths of the program, difficulties encountered during the program, as well as what could be changed. Teachers felt parent involvement was a key strength of the program as was the building of the parents' confidence. They also perceived the skills taught as important but believed it was more important that the skills were matched to the appropriate books and that they were taught in a clear manner. Few difficulties were mentioned but parent work schedules and time for the parents to implement the program were noted. Teacher suggested changes to the program included allowing the parents to keep the books, rather than returning them to the teacher so that they could build their own personal libraries.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

In this fifth and final chapter, a discussion of findings from the current study will be presented. This discussion will begin with results from research question 1 and will continue, sequentially, through research question 4. Next, implications of findings will be detailed as they relate to further research indicated as a result of this study and implications for teaching and pedagogy. In the third and fourth sections, limitations of the present study will be considered and concluding remarks will be made.

Discussion

Research Question 1

The principal purpose of this study was to examine the effects of shared reading interventions with Hispanic families of 4-year-olds on their prekindergarten students' oral language and literacy scores. The first research question investigated whether or not there were significant differences between the treatment and comparison group on these variables, as measured by the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock et al., 2005). Scores in both English and Spanish were considered. After controlling for student pretest scores and gender, an ANCOVA was used to analyze data. Descriptive statistics were provided and a regression analysis was also conducted to determine the effect that parent attendance had on students' language and literacy scores.

The results indicated statistically significant differences between groups in oral language in English and Spanish. First, students in the experimental group scored

significantly higher in oral language in English than did students in the comparison group ($F[1, 92]=6.58$, $p<=0.012$). The difference could be attributed to (a) parents or caregivers in the treatment group gaining more exposure to and practice in English, (b) the bilingual books, and/or (c) the bilingual training sessions provided through the study. Parents may have been more willing to engage in English with the children, either through read alouds or daily conversation, giving the children greater opportunities to learn and use English. While the effect size in English oral language was very small (η_p^2 =.067), this could have been due to the short treatment time. Despite the small effect size, statistically significant results in English oral language were considered as positive as English was not the first language of the parents or caregivers or children.

The results also indicated statistically significant differences between groups in Spanish oral language ($F[1,92]=26.98$, $p<=0.001$). The experimental group scored significantly higher than the comparison group. This finding was expected and supports other research that has consistently documented the importance of using books written in the child's native language and in the value of shared reading sessions on children's oral language, particularly sessions that include specific strategies such as the ones used in the current study (August & Shanahan, 2006; Avons, Wragg, Cupples, & Lovegrove, 1998; Bus, van IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995; Jiménez, Fillipini, & Gerber, 2006; Whitehurst et al., 1988). Again, while small (η_p^2 =.227), there was a stronger effect in Spanish than in English. This could be explained by the parents spending more of their time reading, asking questions, and engaging the child in dialogue in Spanish. Again,

this was not surprising since Spanish was the first language of the participants, suggesting that they would spend more time using the strategies in this language.

No statistically significant differences were found between groups in English or Spanish literacy. A few factors could have contributed to this finding. First, children in both groups simply may not have had enough exposure to and experience with letter identification before and during prekindergarten. In Texas, prekindergarten guidelines include letter identification as a goal to be reached by the end of the year (identifying 20 upper and lowercase letters) but it is possible that teachers are concentrating on other skills in the classroom and in the home school connection (TEA, 2008). For example, in conversations with the teachers involved in the current study, several mentioned focusing the majority of instructional time during the first portion of the school year getting the children into a routine, immersing them in books and language activities, and working on improving social skills. Since letter identification is targeted more heavily in kindergarten in Texas, a greater focus may have been placed on other skills in the prekindergarten classrooms, resulting in the children having less exposure to and experience with this skill.

Furthermore, in this study, there were only two sessions were letter identification was discussed. In week 4, an alphabet book was distributed for the shared reading sessions and, later in week 9, parents or caregivers were taught how to incorporate letter identification strategies into the sessions. Because the main focus of the prekindergarten guidelines in Texas appears to be on stimulating language growth, most of the training in the current study targeted strategies to build oral language rather than letter identification

(TEA, 2008). However, letter identification was still of interest as a meta-analysis conducted by Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) indicated shared reading served to improve student literacy skills, such as letter identification. The results of the current study may have been different had there been more sessions targeting letter identification or had letter identification been targeted earlier in the study, giving the parents more time to integrate and practice this skill in their shared reading sessions.

Second, Phillips and Norris (2008) posited that while language outcomes are often affected by shared reading sessions, children's attention must be drawn to the text and away from the illustrations if gains are to be made in skills such as letter identification. It is possible that parents or caregivers did not fully draw the children's attention to the letters in the text in each reading session. Again, as mentioned above, if more sessions were devoted to this strategy it is possible that parents might have addressed this more fully.

Third, one must also consider the findings of Deckner, Adamson, and Bakeman (2006) when they examined shared reading outcomes with children from 18-42 months of age. In their longitudinal study, results suggested that children's interest predicted letter knowledge. While children in the current study were older than 42 months, interest could explain the lack of statistically significant findings with regards to letter identification.

Fourth, it is also possible that the lack of significant findings is due to the instrument used to assess letter identification. While task 3 of the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock, et al., 2005) is currently used by the district involved in the current study as a way to

assess their prekindergarten students' letter identification skills, the task moves from letters to words on the 13th item. The entire alphabet is not assessed. Another measure used to assess all of the letters represented in the alphabet may have produced different findings.

In regards to research question 1, attendance at the training sessions was also of interest. The data showed that 41 of the parents or caregivers attended 60% or more of the meetings, 36 attended 70% or more, and 30 attended 80% or more. A regression analysis was conducted to examine whether parental or caregiver attendance at the shared reading training sessions affected student scores. Results from the analysis indicated that student pretest scores were statistically significant predictors of student posttest scores for every variable. Pretest scores often predict posttest scores unless the instrument is unreliable. Given the reliability of the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock et al., 2005), this was a reasonable and expected finding.

The results also indicated parental or caregiver attendance significantly predicted student scores in Spanish oral language (β=.39, p<.001). It is presumed that the parents or caregivers who attended more sessions read more to their children, learned a greater number of strategies to encourage oral language in their children, and practiced those new strategies in Spanish more often. Consequently, it is surmised that the students' oral language skills in Spanish were strengthened.

Attendance was not a statistically significant predictor of student oral language scores in English or student literacy scores in English or Spanish. It is speculated that because English was not the first language of the families, attendance was not a predictor

of student scores in English oral language. While parents were encouraged to use more of their English skills, they were asked to use whichever language was most comfortable. It is possible that they simply felt more confident reading and conversing with their child in Spanish, regardless of the number of sessions they attended. Additionally, as noted prior, few sessions targeted the teaching of letter identification, explaining why attendance did not serve as a statistically significant predictor of literacy in English or Spanish.

Research Question 2

This study also sought to determine if there were statistically significant differences between groups on parents' self-reported home reading behaviors, as measured by the *Shared Reading Practices Survey*. Parents or caregivers responded to 17 items on the survey and data was analyzed through a Pearson's chi-square test. The results indicated statistically significant differences between groups in the language in which the parents read to the child ($\chi^2[1, N = 94] = 16.10, p = .001$). While both groups appeared to have similar number of parents or caregivers who read in Spanish, a greater number of parents or caregivers in the experimental group reported reading to their child in both English and Spanish. One explanation for this finding is that parents or caregivers in the experimental group began to read more in both English and Spanish, as a result of the bilingual books and the encouragement at the sessions to use both languages. This finding also serves to further explain the statistically significant differences found between children in the experimental and comparison groups in English and Spanish oral language. The parents in the experimental group were using

more of both languages, rather than resorting to speaking only in their first language, thus increasing their child's ability in both languages.

While no statistically significant differences were found in the Parent Child Interaction segment of the survey at pretest, differences were found at posttest. Specifically, significant differences were found between groups in the frequency with which parents or caregivers read with their child ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 14.71$, $p = .001$) and in the amount of time they read to their child on the day prior to completing the survey ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 22.65$, $p = .001$). The experimental group read to their child with greater frequency each week, and also read for more minutes, on the day preceding the survey. Again, these results were anticipated due to findings documented in the literature. Specifically, the meta-analysis conducted by Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) indicated that, in several intervention studies, the frequency of shared reading sessions between parents or caregivers and children was influenced by the inclusion of books, support, and evaluative comments or feedback, although it was not stated from whom the feedback needed to come. Bilingual books, training, and both teacher and peer feedback were provided to the parents in the current study.

In the Child Reading Interest segment of the survey, statistically significant differences were also found between groups. First, results indicated children in the experimental group asked their parents or caregivers to read to them more often than children in the comparison group ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 22.54$, $p = .001$). There were no differences between groups on this variable at pretest. To explain the change, previous literature is considered. According to Reese and Goldenberg (2008), communities with

high concentrations of Latino families often have fewer books and literacy materials in the home. It stands to reason that having more literacy materials in the home played a role in explaining this finding, simply by novelty effect. Children in the experimental group may have been excited about having a new book in the home and asked to be read to more often. It is also possible that by attending the training sessions, parents or caregivers became more proficient and confident in shared reading strategies, thus allowing the children to be more involved in the readings with a resultant increase in children's interest in the reading sessions.

The results also indicated statistically significant differences between groups regarding how much the child enjoys being read to by their parent or caregiver ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 12.02$, $p = .007$). It was reported that children in the experimental group enjoyed being read to more than children in the comparison group. This could be due to pretest differences that existed or it could be due to the children enjoying the sessions more, because of their parents' increased proficiency resulting from the shared reading sessions.

Finally, the results from the Parent Reading Interest segment of the survey also indicated statistically significant differences between groups that were not present at pretest. When asked how much they enjoyed reading for pleasure, parents or caregivers in the experimental group reported greater enjoyment for reading than did those in the comparison group ($\chi^2[1, N = 95] = 8.15$, $p = .043$). This finding could be attributed to the training received in the program. Parents were encouraged to set aside a time to read with their child each night and to model all of the skills taught in the sessions. With a

continual focus on the importance of reading to and talking with their child, it is not unlikely that the parents began to enjoy reading more on their own. Bus, van IJzendoorn, and Pellegrini (1995) supported this assertion when they wrote that "Parents who read frequently to their children are also likely to read more themselves" (p. 3).

Research Question 3

In order to determine parents' perceptions of the intervention, two additional items were administered to parents or caregivers in the experimental group on the *Shared Reading Survey*. The items contained multiple questions, all of which required a yes/no response and percentages were calculated for each question. Regarding the first item, the findings suggested that most of the parents or caregivers learned to implement specific shared reading strategies with their child, as a result of the training. Over 91% responded that the program taught them to ask their child quality questions, allow their child to ask questions, define and discuss new words with their child, encourage the child to predict what might happen next in the story, describe what is seen in the illustrations, rhyme with words in the text, and praise their child for any verbalizations made during the shared reading sessions. Approximately 88% of parents or caregivers also reported that they learned how to encourage their child to make personal connections with the text. The positive findings could be the result of strong attendance at the training sessions, the modeling of strategies by the teachers, the time that was given to parents or caregivers to practice the strategies in the sessions, the book logs that listed "reminders" about how to implement the strategy taught in the session, the

revisiting of the strategies at the following session, as well as the documenting of the book and strategy in the literacy notebooks. All of these factors, alone or combined, could explain the findings.

In regards to the second item, again, parents or caregivers in the experimental group responded favorably when asked how the sessions had helped them. As much as 95% or more stated that the training sessions had encouraged them to formulate a reading routine with their child, interact more with their child, and communicate more frequently with their child. The majority of the parents or caregivers also stated that sessions had helped to increase their child's reading interest (91%). The findings were thought to be a direct result of the program as well. First, when parents or caregivers were given time at the beginning of the sessions to share with others what had worked well in their reading sessions at home, a few mentioned that choosing a certain time each night to read had helped. Others stated that when they implemented this suggestion and created a routine, or a specific time to read each day or night with their child, their shared reading sessions went more smoothly as well. Second, it is not a surprise that parents interacted and communicated more with their child as the program focused heavily on parents interacting with their child during shared reading sessions and in implementing strategies that would encourage greater communication. While the primary goal was for the children to communicate more and to increase their language and literacy skills, the parents were taught how to initiate this communication through strategies such as asking quality questions, praising children for their verbalizations, and predicting.

Research Question 4

After interviewing teachers to determine their perceptions about the program implemented during the study and analyzing their responses to the interview questions, themes became apparent. When asked how successful they were in implementing the training sessions and what they would change regarding the way they taught the parents or caregivers, teachers stated that they felt successful. Emergent themes in their responses attributed the success and resultant self-efficacy to familiarity between parents or caregivers and those delivering the training, parent or caregivers possessing a desire to help their child, each teacher having a specific role in the intervention, and the sessions being conducted, primarily, in the parent or caregiver's native language. Teacher A stated "I think, at the very first, I was kind of nervous. I didn't really know what to expect. But then, with the parents all coming and seeing a familiar face, it made me feel welcome and it made them feel welcome as well. They were all eager to learn so it made me more eager to want to show them what they could do because they wanted to learn how to help their child at home. So, I feel like I was successful."

Two of the four teachers stated there was nothing that they would have changed about the way the training was conducted, but the remaining two teachers offered ways in which they would change the way parents or caregivers were taught. Teacher A noted that a quieter environment would have been helpful. This is a reference to the setting in which the ten sessions were conducted and the noise level created by the families with young children gathered in an acoustically challenged room.

Teacher C perceived the training to be a success but felt it could be even better if the parents or caregivers were placed into small groups, rather than being placed into one large group to receive instruction. As teachers began to make connections with parents or caregivers, they saw the benefit of small group instruction, mirroring and applying what they know to be best practice for teaching young children and transferring that to adult learners.

The teachers may have felt the program needed few changes due to their ability to give input. After the researcher created the lessons for each week, an agenda was sent to the teachers stating the order of the training, as it would be delivered on the power point. They were given the opportunity to provide feedback to the researcher before the session began. Additionally, one of the bilingual teachers reviewed the translated Power Point and made additional suggestions or revisions, as necessary. Involving the teachers in a process where their feedback was considered vital to successful implementation at the start of the process may have empowered the teachers to feel ownership in its success or failure.

The changes that were suggested have possible explanations as well. Teacher A stated that a quieter place to hold the sessions would have been helpful. All sessions were held in the school's cafeteria at the request of the principal. The cafeteria was the largest place for assembly on the campus and was one of the few places that had a large viewing screen for PowerPoint lessons. Although the cafeteria was a place that received limited traffic during the training sessions, it was not especially quiet. The limited noise was due to the number of parents involved in discussions as well as small children that

were present. While childcare was provided, many parents or caregivers brought infants in carriers or other small children into the sessions. This was not discouraged as the researcher wanted to honor and respect the parents or caregivers and to encourage a positive school experience, especially those that may have felt intimidated or devalued in previous visits to school. Additionally, Teacher C had requested holding the sessions in smaller groups. While this idea has value, it was not conducted in this manner due to the need to have all Spanish-speaking and English-Speaking teachers available for support, rather than having four groups, two of which were conducted in Spanish and English and two of which were conducted in English only.

Teachers were then asked their perceptions of how many of their children's parents or caregivers attended and how often they came. Teachers A, B, and C responded that half, or more than half of their students' parents or caregivers attended the sessions, but Teacher D was unsure as to the exact number of her families in attendance. Teacher A stated that a large number of her parents came to every session, as did Teacher B. Teachers C and D noted that approximately 70-80% of their parents in attendance came to most all of the sessions.

Teachers perceived attendance to be critical and important to the parents. Teacher D stated, "I had quite a few parents that just couldn't make it all the time, but they wanted to be there." Teacher A responded, "I know that all the parents that came really gave it their best effort to come unless there was an illness, but they all tried to." She mentioned that when parents were unable to attend a session, they often made contact with the teacher to let them know that they would "come back to the next

session." Providing further detail, in an informal conversation with Teacher A, she discussed a parent who had come early to school, before the session started, and stated that he had been called to come to work. He indicated that he was worried he would lose his "spot" in the sessions and he did not want to miss out on any of the learning.

Strong attendance by the parents or caregivers could be attributed to several factors. First, the teachers indicated that the parents or caregivers had a deep desire to help their child. This was reflected in parent survey responses, casual conversations with the teachers, and their investment in the work conducted at each session and in the home. By attending the sessions, parents or caregivers felt they were contributing to their child's learning. Second, the parents may have appreciated the welcoming environment. Teacher C mentioned that the parents "felt welcome so they wanted to come more." Third, according to literature, many Hispanic families may have fewer literacy materials in the home, particularly bilingual books (Reese & Goldenberg, 2008). Bilingual books were provided at the sessions and all books were selected for prekindergarten students. Fourth, incentives were given. Bilingual child care was provided at each session as were refreshments and door prizes. At the first session, $20 grocery store gift cards were given to those in attendance and cash prizes were also drawn for at the end of the intervention. If parents or caregivers attended at least five meetings, their names were placed in a drawing for $150. If they attended six or more meetings, their names were placed in a drawing for $250.

Next, teachers were asked to describe the changes they saw in the parents or caregivers throughout the course of the intervention. One theme that emerged was how

parents or caregivers transformed from appearing shy, timid, and unsure at the first few meetings, to becoming more comfortable and confident. As the sessions progressed, Teacher D stated that "Most of the parents were a little bit shy about coming at first…. but, they began to get more confident about coming and they felt welcome so they wanted to come more." Teacher A responded in a similar way, "I felt like the parents, as a Hispanic, the parents, the culture, are very shy and timid and so as the sessions were going on, I could see they were opening up. They were laughing…I could see them all asking more questions and wanting to be informed."

A second theme that emerged was how the parents became more involved at school and with their children. Teacher B stated, "You could tell which parents were coming to the meetings because they were more involved in whatever little project we had sent home. You could tell they were more involved and you could really tell a difference and like the parents seemed to come in and talk to us more and just be more involved in the student work and in the daily schedule." Teacher C felt the parents or caregivers became more involved as well. She noted, "They became more involved with me, the teacher, and the student. They had more questions about what was going on in the classroom and how their child was doing."

Varying reasons could explain the parents or caregiver's new confidence and involvement. In the beginning, parents or caregivers may have been concerned that all of the sessions and materials would primarily be in English and felt unsure they would have the language skills to be successful. Once they found that all sessions and materials would be in English and Spanish, they may have felt more comfortable

knowing their native language was used. Having the same parents or caregivers and the same teachers and researcher attend each of the sessions could have also caused the families to feel more secure. As noted by Teacher D, at the end of the sessions, parents or caregivers who had once been reserved came in and "started talking and they made friends and the people that they wanted to see there were always there, and you know, they just fit right in."

It is also possible that the parents or caregiver's increased involvement was the result of the training and a change in their perception regarding their ability to help their child. Through an informal conversation with one of the bilingual teachers, she stated that, in the beginning, the parents felt as though they were not qualified to help their child with academics. She further stated that parent's believed that teaching should be left to the teacher and that the role of the parent or caregiver was to make sure the children were respectful and well-behaved at school. This did not appear to be the case at the end of the sessions, as teachers stated parents or caregivers participated more, asked more questions, and became more involved at home and at school.

Furthermore, the parents or caregivers might not have been convinced of the value of the work or the training, initially. As they gained skills and saw success and confidence built in their child, it is possible that they came to value not only the program but their own work and abilities. This speaks to the power of self-efficacy in that the thoughts or expectations of individuals often determine "how much effort people will expend and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences. The stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the more active the efforts" (Bandura, 1977, p.

194). Although the parents or caregivers may have felt unsure about the training or their ability to effectively implement the training at the onset, as they gained new skills and became more confident, it is speculated that they were more willing to continue their involvement in the program.

Teachers were then asked what observable changes they had noted, overall, in the students throughout the program, specifically as viewed through competence in oral language and letter identification. They were also asked to describe changes they had seen in students, regarding any of the other skills taught at the sessions. Overall, teachers felt that the students seemed more interested in school and in books, displayed a greater respect for books, and began to increase their proficiency in some of the skills taught at the sessions such as describing and vocabulary. Teacher B discussed that students in her class "go to the library once a week and they get to choose a book. They seem more excited about that and wanted to show what book they had picked out and then, in the classroom, they were more involved with the book or more interested. They weren't just looking at it and throwing it down. They were actually looking at the pages and they would point."

In regards to oral language, teachers believed that students talked and questioned more, communicated more in English, were more proficient in their communication skills with peers and teachers, used more vocabulary, and displayed a greater excitement for giving input on books or stories. Teacher C mentioned that, with some of the students, "you couldn't understand them when they talked to you and now they are doing a lot better." Teacher B stated, "They are communicating more and on my side, it is the

English side. So, when they come to my side, we speak in English." Here the teacher is referring to her instruction as being conducted in English. She is not bilingual. Teacher A said that her students now "talk and talk and talk." She further reported, "They started using the terminology that the parents were using with them at home and they were using it with me as well."

Teachers felt the students' ability to identify letters had also changed. The teachers mentioned that students could identify more letters in the alphabet, could identify and write their names, and could make connections between letters and letters in their names, friends' names, and words they encountered in their classrooms. Regarding letters, Teacher D stated that children were "able to recognize them, not just in an isolated way." Teacher B noted, "When we go to our Centers, our Learning Centers, the children have a tag that has their name and an icon on it. The children are recognizing those letters that are in their friends' names." Teacher A also noticed identification of letters in a real-world context when she discussed how students "are really identifying. I can see them whenever we are reading a book, they make that connection. Oh, look! That book starts with the same letter as so-and-so." It may be "The name of their mom or their brother or sister, so they are making a connection with the letters and associating it with everything, especially the books."

Teachers noticed the children displaying increased proficiency in specific skills presented in the sessions as well. Most notably were increased abilities in describing, vocabulary or the meaning of words, and concepts of print. Teacher A stated that her students "are describing everything they see." Teacher B observed changes in her

students' abilities in concepts of print and noted that they were "picking up things like how to hold a book, and there's a front and a back and there's an upside down and a right way to follow along. Even though, you know, they might not can read the words, they know that the letters represent, they go together to make a word. They are telling a story."

Teacher perceptions regarding changes in students' oral language abilities were not surprising. The majority of the training sessions targeted skills that have been found to increase oral language and, thus, the children possibly had parents who were better trained in this skill. As a result, the children became more proficient in oral language. It is also possible that the children had parents who were attempting to use more English, which transferred to the students as well.

Since there were no statistically significant findings in letter identification in English or Spanish on the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock, et al., 2005), the observed changes in students' abilities to identify letters were interesting. This could be due to parents or caregivers focusing on specific letters in the shared reading session, such as those that the student's name began with or those that begin with the same letter as a family member, friend or other words important to the child. For that reason, children were possibly more adept at noticing letters in context than in isolation.

Regarding specific skills taught in the sessions, one reason why children may have been perceived as more proficient in vocabulary is due to the parent or caregivers' increased skills in reading and language. Parents or caregivers may now have more academic language to model and share with the children, due to the words and strategies

taught in the sessions. Additionally, those words or terms the parents learned may mirror what the teachers are using at school. As for more social language, one of the books contained common items found in most homes and they were labeled in Spanish and English. I noticed in one of the parent's literacy notebooks that he or she had written three to four full pages of words in English and in Spanish, to refer to later. Parents or caregivers may have recorded these words, learned them, and practiced them with their children. Additionally, the recorded work served as a kind of model for the child as the parent or caregiver and child shared in the creation of the work contained and recorded in the notebook.

As for describing, the perceived improvement in this skill could be due to the way the skill was taught. Parents or caregivers were asked to begin by having their child describe the color and shape of items found in the illustrations of the books. Then, they were to move to other ways to describe what was seen. Because children in prekindergarten often work towards identifying colors and shapes, this skill would not be out of their reach, but would reinforce something they are learning at school. Furthermore, the after activity tied to this skill may have been interesting and engaging to the child. They were provided with a disposable camera and were to take a "picture walk" after the book was read. The families had free choice as to where the actual walk was taken and what items were to be photographed. Children were to describe what they saw and then were to take a picture of it. After the film was developed and returned to the families, they could use the photos as entries in their literacy notebooks.

Perceived improvement in concepts of print could also be explained. While this particular skill was not focused on in one specific session, it was modeled and reviewed at each session, as a general way to conduct a shared reading session with children. Parents or caregivers were shown how to interact with the child regarding how to hold the book, track the print, focus on the idea that print moves left-to-right, as well as to discuss the author and illustrator. Again, the language and modeling at home served as a connection to what they saw modeled at school.

When asked specifics about the program, strengths were described as being the involvement of the parents or caregivers and their increased confidence. Teacher B stated that parent involvement was key as many of the parents "are young and they are not sure. It's been a long time since they were four-years-old or whatever or they are unsure, sometimes, of what we are doing at school…The program helped to show them they are able to help their children at home." When asked what difficulties were associated with the implementation of the program, the majority of the teachers said there were no difficulties they had encountered except for parent or caregiver work schedules. Teachers were then asked what changes they would make to the program and, again, the majority stated no changes would have been made. Teacher A, however, noted that she would have liked for the families to keep the books so they would have greater access to bilingual literacy materials at home.

Teaching perceptions towards specifics of the program could go back to teacher goals, ownership, and input. Teachers, by nature, are often looking for ways to involve parents at school and transfer the work conducted at school to parent reinforcement with

their child at home. This program may have served to meet one of their goals for parent involvement. Teachers also had ownership in this program. Not only did the teachers travel together with the researcher, out-of-town, to attend training on the Latino Literacy Project, all four of the teachers implemented the sessions, as a team. While the researcher attended each of the sessions and created the lessons, teachers were given opportunities to provide suggestions regarding what might and might not work well with the families of their students. This could explain the strengths of the program as well as why they felt few changes needed to be made.

Implications for Research

In this section, the research implications of the current study will be discussed. While the present study shares some similarities with previously conducted research on shared reading with English monolinguals, shared reading with ELLs, and home literacy practices, it also differs in several ways. This section is devoted to explaining those differences and how the current study contributes to literature in the field.

To begin with, several research studies have lauded the benefits of shared reading sessions with English monolingual students. In an often referenced meta-analysis, Bus, van IJzendoorn, and Pellegrini (1995) investigated the effects of shared reading between parents or caregivers and their preschool children. Findings suggested relationships between shared reading and the children's language growth, emergent literacy skills, and reading achievement. In the present study, statistically significant results were found in children's oral language but not in literacy. However, it is important to note that in the Bus, van IJzendoorn, and Pellegrini (1995) study, the term literacy was used to represent

various skills "such as name writing or reading, letter naming, and phoneme blending" (p. 6). In the current study, literacy referred to one measure that assessed letter and word identification only.

Similarly, Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) conducted a meta-analysis, reviewing 30 years of research on the outcomes of shared reading between parents or caregivers and children. Although findings from their review of 31 correlational and intervention studies also indicated positive language and literacy benefits when all studies were combined, the researchers stated that results were "not as consistent or strong as many would expect" (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994, p. 293), particularly with regards to literacy. Furthermore, only eight of the studies in the Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) meta-analysis examined early literacy outcomes with children of prekindergarten age and, again, a range of literacy skills such as concepts of print, recognition of environmental print, letter knowledge, invented spelling, and early decoding skills were used to represent literacy outcomes. The present study adds to the research base in that prekindergarten students, entering formal school instruction for the first time, served as participants rather than children of varying ages. The results of the current study indicate a need for more research regarding shared reading and literacy.

In a third meta-analysis, Mol, Bus, de Jong, and Smeets (2008) sought to determine the benefits of dialogic reading sessions conducted between parents or caregivers and their 27 to 70 month old children. They reviewed 16 intervention studies that included receptive or expressive vocabulary as an outcome and significant results were found, overall. Stronger effects were noted for expressive vocabulary as opposed

to receptive vocabulary but no literacy measure was included, as was in the current study.

In 1988, Whitehurst et al. examined the effects of dialogic reading interventions with mothers and their 21 to 35 month old children. Children's expressive language skills were assessed and results indicated significantly higher expressive language scores for the children in the experimental group. While Whitehurst et al.'s experimental study included middle class families from New York and took place over a 4-week period, the current study included parents or caregivers whose children qualified economically or by language to attend prekindergarten and was conducted over a 20-week period. Both studies included randomization, control groups, and the strategies of asking quality questions, expanding student speech, and praising children for their verbalizations, but the present study also included five additional strategies that were taught to parents or caregivers. As noted prior, the current study also used literacy as a measure.

While the research field is rich with studies on shared reading conducted with English monolinguals, there is limited research available on shared reading interventions with ELLs, particularly with Hispanic families and their young children who are learning English. More information is needed regarding shared reading with ELLs so the current study makes an important contribution to the field, in this respect.

Of the few studies available on shared reading with ELL's, only two used experimental or quasi-experimental designs. Hancock (2002) conducted a quasi-experimental study with kindergarten students in the US, some of which spoke Spanish and some of which spoke English, to determine the effect of shared reading in the child's

native language on literacy outcomes. However, while the experimental group scored significantly higher than the comparison group, children were assessed in English only and the literacy measure included several items such as construction of meaning, knowledge of the alphabet, and concepts of print. The current study differs in that a pretest was given, training was provided to the parents rather than solely providing books, and children were assessed in both English and Spanish. It also differed in that the children in the experimental group did not score significantly higher than the comparison group on the one literacy skill assessed.

Differences were also found between the current study and Vivas' (1996) experimental study. Vivas (1996) conducted her study in Venezuela with preschool and first grade children in order to determine the effects of shared reading with two experimental groups and one control group. Children were assessed on expressive language and language comprehension and significant increases were indicated in both variables for both experimental groups. The current study appears similar in that significant results were found in oral language and preschool children served as participants but the term preschooler in the Vivas (1996) study refers to children between the ages of 5-7, rather than children 4-5. It is also noteworthy that while most of the students in the Vivas (1996) study were from families of low-income, a portion of the participants were categorized as coming from middle class families. This was not the case in the current study as all students qualified for prekindergarten due to language and income. The current study also differs in that it was conducted in Texas, one home-based experimental group was utilized rather than one home-based and one school-based

experimental group, and literacy was evaluated instead of language comprehension. Furthermore, the current study was conducted over 20 weeks, rather than 12 weeks, and, additionally, parents in the experimental group were offered 10 training sessions that incorporated shared reading strategies. The parents or caregivers and teachers in the Vivas (1996) study were provided with one session on how to read a book to children.

While the current study was situated in research conducted by Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber (2006), there were variations between the two studies. Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber (2006) observed parents or caregivers in shared reading sessions with their children to determine if home-based interventions would increase parents' strategy use and verbal interactions as well as the quantity and variety of children's language productions. Results indicated significant growth in children's language production and participation, significant differences between pre- and posttest mean scores for parent strategy usage, and increases in parent participation. In the current study, there were 96 participants instead of 16 participants and all training took place at school, rather than at home. Parents or caregivers in both studies were trained on the six strategies of making personal connections, asking quality questions, praising children for their responses, predicting, expanding children's speech, and defining new vocabulary, but two additional strategies were used in the current study. Furthermore, the current study focused on children in prekindergarten while the Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber (2006) study focused on children 7-and 8-years-old.

Along with contributing to research regarding shared reading with English monolingual students and shared reading with English Language Learners, the current

study also adds to the knowledge base concerning home literacy practices that affect the oral language and literacy skills of young children. In the current study, literacy practices were examined with Hispanic families of preschoolers, all of whose children were accepted to bilingual prekindergarten based on language and income. Many of the studies evaluating home literacy practices were conducted with English monolinguals. In 2006, Roberts, Jurgens, and Burchinal investigated literacy practices that predicted preschool children's language and literacy outcomes. Results indicated significant associations between parents or caregivers who used a greater number of strategies during shared reading exchanges and higher preschool *PPVT-R* (Dunn & Dunn, 1981) scores. Similar results were found in the current study as the majority of the parents or caregivers in the experimental group indicated they had learned how to implement all of the shared strategies taught and, subsequently, children in the experimental group scored higher in oral language on the *WMLS-R* (Woodcock, et al., 2005) in English and Spanish. One can infer by the higher scores of the experimental group, that parents or caregivers understood how to use the strategies effectively.

Roberts, Jurgens, and Burchinal (2006) also found modest associations between how much the child enjoys being read to and the number of shared reading sessions that took place. Similar results were indicated in the current study. However, the Roberts, Jurgens, and Burchinal (2006) study was conducted with African American preschoolers, speaking only English rather while the current study focused on preschool ELLs, who were assessed in English and Spanish.

Storch-Bracken and Fischel (2008) evaluated the home literacy practices of preschool children's families in order to determine relationships between and variations amongst the practices, as well as to determine how those practices relate to children's literacy skills. The *Family Reading Survey* was administered to all parents or caregivers, with questions grouped into three components: Parent/child reading interaction, parent reading interest, and child reading interest. Results indicated significant relations between children's early literacy skills and both parent and child reading interaction and child reading interest. While relationships were not examined in the current study, no significant differences were found between groups in literacy even though the children in the experimental group displayed greater enjoyment in reading and parents or caregivers in the experimental group read more frequently to their children.

There did appear to be a similarity between the two studies, however. Results from Storch-Bracken and Fischel (2008) indicated parent child reading interaction significantly predicted receptive vocabulary. Again, while the purpose of the current study was not to examine which literacy components predicted certain skills, findings were similar in statistically significant differences found between groups in the frequency with which parents or caregivers read to their children and children's oral language scores. The experimental group scored higher in both variables.

To summarize, there were similarities and differences between the current study and previously conducted research. Like the current study, several studies found significant results in language. However, previous research often found significant results in literacy as well. Although the current study differed in this respect, it is

important to note that researchers in one meta-analysis stated that literacy results were "not as consistent or strong as many would expect" (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994, p. 293) and many studies assessed several skills under the term literacy, rather than just letter and word identification. Additionally, the current study differed in that it included 4- and 5-year-old ELL's as participants, rather than English monolinguals, and children were assessed in both English and Spanish, rather than just one language. The current study also included randomization and was conducted over a 20-week period, unlike other interventions that focused on shorter treatment time frames.

Implications for Practice

Implications for practice will be discussed and considered in this section, based on the results of the current study as they relate to the children, parents, teachers, and the district in which the present study was conducted. The first discussion focuses on the children's oral language scores. The experimental group scored significantly higher than the comparison group in oral language, not only in Spanish, but in English as well. Research has indicated, and it stands to reason, that children who do not have proficient language and vocabulary skills at an early age are at risk for language and vocabulary difficulties, later in school (Hart & Risley, 2003; Laakso et al., 2004). Sénéchal and Lefevre (2002) also found that the language skills of young children, such as vocabulary, "were directly related to reading in grade 3" (p. 445). The implications of these findings are that the children in the experimental group in the current study may have fewer language and vocabulary challenges in the future and may be more successful in reading

in later grades, as a result of the program. They may feel more comfortable taking risks with academic language.

Additionally, during an informal conversation with one of the teachers in the study, the researcher was informed that an unusually large amount of students in the experimental group qualified for the district's dual language program the following year. The teacher stated that the students had been selected for the program, based on their high language scores at the end of the intervention. Because the district utilizes a 50/50 dual language model where the children spend half of the day in Spanish instruction and half of the day in English instruction, it is expected that the children will only continue to grow in their proficiency of both languages.

Other implications for children and parents should be considered, based on the *Shared Reading Survey*. The results indicated children in the experimental group enjoyed being read to more and asked to be read to more often than did children in the comparison group. Furthermore, the results indicated parents or caregivers in the experimental group read more often to their children, read for greater lengths of time, and the majority learned shared reading strategies to implement with their child. These findings could have positive implications for children only 4-years-old. Having an interest in reading at an early age and parents who are willing to engage in and scaffold their learning could lead to a lifetime love of reading and learning. It is also possible that because the parents read more often to their children, they will continue to do so, further expanding the child's learning. The majority of the parents or caregivers in the experimental group also indicated they had younger children at home, leading the

researcher to suggest that parents or caregivers could begin implementing shared reading sessions at an even earlier age with the siblings, thus leading to even greater effects for not only children in the study, but other children in the home as well. Continued shared reading with the research participants could lead to overall changes in the reading habits in the home, which could include an interest in acquiring more books.

At posttest, the findings also indicated parents or caregivers in the experimental group enjoyed reading more than did parents or caregivers in the comparison group. The implication is that the more the parents or caregivers enjoy reading for pleasure, the more likely they are to pick up a book or other text and read. This, in turn, could lead them to becoming more literate, especially in English, and serve as models for their children. While the parents or caregivers in the present study were not assessed on their literacy skills or education levels and assumptions cannot be made regarding those variables, it stands to reason that the more someone reads, the more proficient they become in language and literacy.

Finally, implications for the teachers and district involved in the study should be discussed. Due to significant differences between groups in oral language scores in English and Spanish, the high number of students who were admitted into the dual language program, the strong attendance of parents or caregivers at sessions, the significance of results found in the *Shared Reading Survey*, and the growth in parent involvement at school and at home with the children, teachers and districts with ELL populations should consider implementing a similar program with their future students and families. The district in which the study was conducted should consider

implementing the program with all of their bilingual prekindergarten classes, based on the results of the current study.

Limitations

While the quantitative portion of this mixed-methods study utilized an experimental pretest posttest control group design that included random selection of participants, the district in which the study was conducted was selected due to accessibility, and considered a sample of convenience. Additionally, the study took place in rural East Texas, on a primary campus, where all bilingual prekindergarten classrooms were housed. This would limit generalizing findings to populations that were not similar to those in the present study, causing a threat to external validity.

It is also important to note that parents or caregivers in the experimental group agreed to attend sessions and implement shared reading strategies at home, which could be viewed as volunteerism. Another limitation of the study was pretest sensitization. Children were tested on the same instrument at pretest and posttest but this threat was possibly reduced due to the amount of time between assessments. The pretest was administered during September and the posttest was administered at the end of February. Finally, although the primary questions of the survey have construct validity, no reliability measures were reported.

Future Research

Because of the limited number of studies evaluating the effects shared reading with English Language Learners, additional research should be conducted. In particular, more research is needed with young ELLs who have yet to enter formal institutions of

education or who are just beginning to enter prekindergarten programs. Future experimental studies would benefit from utilizing a larger sample and possibly focusing one experimental group and two comparison groups. For example, a future study might include an experimental group having parents or caregivers trained on the shared reading strategies who also would also receive the bilingual books. The first comparison group would receive books but no training and the second comparison group would receive no training or books. This would serve to determine if the results were from the strategies and books or just the books, alone.

Additionally, other measures should be considered when prekindergarten students are used as participants. One suggestion is to include literacy instruments that assess children on all letters of the alphabet. The teachers in the current study reported attention to concepts of print by the experimental group, thus, other skills could also be assessed such as concepts of print, since children are learning how to hold a book, which way to track the print, and that words represent meaning.

Undertaking a qualitative study or collecting more qualitative data would also add to the field. Based on results of the current study, more immediate research should consider interviewing parents to determine how much time was spent reading in English and/or Spanish and why the parent or caregiver chose to read a text in one language over another. Additionally, the interviews could include other items that were found to be of significance such as what prompted them to read more frequently and for longer periods of time, what caused them to enjoy reading more for pleasure, and what they perceived the reason to be for their children enjoying reading more and asking to be read to more

often. It would also be of interest to note what the parents or caregivers felt were the strengths of the program, what needed to be changed with the program, and to gather information regarding how much they felt they grew in their English and Spanish language and literacy skills. Gathering qualitative data might also shed light on how important books have become to the families and how to assist the parents in acquiring books for their children.

Lastly, it is recommended that future research include a longitudinal study to examine the long-term effects of this program with the students. The children admitted into the district's dual language program, should be tracked and assessed again in later grades, using their Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS; TEA, 2011) and Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS; TEA, 2009) scores as measures. These scores could be compared to the students in the comparison group to determine if the "head start" those in the experimental group received in English and Spanish literacy proved long-lasting.

Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to examine the effectiveness of shared reading training sessions on Hispanic prekindergarten children's oral language and literacy scores. Furthermore, the literacy behaviors of the parents or caregivers of these children were also assessed and teacher perceptions regarding the program were evaluated. The present study added to the research base in that numerous studies outline the effects of shared reading with English monolingual students and their families, but relatively few studies exist investigating the same effects with ELL's. Even fewer

studies can be found on shared reading with young ELL's and their parents or caregivers who speak Spanish, especially studies that utilize randomization, along with a treatment and control group.

In particular, the current study expanded on research conducted by Jiménez, Fillipini, and Gerber (2006), Storch-Bracken and Fischel (2008), and Whitehurst et al., (1988) as it investigated shared reading between parents or caregivers and children and literacy behaviors or practices that take place at home. It differs in that most of the studies were conducted with children who were older than 4- or 5-years of age, children who were English monolinguals, or children who were assessed in only one language. The parent or caregiver training sessions also took place over a longer period of time than in most studies and shared reading strategies were provided, along with books written in English and Spanish.

The current study produced significant findings in several areas. First, children in the experimental group scored significantly higher in oral language in not only Spanish, but English as well. Second, shared reading interactions between parents or caregivers and children took place more frequently and for greater periods of time in the experimental group than in the comparison group. Third, significant differences existed between the groups in parent reading. At the end of the intervention, parents or caregivers in the experimental group enjoyed reading more for pleasure. Fourth, significant differences were also found in child reading interest and the frequency with which the children asked the parents or caregivers to read to them. The experimental group scored significantly higher in both variables. Lastly, the teachers indicated in

semi-structured interviews that the program was a success. They felt as though few changes should be made to the program as it served to transform parent involvement at school and home. They also indicated that the program was the main reason students used progressively more English and Spanish in conversations and increased their skills in rhyming, predicting, describing, questioning, letter identification, and concepts of print.

Ultimately, more research should be conducted with young ELL's on the effects of shared reading. It is vital that educators find ways to encourage the oral language and literacy scores of these young learners and to encourage the participation of their parents or caregivers in the school and learning process. Due to the increasingly diverse nature of the nation's classrooms and the critical importance of language skills at an early age, all stakeholders should be involved, early, to ensure the success of ELL children and their families.

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APPENDIX A

Shared Reading Practices Survey

This survey is voluntary. There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer the questions below and return:

Parent's
Name_____

1.

How many children do you have?
1 ?
2 ?
3 ?
4 or more **?**

2.

List the ages of all of your children.
_____
_____
_____
_____

3.

What is the age of your child in pre-k today?
4 ?
5 ?
6 ?

4.

What is your child's sex?
Male ?
Female ?

5.

How often do you read with your child?
Hardly ever ?
1-2 times per month ?
1-2 times per week ?

6.

In what language do you read?
Spanish ?
English ?
Both Spanish and English ?

7.

At what age did you first read to your child?
Before 6 months ?
6 months to 1 year ?
1-1.5 years ?
1.5-2 years ?
After age 2 ?

8.

How many minutes did you read to your child yesterday?
0 min. ?
1-10 min. ?
11-20 min. ?
More than 20 min. ?

9.

How many children's books do you have in your home?
0-2 ?
3-10 ?
11-20 ?
21-40 ?
More than 40 ?

10.

How often does your child ask to be read to?
Hardly ever ?
1-2 times per month ?
1-2 times per week ?
Almost daily ?

11.

How much does your child enjoy being read to?
A little ?
Pretty much ?
Very much ?
Loves it ?

12.

How often does your child look at books by himself or herself?
Hardly ever ?
1-2 times per month ?
1-2 times per week ?
Almost daily ?

13.

How often do you take your child to the library, now?
Hardly ever ?
1-2 times per month ?
1-2 times per week ?

14.

How many minutes do you read per day?
0 min. ?
1-10 min. ?
11-20 min. ?
More than 20 min. ?

15.

How much do you enjoy reading?
Not at all ?
Some ?
Moderately ?
Very much ?

16.

Do you have a computer in your house?
Yes ?
No ?

17.

How often does your child use the computer?
Hardly ever ?
1-2 times per month ?
1-2 times per week ?
Almost daily ?

18.

In these sessions I learned to:		
Ask my child questions as we read	Yes ?	No ?
Allow my child to ask questions as we read	Yes ?	No ?
Talk about new words with my child	Yes ?	No ?
Talk about what might happen next in the story	Yes ?	No ?
Ask my child to talk about what they see in the pictures	Yes ?	No ?
Ask my child to make personal connections to the story	Yes ?	No ?
Ask my child to make rhymes with words in the story	Yes ?	No ?
Praise my child for their answers	Yes ?	No ?

19.

These sessions helped me to:		
Establish a reading routine with my child	Yes ?	No ?
Interact more with my child	Yes ?	No ?
Communicate more with school	Yes ?	No ?
Increase my child's interest in reading	Yes ?	No ?

Encuesta sobre las prácticas de la lectura compartida

Esta encuesta es voluntaria. No hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas. Por favor responda las siguientes preguntas y regreselo:

Nombre del
Padre/Madre_____

1.

¿Cuántos hijos tiene usted?
1 ?
2 ?
3 ?
4 o más ?

2.

Liste las edades de todos sus hijos.
_____
_____
_____
_____

3.

¿Cuál es la edad de su hijo/a que está en preescolar (pre-k) hoy?
4 ?
5 ?
6 ?

4.

¿Cuál es el sexo de si hijo/a?
Masculino ?
Femenino ?

5.

¿Qué tan seguido lee usted con su hijo/a?
Casi nunca ?
1-2 veces al mes ?
1-2 veces a la semana ?

6.

¿ En qué idioma lee usted?
Españo ?
Inglés ?
Ambos en Español y en Inglés ?

7.

¿A qué edad le leyó usted a su hijo/a por primera vez?
Antes de los 6 meses ?
6 meses a un 1 año ?
1-1.5 años ?
1.5-2 años ?
Después de los 2 años ?

8.

Cuántos minutos le leyó usted a su hijo/a ayer?
0 minutos ?
1-10 minutos ?
11-20 minutos ?
Más de 20 minutos ?

9.

¿Cuántos libros infantiles tiene usted en su casa?
0-2 ?
3-10 ?
11-20 ?
21-40 ?
Más de 40 ?

10.

¿Con qué frecuencia su hijo/a le pide que le lea?
Casi nunca ?
1-2 veces al mes ?
1-2 veces a la semana ?
Casi todos los días ?

11.

¿Qué tanto le gusta a su hijo/a que le lean?
Un poco ?
Más o menos ?
Muchísimo ?
Le encanta ?

12.

¿Con qué frecuencia su hijo/a mira libros por sí mismo?
Casi nunca ?
1-2 veces al mes ?
1-2 veces a la semana ?
Casi todos los días ?

13.

¿Con qué frecuencia usted lleva a su hijo/a a la biblioteca, ahora?
Casi nunca ?
1-2 veces al mes ?
1-2 veces a la semana ?

14.

¿Cuántos minutos lee usted al día?
0 minutos ?
1-10 minutos ?
11-20 minutos ?
Más de 20 minutos ?

15.

¿Cuánto le gusta leer?
No mucho ?
Un poco ?
Moderadamente ?
Muchísimo ?

16.

¿Tiene una computadora en la casa?
Sí ?
No ?

17.

¿Con qué frecuencia su hijo/a usa la computadora?
Casi nunca ?
1-2 veces al mes ?
1-2 veces a la semana ?
Casi todos los días ?

18.

En estas sesiones yo aprendí a:

Hacerle preguntas a mi hijo/a mientras leemos	Sí ?	No ?
Dejar que mi hijo/a haga preguntas mientras leemos	Sí ?	No ?
Hablar sobre palabras nuevas con mi hijo/a	Sí ?	No ?
Hablar sobre lo que podría pasar después en la historia	Sí ?	No ?
Pedirle a mi hijo/a que hable sobre lo que ven en los dibujos	Sí ?	No ?
Pedirle a mi hijo/a que haga conexiones personales con la historia	Sí ?	No ?
Pedirle a mi hijo/a que haga rimas con las palabras de la historia	Sí ?	No ?
Elogiar a mi hijo/a por sus respuestas	Sí ?	No ?

19.

Estas sesiones me ayudaron a:		
Establecer una rutina de lectura con mi hijo/a	Sí ?	No ?
Interactuar más con mi hijo/a	Sí ?	No ?
Comunicarme más con la escuela	Sí ?	No ?
Aumentar el interés de mi hijo/a en la lectura	Sí ?	No ?

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

1. How successful were you in implementing the training sessions? Was there anything you would have changed about the way parents were taught?

2. How many parents attended? How often did they come?

3. What changes did you observe in your students' parents during the program? Do you think those changes were associated with the program?

4. What changes did you observe in your students during the program? Do you think those changes were associated with the program's activities?

5. Have you seen an increase in your students' oral language proficiency? What types of changes have you seen in your students' oral language proficiency? Do you think the change was associated with the program's activities?

6. Have you seen an increase in your students' ability to identify letters? What types of changes have you seen in your students' ability to identify letters? Do you think the change was associated with the program's activities?

7. Have your students become more proficient in any of the other skills that were taught in the program? If so, which ones?

8. What were the strengths associated with the program?

9. What were the difficulties associated with the program?

10. What changes would you like to see with the program?

VITA

Name: Tracey Covington Hasbun

Address: c/o Dr. Hersh Waxman
Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture
111 Harrington Tower, 4232 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4232

Education: Ph.D., Curriculum and Instruction
Texas A&M University, 2011

M.I.S., Elementary Education, Educational Leadership, Math
Stephen F. Austin State University, 2003

B.S., Elementary Education (Early Childhood)
Stephen F. Austin State University, 1993

Presentations:

Wilson, B., Dillard, E., & **Hasbun, T**. (2011, April). *The Significance of Early Childhood Education Social and Emotional Characteristics and Early Mathematics: Observations from Parents and Teachers Using the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)*. American Educational Research Association (AERA)-New Orleans, LA.

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