“The Children Want to Learn; the Parents Want to Participate”: Expanding Understandings of the Parental Involvement of English Learners

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ABSTRACT

This manuscript-style dissertation contains three papers on EL parent involvement. The first, *Beyond the Greatest Hits: A Counter Story of English Learners' Parent Involvement*, is an integrative review of 20 years of research on EL parent involvement. Specifically, I examine the ways in which EL parent involvement aligns with and/or differs from widely held notions of what constitutes involvement for all parents—in other words, "the greatest hits" (Hong, 2011). I show how parents are involved in their ELs' education through engaging in three key relationships: (1) relationships with their children's schools, (2) relationships with their children, and (3) relationships with other families. Moreover, I argue that these relationships exist along a continuum that moves away from school-directed involvement to more parent-led engagement.

The second and third manuscripts are both studies from data that I collected during seven months at Arbor Elementary, an urban school with a large and quickly growing Latino, EL population—a trend that is reflective of many schools across the U.S. (Hussar & Bailey, 2014). In the second manuscript, *Teachers Reading Parents: An Examination of Urban Elementary School Educators' Reflections on Latino Families,* I used data collected from parent workshops to create a discourse-based interview protocol that elicited educators' reflections on statements made by parents during the workshops. Analyses of these reflections revealed that educators' backgrounds and experiences were related to the types of reflections that they made. Additionally, these reflections show the Arbor is a school in transition where educators are still coming to understand and respond to its recent demographic shifts.

In manuscript three, *Contradictory Discourses of Valued Participation: A Principal's Discursive Construction of a Parent Literacy Program,* I examine the discourse of Eleanor Parker, Arbor's principal, as she designs and implements an in-class literacy program aimed at Latino parents. I show that Eleanor's discourse presents two contradictory Discourses of valued

participation for EL parents. The first is a Discourse of responsivity where the school acts in response to the needs of EL parents. The second is a Discourse of rigidity where the school maintains a unidirectional transmission of communication from the school to the home.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my devoted husband, Andrew, who continues to see more for me than I often am able to recognize for myself. And to our son, Walker, whose entrance into the world proved to be the most effective motivation for completing this dissertation – I promise to continue to work towards stronger schools for you and your peers.

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First and foremost, I am indebted to “Eleanor Parker” and the students, staff, and families of Arbor Elementary who welcomed me into their world and without whom this research would not have been possible. I am also grateful for the support of my advisor, Amanda Kibler, who has proven to be an incredible mentor, role model, and champion of my academic pursuits. I would also like to thank my supportive committee members, Natalia Palacios, Michael McKenna, and Tina Stanton-Champan, for their helpful feedback throughout the writing process.

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CHAPTER 1

Linking Document: Expanding Understandings of the Parental Involvement of English Learners

Introduction

When telling me why she continued to teach at Arbor Elementary School[1], Jackie, a Kindergarten teacher, said, "the children want to learn; the parents want to participate" (June 3, 2014). In the three years that Jackie has taught at Arbor Elementary, she has seen her classes increase in the number of Latino English Learners (ELs) each year. Though she did not have experience with this population prior to working at Arbor, she says that now it is her ideal teaching context in large part to the involvement of her students' parents. Through observing parents and interacting with them, Jackie has been able to understand that her EL parents want to be involved in their children's education. This is striking as she has come to this conclusion despite not sharing a common language with most of her students' parents. The observations of educators like Jackie who work with EL populations are central to the three manuscripts detailed in this dissertation.

Who are English Learners?

While the ELs at Jackie's school are primarily Latino, nationwide the EL population is extremely diverse with regard to language background and ethnicity. According to the U.S. Department of Education, a student designated as an EL is an individual who, "has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to be denied the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to participate fully in the larger U.S. society" (Kena et al., 2014). Typically, ELs are either born outside of the U.S. or come from environments where a language other than English is dominant (Kena et al., 2014).

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[1] All names in this dissertation are pseudonyms.

[2] Brantlinger and colleagues' (2005) quality indicators go beyond established evaluative criteria

Within the context of this dissertation, I use term "EL parents" to refer to the parents of any child who is designated as an English learner and/or parents who might be English learners themselves. EL parents are a diverse group with regard to country of origin, language abilities, educational background, and household income. While the majority of ELs are born in the U.S., about half have parents who were not (Fortuny, Hernandez, & Chaudry, 2010). About 40% of immigrant parents are from Mexico, but the remaining 60% represent a diversity of origins with no one country or region accounting for more than 7% of the population (Hernandez, Takanishi, & Marotz, 2009). Consequently, many ELs live in homes where English is not the primary language and have parents that are also in the process of learning English (Fortuny et al., 2009). Moreover, there is substantial variation in parental education levels of ELs. Overall, about 25% of EL parents have less than a high school degree compared with 8% of English-speaking parents (Fortuny et al., 2009). And while just over half of all EL children live in low-income households, they largely come form stable, two-parent homes where at least one parent is employed (Fortuny et al., 2009; Turner, Guzman, Wildsmith, & Scott, 2015). In fact, many ELs may reside in a home with extended family members—potentially expanding the number of adults that are engaged in supporting the children's schooling (Turner et al., 2015).

Why English Learners?

Recently I attended a reception where a woman I had just met—neither an educator, nor a parent—asked me about my dissertation research. Assuming that she would not be overly interested in theory and research methodologies, I responded, "parental involvement of English learners." Without hesitation she countered, "…or lack thereof." Her quip was evidence of a presumed deficit and stereotype that associates parents' lack of English proficiency with a disinterest or inability to support their children's education. Unfortunately, this woman's views

were not unfounded; there is a body of research that perpetuates such stereotypes through negative associations between children from non-English speaking homes and poor academic achievement (Cabrera, 2013).

Though debunking stereotypes is one reason to develop a better understanding of EL parent involvement, the growing population of ELs in U.S. public schools is another. Nationwide ELs make up about 10% of K-12 students. In several Western states, like California, ELs represent up to 30% of all K-12 students (Batalova & McHugh, 2010a). Yet even at the state level, these numbers are misconstrued, as there is a tendency towards concentrations of ELs within certain cities and towns, and therefore within schools and districts. In fact, during the 2004-2005 school year, one quarter of the total EL population in the United States was concentrated in only 25 school districts (Batalova & McHugh, 2010b). However, even states that do not historically have large immigrant populations have also seen their numbers of ELs rise. For instance, South Carolina experienced an 800% increase in the number of ELs in their public schools between 1997 and 2008 (Batalova & McHugh, 2010a). With this in mind, ELs are likely to play a major role in the future of American workforce and consumer economy.

Why Parental Involvement?

Substantial research exists about the important role that parents play in supporting their children's academic achievement (e.g. Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2003; Sheldon, 2009). Specifically, involvement has been shown to be associated with children's positive behavioral outcomes, grade promotion, achievement on standardized tests, improved grades, graduation rate, college entrance, social skill development, and general attitudes towards school (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2003; Meidel & Reynolds, 1999; Tinkler, 2002). Parents are natural

experts on their children, and leveraging their expertise can help schools effectively instruct all children.

Research that focuses specifically on EL parents reveals that they possess and utilize many resources to support their children's education, but these resources may not look the same as those utilized by English-speaking parents (e.g. Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Valdés, 1996). For example, one study of Mexican-American families in California revealed that parents maintained high expectations, assured that children were well behaved, made sure that children were fed and rested for school, and established strong bonds with other families in their community (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992). Similarly, Walker-Dalhouse and Dalhouse's (2008) research on Sudanese parents revealed that they viewed themselves as cultural historians responsible for sharing their experiences in Africa as well as the history of their country with their children.

While these are beneficial ways to support learning, there is also evidence that EL families may face barriers that can limit their participation in their children's education. Barriers may include a lack of English proficiency, limited exposure to formal education, low income, non-traditional work schedules, negative school experiences, differing expectations about parent and school responsibilities, limited access to transportation, and prior experiences with institutional discrimination (Kim, 2009; Salend, Dorney, & Mazo, 1997; Tinkler, 2002). However, much of the research documenting the barriers to EL parents' participation is aimed at reframing their perceived lack of involvement, and instead recasting that perception as a lack of understanding and/or accommodation on behalf of the school. This shifts the onus of parental participation from the families to the school, stressing that the school should adapt to families whose backgrounds and current life circumstances may not allow for participation in the same ways as other families (e.g. Amatea, 2009; de Carvalho, 2001; Delgado-Gaitan, 1992).

Terminology

Recently, the field of parent involvement research has shifted its terminology, and "family engagement" has largely replaced "parent involvement," though the same change is not necessarily pervasive in practice (Ferrara, 2011). This shift in language acknowledges that other family members (e.g. siblings and/or extended family) as well as legal guardians can also be active participants in a child's education. Moreover, engagement is viewed as a more encompassing term than involvement, and one that embraces not just practices, but also beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions. While I agree with this turn of phrase, for the purposes of this dissertation I have decided to use the term "parent involvement" for consistency across the three studies, and to reflect the contents of the extant research that I review (manuscript one), as well as the school context where I conducted research (manuscripts two and three) (in which it was the term most commonly used by teachers and administrators). In the following manuscripts I strive to maintain authors' and study participants' use of terms when referring to each, but also acknowledge that I may use "parents" and "family" interchangeably in my general commentary.

Theoretical Orientation

The three manuscripts in this dissertation are all situated in anti-deficit, strengths-based views of both EL parents and educators. Anti-deficit theories are a response to movements, like former President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, that perpetuate the attribution of poor and minority children's academic problems to growing up in culturally deprived homes (Dudley-Marling, 2007; Labov, 1972; Ladson-Billings, 1999). This idea erroneously faults certain groups of parents—as well as their languages and cultures—for an inability to prepare children for the specific practices of public schools. This stigma exists despite evidence that, although children from poor and minority backgrounds experience frequent, high quality language and literacy

interactions at home, these interactions may not always resemble the practices of middle-class families, nor those valued by schools (e.g. Heath, 1983, 2012; Purcell-Gates, 1993). Anti-deficit and strengths-based approaches are rooted in the idea that all families have "funds of knowledge" (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) that can contribute to children's learning, and it is the job of schools to leverage families' inherent potential.

While I agree with the need to approach all families from a strengths-based perspective, I would also argue that this anti-deficit discourse has led to a tendency to blame teachers for not leveraging the strengths and resources of families. As more intensive pressure is placed on teachers through high-stakes accountability measures, I believe that faulting individual teachers is an unfounded proposition. Therefore, throughout these three manuscripts, I attempt to neither demonize nor fault parents and teachers. Instead, I assume that both want the best for their children and students, and will act within their means to promote their success. That is not to say that every teacher is prepared to work with all ELs, nor that every parent is ready to navigate the U.S. school system. But blaming either one, particularly in aggregate, is unproductive.

Three Manuscripts on Parent Involvement

This dissertation examines EL parent involvement through three distinct studies: (1) an integrative literature review, (2) an examination of educators' reflections on Latino families, and (3) a discourse analysis of a principal's construction of a new literacy program targeted at EL parents. In the first manuscript, *Beyond the Greatest Hits: A Counter Story of English Learners' Parent Involvement*, I review extant research on EL parent involvement to highlight the ways in which it aligns with and/or differs from widely held ideas about what constitutes involvement for all parents—in other words, "the greatest hits" (Hong, 2011). I analyze the ways in which inductive methods have been used in research over the last 20 years to describe EL parent

involvement *in situ*. My analysis reveals that the ways that schools and families enact EL parent involvement present a "counter story" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002) to the hegemonic practices touted in large-scale policy initiatives aimed at families deemed "at risk." Specifically, I show how parents are involved in their ELs' education through engaging in three key relationships: (1) relationships with their children's schools, (2) relationships with their children, and (3) relationships with other families. Moreover, I argue that these relationships exist along a continuum that moves away from school-directed involvement to more parent-led engagement.

The second and third manuscripts are both studies from data that I collected during seven months at Arbor Elementary, an urban school with a large and quickly growing Latino, EL population—a trend that is either presently occurring, or will soon occur, in many U.S. schools (Hussar & Bailey, 2014). While at Arbor I worked closely with staff to plan and present a series of workshops for Latino parents on a variety of topics. In addition, I also conducted interviews with parents, teachers, and administrators; observed classes, and attended school events.

In the second manuscript, *Teachers Reading Parents: An Examination of Urban Elementary School Educators' Reflections on Latino Families,* I used data collected from parent workshops to create a discourse-based interview protocol that elicited educators' reflections on statements made by parents during the workshops. I framed the study through transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991, 1998) or the notion that a "disorienting dilemma" can present the opportunity for critical reflection, and potentially shift individuals' understanding(s) and future actions. I used a modified analytic induction approach to analyze the educators' interview transcripts in order to create a descriptive picture of how the educators individually and collectively viewed the Latino parents at the school. The findings from my analyses revealed that collectively educators were engaging in frequent information gathering, and were sensitive to the

experiences of Latino students and their families, but were not yet familiar enough with this new population to present a unified vision for how the school should engage Latino families. Moreover, my examinations of sub-groups of educators revealed that the bilingual/bicultural educators and the seasoned educators both provided reflections that were distinct from the rest of the sample. Specifically, the bilingual/bicultural educators regularly drew upon their personal experiences in expressing their understandings of Latino students and their families. Whereas seasoned educators more frequently discussed their ideas for future action, drawing upon their professional experiences in understanding effective means for engaging families. Finally, this manuscript showed that Arbor is very much still a school in transition, where educators are learning about and responding to the recent influx of Latino families and their children.

In manuscript three, *Contradictory Discourses of Valued Participation: A Principal's Discursive Construction of a Parent Literacy Program,* I examine the discourse of Eleanor Parker, Arbor's principal, as she designs and implements an in-class literacy program aimed at Latino parents. This focus is warranted because, in her position as principal, Eleanor has the power to potentially influence the "big D" Discourse, or in other words, the "being and doing" of parent participation at the school (Gee, 1999, p. 20). I employ two discourse analytic frames—recontextualization of social practice (Van Leeuwen, 2008) and critical/positive discourse analysis (Rogers, 2013)—to show that Eleanor's discourse presents two contradictory Discourses of valued participation for EL parents. The first is a Discourse of responsivity where the school acts in response to the needs of EL parents. The second is a Discourse of rigidity where the school maintains a unidirectional transmission of communication from the school to the home.

While these three papers do not encompass the entirety of EL parent involvement research or practices, they—both individually and collectively—contribute to the field of EL

parent involvement. First, as separate manuscripts, they present (1) a new way of understanding extant research on *in-situ* EL parent involvement—through the relationships that parents cultivate with schools, their children, and other families; (2) a unique perspective on a school-in-transition that shows how educators working with Latino students differentially draw upon their prior experiences in reflecting on their students' families; and (3) an important addition to the literature on school leadership and EL populations by demonstrating how a well-meaning school leader can put forth two contradictory Discourses about EL parent participation. Viewed collectively, these three papers point to the idea that the ways that educators discuss EL families will influence the relationships that EL families enter into, which will ultimately affect how they participate in their children's education.

Each chapter of this dissertation contains a complete version of the manuscripts described above. Table 1.1 contains the manuscript titles as well as the journals where I have either submitted or plan to submit each paper. Since my proposal in September 2014, I have submitted the first manuscript to *The School Community Journal* and received an acceptance contingent upon my completion of minimal revisions, of which I recently completed and returned to the editor. I plan to submit the second and third manuscripts after successful defense, revision, and submission of my dissertation.

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Table 1.1
Journals for Submission

Manuscript	Journal	Status
Beyond the Greatest Hits: A Counter Story of English Learners' Parent Involvement	The School Community Journal http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/SCJ.aspx	Conditionally accepted
Teachers Reading Parents: Urban Elementary School Educators' Reflections on Latino Families	Urban Education http://uex.sagepub.com/	In preparation
Contradictory Discourses of Valued Participation: A Principal's Construction of a Parent Literacy Program	Critical Inquiry in Language Studies http://www.isls.co/index-3.html	In preparation

CHAPTER 2

Beyond the Greatest Hits: A Counter Story of English Learner Parent Involvement

Introduction

In the United States, the notion of parents being involved in their children's education is a widely accepted cultural norm rooted in ideals about the importance of education and the parent-child relationship. Numerous federal, state, and local policy initiatives are in place to train and support parents who might be viewed as uninvolved in their children's education. For example, several pieces of federal legislation including the Goals 2000: Educate America Act (1994), the last two reauthorizations of the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act: the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA; 1994), and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB; 2002), all require that schools develop parent involvement plans. The Goals 2000: Education America Act (1994) explicitly states that, "every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children." IASA and NCLB both include provisions—through Title I funds—to support involvement initiatives with the explicit intent of improving student achievement. Specifically, this legislation emphasizes that parent involvement initiatives pay particular attention to "parents who are disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background" (IASA, 1994; NCLB, 2002).

Moreover, much academic research has examined the role of parental involvement in children's education. Google Scholar returns over 22,000 hits when searching for "parent involvement" AND "education" since 1994 (the year IASA and Goals 2000 were passed). Popular media outlets are also filled with articles on parenting, early learning, and parent involvement in children's education.

These policy, research, and social emphases on parent involvement have resulted in a narrow list of activities that constitute a "greatest hits" of parent involvement practices. Hong (2011) quotes an urban school principal in Chicago explicating this phenomenon:

> With the influx of middle-class families at my school, I am realizing that some of the strategies are written for them. If you look at our events, it looks like we have more parent involvement, but really, we just have more middle-class parents who are responding to our use of the 'greatest hits' in parent involvement. (p. 19)

"Greatest hits" refer to observable practices that often occur within the school. These may include attending school events (parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, PTA/O meetings, ceremonies, celebrations, sporting events, etc.), communication with the school, helping with homework, and reading to children (Jeynes, 2010). Implicit in this Chicago principal's statement is the recognition that such practices are insufficient for engaging all parents. Moreover, Doucet (2011) argues that such ritualized practices in parent involvement lead to a group identity and solidarity among mainstream parents that excludes diverse families—the same families that many of these initiatives intend to target.

Problem statement

Often discussions of parent involvement do not include any consideration of the ways in which families' cultural and linguistic backgrounds may factor into their involvement. In fact, there is evidence to suggest that families who may speak a home language other than, or in addition to English—and whom for the purposes of this review I will refer to as English learners (ELs)—are involved in their children's education in ways that differ from those of other social groups (Lee & Bowen, 2006). Yet teachers and schools frequently view linguistic minority parents as uninterested and/or uninvolved in their children's education when they do not attend

school events (Ngo, 2012; Hong, 2011; Poza et al., 2014). This is despite substantial research on immigrant and minority families that demonstrates how they are deeply concerned about their children's education (e.g. Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Lim, 2012). In fact, many immigrant families state that their main reason for migration is to provide their children with better opportunities for success. Once in the U.S., immigrant parents come to see education as imperative for their children to access future opportunities and social mobility (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).

As the population of immigrant children in public schools continues to grow while concerns about their academic achievement rise, a more nuanced understanding of the ways in which EL parents are involved in their children's education holds the potential to inform future research, policy, and practice with this population. Through a thorough review of the literature, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of the ways in which extant research defines and describes EL parent involvement.

Clarification of Terms

Throughout this paper I use the terms "parent" and "family" interchangeably. I am principally concerned with the ways that mothers, fathers, and legal guardians are involved in their children's education because they have been the focus of involvement policy initiatives. NCLB (2001) explicitly mentions this in Section 1118(e): "specifically, these provisions stress shared accountability between schools and parents." This is not to say that siblings and extended family members are not involved in children's education in significant ways. To the contrary, there is a substantial body of research highlighting each of these groups' influence on language minority children's education. But by and large parents—in policy, research, and practice—tend to receive the most emphasis and are thus the focus of this review.

My use of the terms "English learner," and "language minority" also warrants clarification. For the purposes of this review, I use these terms to refer to parents and families who—for reasons of immigration or migration in their histories—speak a language other than or in addition to English within their homes. These are the parents of children who are often deemed to be ELs in American public schools.

Lastly, recent research on parent involvement has shifted to the use of the term "engagement" over "involvement" to reflect a shared responsibility between families and schools (Doucet, 2011; Ferrara, 2011). In this paper I choose to use "involvement" in the title to reflect the word's use in policy initiatives, which I argue have had a strong influence on school practices. Yet in discussing this study's findings, I explicate how the use of this term may have the effect of narrowing educators' and even parents' ideas about what constitutes involvement.

Parental Involvement and Children's Outcomes

There is no lack of evidence to link the connection between family involvement and students' educational achievement (e.g. Henderson & Mapp. 2002; Jeynes, 2003; Sheldon, 2009). Specifically, involvement has been shown to be associated with children's positive behavioral outcomes, grade advancement (Meidel & Reynolds, 1999; Tinkler, 2002), achievement on standardized tests, improved grades, graduation rate, college entrance, social skill development (Henderson & Mapp, 2002), attendance (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002), and general attitudes towards school (Jeynes, 2003).

Several recent meta-analyses have been conducted to summarize quantitative research findings on effective parent involvement. Overall, these studies find a positive relationship between involvement and academic achievement. In a review of 25 studies, Fan and Chen (2001) found that parent involvement was associated with a 30% increase in academic achievement as

measured by test scores and grade point averages. Each of these meta-analyses also highlights that while parent involvement is important, the type of involvement also matters. Across these reviews, one aspect of parent involvement—having high expectations—was consistently the strongest predictor of achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001; Hill & Tyson, 2009, & Jeynes, 2005 & 2007). This finding is also echoed by Froiland, Peterson, and Davison (2012), who found that parental expectations for post-secondary attainment in Kindergarten are stronger predictors of achievement than home-based involvement practices such as reading books and helping with homework. Furthermore, parental expectations in Kindergarten are related to both parental expectations in middle school as well as parental involvement in early grades, which helps children to develop skills that will facilitate their later success (Froiland, Peterson, & Davidson, 2012). Moreover, in a meta-analysis of parent involvement in middle school, Hill and Tyson (2009) note that parents' academic socialization of their children—defined as setting high expectations, valuing education, fostering aspirations, and making plans for the future—conveys "an understanding about the purposes, goals, and meaning of academic performance, communicates expectations about involvement, and provides strategies that students can effectively use" (p. 758).

In addition to having high expectations for academic achievement, supporting children's learning at home was also an important component of children's school success in these meta-analytic reviews. Yet effective home-based support can come in a variety of forms, including reading (Jeynes, 2005), engaging children in home learning activities (Hill & Tyson, 2009), providing direct supervision of activities (Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2007), and embodying a parenting style that is both loving and supportive but also maintains an appropriate level of discipline (Jeynes, 2007). Specific findings on homework help are mixed (Fan & Chen, 2001;

Hill & Tyson, 2009, & Jeynes 2005, 2007). School-based involvement, including visiting a child's school, volunteering, and attending events, were only moderately correlated with achievement (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Parent involvement is important for children regardless of background. In Jeynes' (2003, 2005, 2007) work—which examines the association between parental involvement and academic achievement by race and socio-economic status—consistently reports that correlations between parent involvement—as defined by a variety of measures—and academic achievement hold across minority and income groups. In other words, "one can conclude that parental involvement has a significant positive impact on children across race and across academic outcomes" (Jeynes, 2003, p. 213). Moreover, Jeynes stresses that these findings reveal that parent involvement—both voluntary and that which occurs as the result of parental involvement-focused programs—can be a powerful influence in reducing the achievement gap (Jeynes, 2007).

Joyce Epstein and her colleagues at the National Network for Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University are well known for their work in training teachers, principals, and district leaders to plan for and work with families. The institute operates on a framework of six keys for developing successful partnerships. These keys are: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community (Epstein et al., 2006, 2008). Both independent and internal research on NNPS's model has shown that family involvement is positively related to achievement in reading, math, and science (Epstein, 2005), as well as better attendance (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002).

As mentioned above, parent involvement is touted as a crucial element for student success under NCLB, yet research into parent involvement and adequate yearly progress (AYP) reveals that the relationship between the two may be more tenuous than the law asserts. In a

survey of over 7,000 school principals, researchers found that when parent involvement was defined as *participation* in school events—such as back-to-school nights and parent-teacher conferences—there was a strong positive correlation between parent involvement and subsequently making AYP (Ma, Shen, & Krenn, 2013). However, when the researchers examined the relationship between *school-initiated provisions* for parents—such as creating drop-in centers or hiring parent coordinators—and AYP (controlling for student demographics), they found that these efforts, particularly in urban and suburban schools, were significantly correlated with not making AYP. The authors speculate that there may be differential effects between parent-initiated efforts (choosing to attend) and school-initiated efforts (providing supports) towards involvement, with the former potentially being more salient and effective and the latter lacking roots in an understanding of parents' preferred means of engagement. In relation to language minority families, the researchers found that urban schools providing translators and translated materials for EL parents were twice as likely to make AYP than schools with similar EL populations that did not include these provisions (Ma, Shen, & Krenn, 2013). In sum, the findings of this study reveal that student achievement is related to both parent-driven as well as linguistically accessible means of parent involvement.

Theoretical Framework: Counter Storytelling

Individually and collectively, the research analyzed in the present study conveys a counter story to the hegemonic parent involvement practices that have come to be seen as commonplace greatest hits (Hong, 2011) but may not be definitive of the ways in which EL parents are involved in their children's education.

Counter stories are important in this regard because they juxtapose majoritarian stories through documenting the lived realities of groups of people who do not have social privilege

(Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Knight, Norton, Bentley, & Dixon, 2004; Yosso, 2006). Majoritarian stories, like the greatest hits, implicitly assert deficit orientations towards non-majority populations (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Majoritarian storytelling reinforces inequalities by ascribing deficit-oriented assumptions to members of minority groups who may not enact the same practices or demonstrate the same behaviors. For example, if an EL parent does not participate in their child's education in the same ways as other English-speaking parents, they are at risk of being viewed as not valuing their child's education (Yosso, 2006).

Rooted in critical race theories, counter stories also offer alternative explanations from those put forth through majoritarian stories. For example, in their study of low-income, minority youth Knight and colleagues (2004) use the teenagers' counter stories about college access to demonstrate the important role that their parents and families played in influencing their future aspirations. The families of these children were instrumental in shaping their desires to attend college, yet were not involved in the youth's education in ways that were apparent to school staff. In fact, many of their teachers assumed that the children's parents were uninvolved in their education. Similarly, the counter stories revealed through this review show that EL parents are involved in their children's education in meaningful ways that go beyond the greatest hits practices.

Researcher Positionality

As the primary instrument for selecting, cataloging, and analyzing these studies, I want to clearly acknowledge and address potential biases that may influence this work. I have had a longstanding professional interest in the role that language minority parents play in their children's education and have dedicated a significant portion of my career towards understanding their counter stories. In my academic work, I have focused my research on the role that Spanish-

speaking families play in their children's education in both home and school contexts. My ability to speak Spanish and my experiences living and working in Latin America have greatly aided my ability to relate to the families that I work with.

I attempt to examine the relationships between schools and families by understanding both sides, and I am well aware of the challenges that both encounter. I approach my work with families under the assumption that all parents—regardless of education level, immigration status, or income—care deeply about their children's future and will work with the knowledge and resources that they have available to them to ensure their children's success. At the same time, in working with schools and teachers, I presume that they too want all of their students to be successful and will work within their means to serve children as best they can. Yet I have observed many instances when these two groups—language minority families and schools, despite their shared concern for children—struggle to understand one another and work together. Even in these instances I have often observed how both EL parents and teachers are aware of their own limitations and strive to ameliorate these disconnects.

Integrative Review

Research Questions

Given the social, policy, and research emphases in the U.S. on parent involvement over the past 20 years, this review is focused on understanding how these shifts relate to EL parent involvement in American schools. In reviewing research that documents and describes EL parent involvement as it is practiced, this review paints a portrait of the phenomenon in order to critique the notion of greatest hits practices. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) In what ways does research define and describe *in situ* EL parent involvement since 1994 (the first year that major federal legislation was passed emphasizing

involvement)? (2) How do these definitions and descriptions present a counter story to the "greatest hits" of parent involvement as they have been documented in research during that same time period?

Methodology

Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion

In order to answer the questions above, this review only includes research that documents parent involvement with language minority families *in situ*. In other words, I did not include studies that used pre-established definitions or frameworks for defining parent involvement; instead I only included studies that describe parent involvement as it is actually practiced by schools and families. In this way, I was searching for studies that utilized inductive—as opposed deductive—methods for data collection and analysis.

Only original research studies were included in this review; literature reviews, research summaries, policy briefs, translator pieces, and editorials were excluded from the corpus. I decided to include both book chapters and full-length books first because I found that a significant portion of the literature on this topic was found in books (26% of the studies in this review) and second, because studies that are published in books often provide either longitudinal data collection and/or a level of detail that goes beyond that found in articles, which is particularly suitable for studies of *in situ* parent involvement.

Since I was concerned with accounting for the potential impact of federal policies in the U.S. on parent involvement, I only included studies that were published after 1994 (the year IASA and Goals 2000 were passed) and conducted in an American K-12 context. Lastly, the studies needed to specifically research the involvement of EL families in their children's education as the main phenomenon under study.

Search Strategies

I used the following Boolean search terms to initially identify studies for review: "involvement" OR "participation" OR "engagement;" AND "parent" OR "family" OR "caretaker;" AND "English language learner " OR "English as a Second Language" OR "Limited English Proficient" OR "bilingual" OR "multilingual" OR "language minority" OR "linguistic minority" OR "immigrant" OR "migrant." I searched the EBSCO databases, PsychINFO, Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts, ERIC, Google Scholar, and Academic Search Complete. I only searched for studies published after 1994 (the year that IASA and Goals 2000 were passed). I did not include theses or dissertations as their quality may vary. In article searches, I only looked for those that were published in peer-reviewed journals as a measure of quality control.

These search strategies resulted in an initial corpus of 72 unique publications. I then read each of these studies to select those that utilized inductive measures for documenting parent involvement within linguistic minority families. Additionally, in order to accurately analyze and summarize the ways in which research defined and described EL parent involvement *in situ*, I needed to assure that the studies included in the review were employing quality research methods. Since all of the studies employed either qualitative or mixed methods designs I used Brantlinger, Jiménez, Klinger, Pugach, and Richardson's (2005) quality indicators within qualitative research (p. 202) as standards to assure that studies utilized appropriate and systematic sampling, data collection, and data analysis techniques[2]. This resulted in a final corpus of the 31 articles, chapters, and full-length books that I analyzed for this review.

[2] Brantlinger and colleagues' (2005) quality indicators go beyond established evaluative criteria for qualitative research (cf. Miles & Huberman, 1994) in that they provide researchers with

Cataloging Studies

I cataloged all of the studies in the review using Microsoft Excel. For each study I recorded the authors' names, the year the study was published, the type of publication (journal article, chapter, or book), the name of the publication, the sample size, the sample demographics, the study's methodology, the research questions, the theoretical framework, and the *in situ* parent involvement observed. Whenever possible I used direct quotations for describing parent involvement in order to maintain the integrity of the original work's documentation of the phenomenon.

Coding and Analysis

Initial cataloging allowed me to discern categories for coding each study. Using the cataloged studies, whenever possible I transposed the information into quantitative data in order to calculate descriptive statistics about the studies included in the review (see results in Table 2.1). I took a grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to coding the studies' descriptions of *in situ* parent involvement. During several careful read-throughs, I developed an initial list of open codes, which became core categories from which to analyze the studies' descriptions of parent involvement. These core categories then became axial codes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) from which other sub-categories were surmised, sorted, and re-checked.

Final versions of codes can be seen in Figure 2.1. The initial open codes and eventual axial codes were the three relationships that were at the center of families' involvement: relationships between families and schools, relationships between parents and children, and relationships among families. The sub-categories are the bulleted lists that define involvement within each type of relationship.

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specific indicators based upon study design (e.g. interview, observation, etc.) from participant selection through reporting.

Reliability Checks

I utilized the assistance of an experienced researcher to provide reliability checks on both the inclusion of studies in the review as well as the coding and categorization of included studies. She independently reviewed 20% of studies that resulted from my initial searches to decide whether or not they met the inclusion criteria. From this review, we were in agreement on decisions for 87% of the studies she reviewed. We then met to discuss the two studies where our decisions differed and were able to arrive at 100% agreement as well as further refine the criteria for inclusion. Additionally, she categorized 20% of the included studies into the three codes described in Figure 2.1. Initially, we had an 86% agreement on the categorization of studies and again, through discussion we were able to come to agreement on the one study where our coding differed.

Results

Literature Included in Review

Thirty-one studies met the inclusion criteria for this review. Table 2.1 displays descriptive information about the publications included. The studies include journal articles (74%), book chapters (6%), and full-length books (20%). The studies were published over a twenty-year time span (1994 to 2014), but the bulk of the studies were published on the latter end of that range. The median year was 2008 and the mode was 2011.

The sample sizes of the studies ranged from as small as one—case studies that presented in-depth profiles of the experiences of one parent or one family—to as large as 182. Overall, studies tended to have small sample sizes with the average sample size being 21 participants. The studies included elementary (84%), middle (65%), and high school (45%) contexts with 52% of studies investigating more than one of those contexts. The majority of the studies (87%) in this

review employed a qualitative study design. The remaining studies all used a mixed methods approach.

Relationship-Centered Parent Involvement

After a series of read-throughs and several rounds of coding the studies' *in situ* EL parent involvement, I found that the definitions and descriptions of the ways that schools and EL families enacted parent involvement were all focused on one of three different relationships: (1) relationships that the families have with schools, (2) relationships between parents and children, or (3) relationships among families. Figure 2.1 provides a summary of each relationship, and Table 2.2 details the number of studies contained within each of these categories. Collectively, these studies document a counter story to the greatest hits. Specifically, these studies document how EL families are involved in their children's education through the cultivation of specific relationships. Moreover, the relationships that this review identifies represent a continuum of involvement from school-initiated forms of involvement—some of which may still reflect a reliance on the greatest hits—to more parent-led forms of involvement, which are absent of the greatest hits.

Relationships between families and schools.

The first category is the largest in the review with almost two-thirds of the studies describing EL parent involvement through the relationships that families have with their children's school. The studies in this category explain parent involvement through responsive approaches—or ways that schools and families interact—that strive to understand EL families' existing involvement as well as provide meaningful ways to further involve them in the school community.

Specifically, these studies highlight means of EL parent involvement that are based upon a mutual understanding between families, teachers, and school staff. These studies document how mutual understanding is achieved through engaging in open dialogue and opportunities for relationship building (Chen, Kyle, & McIntyre, 2008; Lawson & Alameda-Lawson, 2012; Quezada, 2004; Waterman, 2008; Wiseman, 2010). Moreover, these studies stress that schools create authentic opportunities for participation in the school community that leverage parents' strengths and resources (Hong, 2011; Iddings & Katz, 2007; Kumar, 2011), are responsive to their needs and goals (Lopez, Scribner, & Mahitivanic, 2011), and provide them with opportunities to advocate for the education they desire for their children (Diaz Soto, 1997; Quiñonez & Kiyama, 2014; Ramirez, 2005). Inherent in these approaches to parent involvement is a directionality of engagement from schools to families. In other words, the onus of developing understanding, fostering dialogue, and providing opportunities for leadership lies upon the school. Furthermore, underlying these approaches to parent involvement is the assumption that, in the end, these efforts will prove mutually beneficial to both schools and families and will also facilitate children's academic success.

Also implicit in these approaches is the idea that schools view parents as advocates for their children. Yet even though schools want parents to be vocal participants in their children's education, being an advocate may not come easily to some EL parents or may not be enacted in an observable manner. In their portrayal of immigrant families' transitions to the U.S., Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (2001) note that there can be initial tensions between families and the ways that schools might expect them to be involved in their children's education. Moreover, some parents may not see themselves as capable or responsible for micro-managing the work of teachers. Instead, for families that may be escaping violence in their home countries, being able

to safely attend school could be seen as an achievement in and of itself. The authors also note that initially many immigrants have a high level of respect for teachers and would not want to critique them or their work, but with time these same parents may also become frustrated with what they perceive to be a lack of discipline in schools and may then be motivated to act in order to improve their child's educational environment. This often results in parents looking for another school or even moving to another area, not necessarily acting to change the current school setting (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).

It is also interesting to note that the approaches laid out by the studies in this category are not without reference to the greatest hits, thus reflecting the pervasiveness of these popular practices within American schools and perhaps even some parents' understanding of what their involvement should look like. In fact, several studies in this category emphasized EL parents' desire to comply with schools' expectations for communication and attendance at school meetings (Lo, 2009; Sutterby, Rubin, & Abrego, 2007) as well as read to children at home even if it was not a part of the family's regular routine (Dudley-Marling, 2009; Sutterby, Rubin, & Abrego, 2007). Additionally, through these approaches are aimed at understanding families and creating opportunities for their involvement, schools may also leverage their relationships with families as a means for encouraging parents' successful participation in the greatest hits (Lopez Scribner et al., 2001) as well as structure interventions whose outcomes may be geared towards participation in the greatest hits (Chen et al., 2008). And while not as strong as the latter two categories described below, this first category on the continuum of relationships still contains evidence of a counter story through the actions that these schools took to engage and understand families rather than solely emphasize predetermined practices.

This category also contained three studies whose *in situ* EL parent involvement included tensions between conflicting approaches to parent involvement. These tensions arose from competing ideas about educator-led programs to incentivize parents' participation in school events that resemble the ways that English-speaking parents participate (aka, the greatest hits) versus adaptive and responsive practices for relationship-building with families in order to meet their needs (Gates & Smothermon, 2006; Grant & Wong, 2004; Lim, 2012).

For example, in a study of Korean-American parents' involvement, Lim (2012) noted that the school expected these parents to participate in the same ways as English-speaking families, and when they did not, schools interpreted them as passive and unconcerned with their children's learning. Yet, the parents reported that they had very high aspirations for their children, respect for the teachers, and frequently engaged in networking with other Korean-American parents (Lim, 2012). Two other studies in this category highlight the specific initiatives made by educators to build strong relationships with EL families through responsive approaches yet work within systems (schools and districts) that continue to value greatest hits practices above other forms of involvement (Gates & Smothermon, 2006; Grant & Wong, 2004).

Relationships between parents and children.

The second most prevalent category of studies (19%) had definitions or descriptions of *in situ* EL parent involvement that focused on the parent-child relationship. These definitions and descriptions highlighted the ways that parents holistically prepared their children for school. These preparation practices included providing for the child's basic needs (Liska Carger, 1996; Walker & Dalhouse, 2008), structuring a home environment that is conducive to learning (Panferov, 2010), instilling values (Liska Carger, 1996), setting expectations (Panferov, 2010; Walker & Dalhouse, 2008), helping the child make education-related decisions (Liska Carger,

1996), asking questions about school (Poza, Brooks, & Valdés, 2014), assuring the child attends school, disciplining the child (Walker & Dalhouse, 2008), and teaching the child about the family's cultural history (Walker & Dalhouse, 2008).

The studies in this category focused more on the holistic preparations that parents provide their children in order to be successful at school and less on families' participation in the greatest hits. The only references to the greatest hits included attending school events that parents thought were supportive of their children's learning (Poza et al., 2014), and providing homework help (Panferov, 2010). The absence of homework assistance from the majority of these studies is striking because it is commonly viewed as a key parent involvement practice even though the evidence supporting a connection to children's academic achievement is tenuous (Fan & Chen, 2001; Froiland et al., 2012; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Jeynes 2005, 2007).

A family's culture may also inform the ways that parents holistically prepare their children for school. Two studies in this category provided insight into specific culturally informed practices of Mexican-American families. First, in an ethnographic study of a Mexican-American family, Delgado-Gaitan (1994) describes how the parents she studies provide their children with *consejos*, a word in Spanish that is translated as "advice" in English, but connotes both empathy and expectation for success. Moreover, the author documents how these *consejos* effectively counteracted the schools' hegemonic practices through empowering statements about the parents' belief in their children's ability to be successful in school (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994). Similarly, *Con Respeto, Bridging the Differences Between Culturally Diverse Families and Schools: An Ethnographic Portrait* (Valdés, 1996) describes the ways in which 10 Mexican-American women support their children's learning at home. These mothers instill in their children an appreciation for education through emphasizing the importance of education and the

family's reliance on children's future success. Additionally, they focus on making sure their children are well-behaved and respectful to their teachers, but they do not regularly engage in what might be seen as teaching practices—such as learning letters or practicing math facts—at home (Valdés, 1996).

Relationships among families.

The third category described parent involvement through the ways in which parents participate in their children's education through fostering partnerships with other EL families. This approach to parent involvement allows parents who may share a language, culture, and/or educational aspiration for their children to work together and present a united voice to advocate on behalf of their children. These studies demonstrate how EL families have organized parent groups (Bratt, Briceño & Violand-Sanchez, 1998; Dryness, 201; Jasis & Ordonez-Jasis, 2012; Jasis, 2013) that not only allow for kinship (Rivera & Lavan, 2012) but also encourage parents to take on leadership roles and collectively advocate to promote social change (Dyrness, 2011). As opposed to the studies included in the relationships between schools and families category, the studies in this group show a directionality of engagement from the families to the school. In other words, involvement starts from the families who work together in order to change the school context. It is notable that there was no mention of the greatest hits practices within this category. Hong (2011) notes that in order to move beyond the greatest hits, schools must show a willingness to embrace these types of parent-led forms of involvement.

An in-depth portrayal of families fostering partnerships in this category was the book, *Mothers United: An Immigrant Struggle for Socially Just Education*, a powerful account of what EL parents can accomplish when they work together. In this book, Dyrness (2011) describes how a group of low-income Mexican and Central American immigrant mothers came together

through a local community organization and collectively, despite many barriers, accomplished reform in their children's school. Through their shared passion for and commitment to pursuing the best possible educational environment for their children, these women were able to become active participants in planning and reforming their children's school. The study reveals how their relationships with one another, their "*convivencia*—the relationships built through the sharing of daily struggles and victories," (p. 25) was essential for fueling their movement and ultimate success (Dyrness, 2011).

Discussion and Conclusions: A Counter Story Beyond the Greatest Hits

My analyses of research studies documenting EL parent involvement *in situ* have revealed an emphasis on the relationships that parents have with schools, with their children, and with other families. Viewed collectively, these observations of *in situ* EL parent involvement create a counter story (Yosso, 2006) to the greatest hits of parent involvement through demonstrating the numerous ways that EL parents are involved in their children's learning. While the greatest hits emphasize specific, observable practices that parents might be seen engaging in either at home or at school, the studies included in this review reveal that EL parent involvement might be less obvious. Studies within the category of family and school relationships detail responsive approaches that schools make towards understanding EL families and providing meaningful opportunities for involvement. While not every study in this category contained evidence of the greatest hits those that did reflect the pervasiveness of these practices. Studies emphasizing relationships between EL parents and children highlight culturally informed, holistic ways that parents prepare their children for school. And studies that detail relationships among EL families show the powerful ways in which families are able to foster change-making partnerships with one another. Moreover, when viewed as a continuum, from the

between schools and families category to the among families category, relationship-centered EL parent involvement moves away from an increasingly diminished reliance on the greatest hits practices and fewer school-initiated approaches towards a greater emphasis on parent-initiated involvement. Additionally, as demarcated by the median publication years in Table 2.2, there is evidence that research from the among families category is more recent (M = 2012, SD = 6.3), perhaps reflecting a trend towards more parent-led involvement.

As noted in the introduction to this study, research in this field is moving away from the term "parent involvement" and into "family engagement" to reflect both the shared responsibility held by schools and families as well as the important role of other family members in supporting a child's education. Yet, as evidenced through the wording in NCLB, many policies that influence practice tend toward the narrower term, "parent involvement." It is possible that this word choice may limit the ways in which schools and families view themselves and one another, therefore influencing the ways in which they engage.

The greatest hits approach to involvement emphasizes activities and practices rather than dynamic processes (Calabrese Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis, & George, 2009; Hong, 2011; Warren, Hong, Rubin, & Uy, 2011). The studies included in this review show that research documenting EL parent involvement *in situ* is less defined by activities or practices and more focused on dynamic processes. A focus on processes over activities can be understood through the Ecologies of Parental Engagement framework (Calabrese Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis, & George, 2009), which can be summarized as:

> a shift from focusing primarily on what parents do to engage with their children's school and with other actors within those schools, to also considering how parents understand

> the hows and whys of their engagement, and how this engagement relates more broadly to parents' experiences and actions in and out of the school community (p. 3).

While the greatest hits were present within the category of relationships between families and school, they were not a part of every study in that category. Instead, the studies in that category revealed how, in working with EL families, many schools start from trying to understand the ways in which parents are already involved in their children's lives—a stark contrast to the top-down ways that greatest hits are often encouraged.

It is important to note that EL parents are not a uniform group. In fact, they represent a diversity of backgrounds, languages, educational experiences, and potentially ways of being involved in their children's education that are not limited to what has been documented in research. Jeynes (2010) points out that many parents may be engaged in subtle means of involvement that are not always visible. He notes that parenting practices and attitudes, while not always easy to observe or measure, are just as crucial to a child's educational success as is the pedagogy that parents employ with their children. Finally, this review reinforces existing research noting that just as "there is no single effective method to assist ELL families" (Téllez & Waxman, 2010, p. 103), neither is there a single means in which EL parents participate in their children's education.

Limitations

As with any research study, this review is not without limitations. I acknowledge that as the sole researcher, I am influenced by my biases and constrained by my perspectives. Additionally, it is possible that the search terms and databases limited my access to additional studies that could have met the inclusion criteria and been part of the corpus. Lastly, I was striving to understand EL parent involvement as it is documented in research, yet not every

context or community has been studied. It is likely that there are many more schools and EL families that are engaged in parent involvement practices that also deviate from the greatest hits but have yet to be documented through research.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should look to document and describe the unique and innovative EL parent involvement practices in which families, schools, and communities are engaging. In this work, researchers should be clear about what constitutes parent involvement, where their definitions come from, and what limitations exist within their definitions of such a broad phenomenon.

Due to the nature of the research questions, the majority of the studies in this review employed qualitative or mixed methodologies to describe and document *in situ* EL parent involvement. However, it is important that future research go beyond just describing involvement in order to examine how these types of involvement relate to schools' and families' development. It would be interesting for future research to explore how broader conceptions of EL parent involvement—like those detailed in this study's relationship-centered approaches—relate to children's achievement and/or changes in teachers' and parents' perceptions over time. Many of the studies included in this review do not consider the relationships between *in situ* parent involvement and children's academic outcomes. Beyond mere documentation of this phenomenon, it is important that future research show how EL parent involvement relates to children's academic growth over time.

Implications for Practice

First and foremost, educators should operate under the notion that all parents care about their child's education, though they will inevitably interact with the school, with their child, and

with other families in varying ways. Schools should invest in families by showing a genuine interest in their lives before demanding that they participate within the school community (Jeynes, 2011). Instead of insisting on greatest hits practices that may not fit with EL parents' cultural or linguistic understanding of involvement, schools should strive to understand the successful ways in which parents are already involved in their children's education.

At the same time, I acknowledge that teachers and parents are constrained by the time and resources that they have available to them. In order for schools to support involvement of all families, they need to be backed by policies that also value forms of parent involvement beyond the greatest hits.

Ideally, approaches to parent involvement should emphasize all three of the relationships highlighted above. Schools should express an interest in the relationships between parents and children and strive to understand families' interactions around education and learning outside of school. Lastly, schools should facilitate opportunities for EL families to connect with and get to know one another as well as provide opportunities to act together within the school community.

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Table 2.1

Descriptive information on included studies

Publication Information	N	Date	Percent	Range
Studies included in review	31			
Time span				1994 to 2014
Median publication year		2008		
Mode publication year		2011		
Study Source				
Journal articles	23		74%	
Book chapters	2		6%	
Books	6		20%	
Study Characteristics				
Qualitative design	27		87%	
Mixed methods design	4		13%	
Sample size range				1 to 182
Average sample size	21			
Elementary school context	26		84%	
Middle school context	20		65%	
High school context	14		45%	
Multi-grade contexts	16		52%	

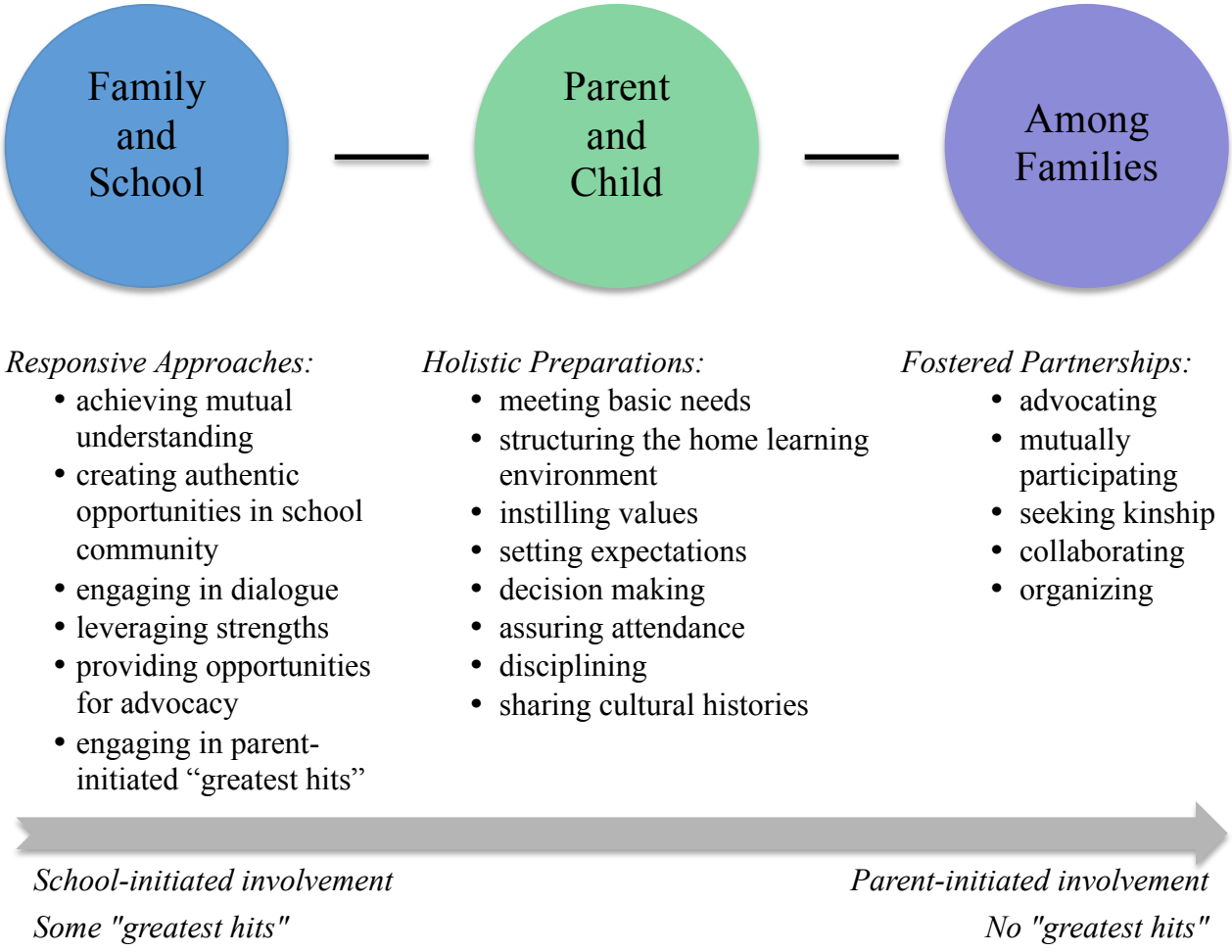
Table 2.2

Studies within each relationship category

Relationship Category	Number of Studies in Category	Percentage	Median Publication Year
Family and School	20	65%	2008
Parent and Child	6	19%	2002
Between Families	5	16%	2012

Figure 2.1

Relationship-centered Parent Involvement in EL families



CHAPTER 3

Teachers Reading Parents: Urban Elementary School Educators' Reflections on Latino Families

Introduction

Upon entering Arbor Elementary School, your eyes are immediately drawn to the toothy grin of a larger-than-life Barrack Obama painting. Though not quite as sizeable, other portraits of prominent African American historical figures adorn the walls and throughout the building signs are written in English. Yet, the hallways are filled with orderly lines of children speaking to one another in Spanish. This contrast between the physical surroundings and the student body is reflective of a school that has recently undergone a substantial transformation. Due to changes in the surrounding community and school boundary re-districting, Arbor's student population has gone from being predominately English-speaking and African American to Spanish-speaking and Latino in the span of three school years. Arbor's teachers and administrators are in the midst of their own transformation as well as they strive to understand and respond to all students and their families. Through the lens of transformative learning theory this study analyses Arbor educators' reflections of Latino families in their school. This study contributes to existing research on parent involvement in demographically changing schools by detailing the ways in which educators' reflections on Latino families depend upon educators' backgrounds and characteristics.

Present Study

Arbor Elementary, like many U.S. schools, has experienced a significant shift in its student body. The historically African American school is now primarily Latino, and the majority of its students are still learning English. This shift has occurred over the course of just three school years. Meanwhile teachers and administrators are in the process of responding to this transformation. By documenting educators' reflections about Latino families during this time, this study sheds light on a transition that many U.S. schools are currently or will soon be

undergoing with the hope of informing the ways in which schools understand and interact with language minority families.

Research Questions

This study documents educators' reflections about families' statements during school-based parent workshops. Specifically this study answers the following research questions: (1) what types of reflections do educators have about parents' interactions during school-based parent workshops? (2) How do these types of reflections differ according to educator characteristics (race, grade, language, and experience)? (3) What inferences do educators make about Latino families in their school and how do these inferences differ by educator characteristics? (4) What do educators see as implications for the ways the school engages Latino families and how do these implications differ by educator characteristics?

Literature Review: Understanding Families

In order to understand the families of their students, teachers may engage in a range of information-gathering processes such as observing, communicating with, and inquiring about families (Caspe, 2003). Teachers then make meaning of this information through comparisons to other families, their own family, and a particular family over time (Caspe, 2003). Yet a teacher's individual beliefs about her relationship to the family and the type of information that is worth gathering will ultimately impact how she comes to see any one family (Caspe, 2003).

As is the case at Arbor Elementary, these information-gathering processes may shift when teachers and families do not share a common language and/or culture resulting in differing expectations between schools and families. For instance, a study of Spanish-speaking immigrant and migrant families revealed that parents' expectations about communication differed from those held by their children's schools (Coady, Cruz-Davis, & Flores, 2008). Specifically, parents

preferred that the school contact them in person rather than in writing, yet the school continually used letters and emails as their primary means of communication (Coady, Cruz-Davis, & Flores, 2008).

Additional research has also highlighted differing expectations between schools and families. For instance, an ethnographic study of Mexican-American families described how mothers believed that it was their duty to ensure that their children were *bien educado* (well behaved, attentive, and respectful), whereas they saw it as the purview of the schools to teach children to read, write, and do arithmetic (Valdés, 1996). Despite how families may enact involvement, many schools expect parents to perform school-like practices at home such as storybook reading and helping with homework (Dudley-Marling, 2009)[3].

While teachers and schools may readily recognize visible forms of parent involvement such as attending back to school night and parent teacher conferences, there is evidence that schools may not be aware of culturally-based forms of family involvement. Research on Latina mothers has revealed regular engagement in culturally-shaped practices like *sacrificios* (sacrifices), *consejos* (advice), and *apoyo* (moral support) that mothers believed furthered their children's motivation to succeed in school (Ramos, 2014; Valdés, 1996). For example, mothers noted – both with pride and hopefulness – how they frequently made *sacrificios* in putting the educational and emotional needs of their children above their own (Ramos, 2014). Further evidence of culturally-informed involvement practices is also evidenced in Delgado-Gaitain's (1994) case study of a Mexican American family's use of *consejos* or cultural narratives used to express feelings about and responses to inequalities that they observed in their children's education.

[3]Though outside of the scope of this review, additional research documents teachers' differing expectations of families by class lines (e.g. Lareau, 2011).

However, schools may hold different notions about what counts as involvement and how much they want parents to be involved. Though not specific to Latino families, Pushnor's (2014) research describes a tendency among teachers to view parents, not as knowledgeable resources with whom to partner, but instead as impediments to furthering what the teacher believes is best for the child. This sentiment has been established in other research noting that teachers may have preconceived notions that parents, particularly those from low-income and minority homes, can be indifferent or unsupportive of their child's education (Bloom, 2001; Comer, 1980; Davies, 1987). When teachers do not have positive perceptions of their students' families, they often do not look to partner with them or use them as resources to promote children's learning (Fueyo, 1997; Trumbell, Rothstein-Fisch, & Greenfield, 2000). Pushnor (2014) notes that this distance between teachers and parents is often introduced during pre-service training where teachers are exposed to

> a hidden curriculum which perpetuate[s] and silently support[s] a story of school in which teachers are positioned as the expert knowers of children, teaching, and learning, discounting parents as also being legitimate knowers in these areas, discounting parents as being holders of complementary knowledge valuable in the processes of schooling (p. 44-45).

Such teacher-centered ideas about children's learning may contribute to some families' experiences of asymmetrical power relations in their children's school. For instance, in a study of a rural EL population, Shim (2013) found that three consist factors negatively influence parent participation: (1) teachers' assumptions about ELs and their families, (2) EL parents' frustrations about not being able to influence teachers, and (3) EL parents' fears about speaking up with regard to what they believed was best for their child. And while it can be argued that English-

speaking families may also be subject to these influences, EL families may be more affected due to linguistic and cultural differences.

There is a body of research that documents the barriers—both on the part of the school and families—that Latino families encounter with regard to participation in their children's education. These include language differences (e.g. Gibson, 2002), parental education levels (e.g. Floyd, 1998), previous negative school experiences (e.g. López, 2001) time constraints (e.g. Delgado-Gaitan, 2001) differing expectations about families' roles (e.g. Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield, & Quiroz, 2001), and feeling unwelcome (e.g. Scribner, Young, & Pedroza, 1999) or intimidated at school (e.g. Hyslop, 2000). One particular study (Sosa, 1996) documents three categories of barriers to involvement: logistical barriers, attitudinal barriers, and expectation barriers. Logistical barriers refer to limits such as time, financial resources, and childcare. Attitudinal barriers include parents' uncertainty about their roles in the school, communication problems, disagreements about school policy, and perceived inability to help children with homework. Expectation barriers refer to schools' lack of recognition for families' realities such as recent arrival, language, culture, and educational backgrounds (Sosa, 1996).

Despite the aforementioned barriers, there is also research that describes equitable relationships between minority families and schools. For instance, Lopez, Scribner, and Mahitivanchcha's (2001) investigations into schools that successfully engage Latino families highlight that these schools did not subscribe to specific models of parental engagement, but instead held themselves accountable for meeting the needs of Latino families. In fact, the schools in this study recognized that before families could fully be involved in their children's schooling, they needed to make sure that all of their basic social, economic, and physical needs were met.

Doing so required a level of familiarity with each family in the school and outreach on the part of teachers to get to know the families of their students.

In addition to meeting basic needs, another consideration for the relationships between families and schools is the extent to which power is shared between both groups. Delgado-Gaitan (1994, 2012) presents a continuum of three types of power sharing relationships between Latino families and schools: conventional, culturally responsive, and empowering. Conventional family involvement strategies consist of organizing in-school activities such as back to school night, conferences, and PTA/O with the purpose of building relationships between families and schools. Culturally responsive relationships begin with the premise that children's language(s), culture(s), and home lives are an essential part of daily school life and should be considered resources for learning. Lastly, empowering family-school relationships assure that power is held equally between both parents and teachers, decision-making is a collective endeavor, and both parties benefit from the others' participation.

In summary, the above research notes that teachers engage in a variety of processes through which they come to understand families, yet these processes may lead to expectations about involvement that differ from families' own definitions. Moreover, there is evidence of schools creating equitable relationships with Latino families despite numerous barriers. As detailed below, this study examines how educators at one school come to understand Latino families and how those understandings might shape the ways in which the school interacts with them.

Theoretical Framework: Transformative Learning

The design of this study is informed by transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1978, 1991) or specifically the premise that a "disorienting dilemma" creates the opportunity for

critical reflections that lead to shifts in individuals' understanding(s) and eventual future action. In the case of Arbor Elementary, the demographic shift serves as a "disorienting dilemma" and therefore an opportunity for reflections about the school's interactions with Latino children and their families. In providing specific instances upon which the educators can reflect, this study strives to gain insight into educators' reflections as well as provide a snapshot of a school in transformation.

Transformative learning theory comes from Jack Mezirow's (1991) research on women's success in returning to community college later in life. Mezirow found that an inherent characteristic of successful adult learners was their ability to reflect upon their experiences and use those reflections as the basis for action and change in their lives. Specifically, transformative learning theory explicates the processes as "making meaning from experiences through reflection, critical reflection, and critical self-reflection…, through which we make sense of the day-to-dayness of our experiences." (Dirkx, 1998, p. 4). These processes are characteristic of adult learners who are able to examine their assumptions in order to change themselves and the ways they view the world. The interviews conducted for this study served to elicit the reflections that educators were enacting on their own accord. In doing so, this study provides insight into one school-in-transition through the reflections provided by educators during discourse-based interviews.

Methodology

Setting and Participants

Arbor Elementary is a K-5 school of about 500 students located in a mid-sized (pop. 215,000), South Atlantic city. Arbor Elementary looks like many urban schools – the facilities are dated, access to technology is limited, and almost all students receive free or reduced price

breakfast and lunch. In addition, Arbor's student body mirrors population changes occurring across the U.S. In less than four school years Arbor has experienced a rapid demographic shift. Both due to changes in the surrounding neighborhoods and citywide redistricting to cluster Spanish-speaking students, the once African American school is now predominantly Latino. In 2010 the school was evenly split between the two racial groups, but in the 2013-2014 school year Latino students made up 85% of the school with the lower grades comprised of almost 100% Latino, EL students. The majority of these students are of Mexican descent and though the school does not track this information, many teachers reported that Mixteco, not Spanish, is the home language of many of families.

The changes in Arbor's student body are occurring or will occur at many schools across the U.S. in the coming decade. The 2014-2015 school year was the first that minority groups became the majority in public schools (Hussar & Bailey, 2014). Moreover, between the years 2011-2022, the population of Latino children in public schools is projected to increase by 33% – an increase that is larger than any other racial or ethnic group in the country (Hussar & Bailey, 2014). Additionally, families immigrating to the U.S. more frequently come from Mexico than any other country—42% of children in immigrant families are of Mexican origin (Hernandez, Takanishi, & Marotz, 2009).

All 28 of Arbor's staff members were invited to participate in this study; 15 agreed to be interviewed. Those staff members who did not agree to participate either did not respond to multiple attempts at communication, said they did not have any interactions with the parents of the Latino students in their class and therefore did not feel they could add to the study[4], or said that they did not have time to be interviewed.

[4] This was a teacher who I still encouraged to participate, but who refused.

Table 3.1 contains demographic information about the sample that participated in the interviews. The sample represented teachers in grades K-5 as well as administrative staff. Fourteen of the 15 educators were female. The participants averaged 13.6 years (*SD* = 10.85 years) of experience working in education, and 5.7 years (*SD* = 3.39 years) working at Arbor. Seven of the educators were white, six were African American, and two were Latina. Three of the participants were the only bilingual staff members that worked in the school, perhaps resulting in an overrepresentation of this sub-group and a limitation that is addressed in more detail below.

Data Collection

Over the course of seven months during the 2013-2014 school year I worked with staff to plan and present a series of workshops for parents at Arbor. Prior to this partnership, the district's bilingual parent resource coordinator presented similar workshops. When the coordinator left for a new position in the fall of 2013, Maria, an ESL teacher at Arbor, approached me about working with her to continue the workshops.

The workshops covered the following topics: ESL assessment and placement, home and school communication, reading report cards, literacy instruction, homework help, parents' rights and responsibilities, the transition to middle school, and summer learning. I met with Maria and Eleanor, the school principal, monthly to review previous workshops as well as plan for upcoming workshops. Together, and with input from parents attending the workshops, we determined the number and content of each session. I worked with Maria to create agendas, materials, and presentations for all of the workshops; we presented every workshop together. Two workshops incorporated guest speakers. Emily, the reading teacher, joined us for the workshop on literacy instruction, and representatives from local middle schools spoke at the

workshop on transitioning to middle school. Workshops were held during the day, in the cafeteria, and occurred monthly. All parents attending the workshops consented to audio and video recording.

The workshops were advertised to parents through bilingual flyers sent home with their children. Bilingual staff members also reminded parents of workshops during school drop-off and pick-up times. Except for the session on the middle school transition, workshops were attended only by Spanish-speaking parents and were—in concordance with parents' requests—conducted entirely in Spanish. The middle school transition workshop was the only workshop that was conducted bilingually since several English-speaking families were also in attendance. I audio and video recorded every workshop. After each workshop I watched all of the videos and wrote detailed, reflective field notes. I consulted the audio recordings if a speaker's voice was not clear on the video. In writing the field notes, I made an explicit effort to capture any statements, questions, or comments made by parents as well as thick descriptions about their actions and interactions with one another.

Selection of Workshop Excerpts

I chose to use discourse-based interviewing (Odell, Goswami, & Herrington, 1983) in order to capture the immediate meaning making that educators engage in when reflecting upon interactions with Latino families. Originally used to understand authors' tacit knowledge about their writing processes, discourse-based interviews were first intended to gain insight into an interviewee's thinking about a text or prompt. For the purposes of this study, discourse-based interviews are the tool through which I created opportunities for educators to make meaning about Latino families, which reflect opportunities that they may encounter in their regular

interactions with students' families and/or conversations that they may have about Latino families.

I used my field notes from the workshops to select excerpts for the interview protocol. Using the qualitative data analysis software, Dedoose (Dedoose, 2013), I read each set of field notes and created excerpts for each instance of parents' statements, questions, actions, or lack of response to a question during the workshops. I then exported each of these excerpts and re-read them for potential inclusion in the interview protocol. In choosing excerpts for the protocol I selected both re-occurring as well as unique statements from parents in order to capture the full range of their understandings, beliefs, and/or opinions about their child's education that were expressed during the workshops. I did not use excerpts from the workshop on middle school transitions in order to ensure that all of the excerpts came from Latino families, and therefore that the educators would only be providing reflections about this population. I limited my selection of excerpts to eight in order to provide multiple but diverse opportunities for reflection while not taking up too much of the interviewees' time. I used verbatim speech to share unique statements (prompts one, three, four, seven, and eight) as well as summaries of re-occurring statements or actions (prompts two and six). Once I summarized a mother's statement in order to provide context and make it clearer for the interviewees, but made sure to maintain her original meaning (prompt five).

For consistency across the interviews, I wrote the interview protocol entirely in English and I translated any statements made by parents in Spanish to English. Since all of the excerpts were from my field notes, they were written from my point of view. Each excerpt was printed on a separate piece of paper and followed by open-ended questions used to elicit the educators' reflections about the prompt. The entire interview protocol is contained in the Appendix.

Discourse-Based Interviews

Thirteen participants were interviewed one-on-one and two asked to be interviewed together. For the two-on-one interview, each educator provided her own response to each prompt, though at times they each built upon or responded to what each other said[5]. I offered to meet with educators in the location of their choice. Twelve interviews took place in the school building, one in an educator's home, and two in a local coffee shop. All of the interviews were conducted in English. All interviewees consented to audio recording and participation in this study.

The interviews began with a series of questions regarding the educators' background and experiences and then continued with the discourse-based protocol. In this portion, the interviewees read the excerpts aloud and then answered the questions that followed. I only interjected to ask clarifying or follow-up questions and to move on to a new excerpt. I took written notes and audio recorded all of the interviews.

Role of the Researcher

My experiences at Arbor Elementary extended beyond the workshops and interviews described in this study. I immersed myself in Arbor for seven months in order to understand the school and its community to a level that would assure confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the data I collected in order for the study's findings to be shaped by the educators' statements and minimize any researcher bias. Beyond the workshops and interviews, I also observed classes, attended school meetings and events, interviewed parents, met with staff members, translated for parents and teachers, and volunteered in an after school homework help program run by Maria. I

[5] I acknowledge that these educators' interpersonal dynamics and relationship with one another may have influenced their responses and that they possibly would have responded differently had I interviewed them individually. However, I wanted to respect their request and assure their participation in the study so I agreed to interview them together.

was in the school building at least once but usually multiple times per week over the seven months of the study. During the workshops, workshop planning meetings, and afterschool program I was a participant-observer (Spradley, 1980) and engaged in presentations, discussions, translation, and tutoring as the context demanded. Outside of these events I was an observer and attempted to minimize my level of interaction with the study participants (Spradley, 1980). Over the seven months of the study I became a familiar face within the school and was often greeted by staff, students, and families in the hallways. Being present in the building allowed me to build relationships with various members of the school community. In this way I was able to gain an insider perspective (Spradley, 1980) on what it was like to work at, attend, or send a child to Arbor while still maintaining an outsider's ability to observe and analyze the school context (Spradley, 1980). I wrote reflective field notes in order to document my observations during each visit. Additionally, I wrote weekly memos to record my developing understandings of the school community.

I acknowledge that my background has influenced how I approached this study and how I related to both families and educators. My fluency in Spanish and experiences working with Latino families in U.S. schools has equipped me with a deep understanding of the diversity of experiences that linguistic minority families may have when interacting with their child's school. Moreover, this understanding has also inspired me to advocate on behalf of families who, due to language or cultural differences, may be misunderstood by schools. Yet, as a Caucasian female in my thirties, I look like many of the teachers at Arbor and can relate to the competing demands that they face in trying to serve children. In approaching data collection and analysis, I strove to give equal weight to both families and educators and recognize that in the end both want the best

for the children at Arbor even though they – figuratively and literally – may not always be speaking the same language.

Data Analysis

In approaching the data for this study I utilize modified analytic induction where I aim to develop a "loose descriptive theory" that encompasses "all cases of the phenomena" (Bogdan & Bilken, 1998, p. 66). This approach differs from analytic induction in that I was not looking for confirming and disconfirming evidence for emerging assertions, but instead I was striving to account for and summarize all reflections that educators provided during their interviews even when they might be conflicting or contradictory.

All of the interviews were transcribed for analysis. In order to become familiar with the data and begin to establish preliminary codes to answer the first research question as well as narrow data for the second, third, and fourth research questions I read each of the transcripts several times. While reading I made extensive notes about potential codes for the types of reflections that the educators provided. As codes emerged I would apply them to other data in order to see if they accounted for all of the educators' reflections; I modified and/or added codes as necessary to account for all reflections. Eventually I was able to summarize all of the data into five reflection codes and four topic codes that are summarized in Tables 3.2 and 3.3, respectively and explained in more detail below.

In order to establish credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) in the definitions for codes, I shared them with another qualitative researcher experienced in conducting research on teachers. She provided feedback on the codes and I further revised them based upon her feedback. In order to assure the dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the coding scheme, this researcher and I

double coded three transcripts and had an inter-rater reliability score of 87% in the application of codes. We discussed the discrepancies in our coding and came to a consensus on all differences.

Once the codes were finalized, I imported all of the transcripts into Dedoose (2014) and attached descriptors for the educators' race, grade, language(s), and years of experience in education. I coded all of the transcripts using the codes described in Tables 3.2 and 3.3. After all of the transcripts were coded, I used Dedoose's analytic tools to isolate excerpts by individual codes, code co-occurrences, and descriptors. In order to answer the first and second research questions I exported this data to Microsoft Excel to calculate frequencies and percentages of code occurrence and to analyze differences by descriptors. To answer the third and fourth research questions I exported selected excerpts that contained the co-occurrence of codes related to each question to analyze data specifically related to inferences about families and implications for the school, as well as how these inferences and implications differed by educator characteristics. I then took the same modified analytic induction approach to categorize and summarize the data for these two research questions. The findings for each of the four research questions are detailed below.

Findings

RQ1: Educators' Reflections

The first research question asked what types of reflections educators made during the interviews. The iterative process of developing a coding scheme revealed that the educators in this study made five types of reflections about parents' interactions during school-based parent workshops: judgments, observations, interpretations, inferences, and implications. Table 3.2 includes definitions for each of the reflection codes. Judgments were expressions of opinion or an assessment. In other words, these statements were educators' qualitative assessments on the

validity of aspects of families that often reflected dichotomous thinking (good/bad, right/wrong). For example, Michelle made a judgment when she said, "Yeah, this population is awesome!" (Interview, 5/29/14). Observations were statements made by the educators about something they observed. For example, Jackie made an observation about herself when she said, "I basically tell my parents, 'write in your language.'" (Interview, 6/3/14). Interpretations were explanations about a *singular* occurrence. For example, Rebecca made an interpretation in response to the seventh interview prompt when she spoke about a specific family. She said, "The mother is telling the child that they believe in the child." (Interview, 5/23/14). Though similar to interpretations, inferences were statements drawn from a *series* of occurrences about the meaning behind something and/or a conclusion the educator drew. For example, in discussing parents' attendance at school events, Gloria provided an inference about families collectively when she said, "they come just because they want to be involved with their children's education." (Interview, 6/19/14). Lastly, implications were instances when an educator provided an idea for future action. For example, in response to the third prompt, Allison said that the teachers should be "communicating positive things about the kids and not just where they're having difficulties or whether or not they're paying attention." (Interview, 5/21/14).

These codes can be viewed as existing within a reflection taxonomy where educators' judgments and observations are seen as lower order reflections that do not require thoughtful evaluation or analysis. Interpretations, inferences, and implications – existing higher on the taxonomy – can be considered deeper reflections requiring more of a synthesis of information and analysis of experiences.

Table 3.2 includes percentages for the frequency of each reflection code. Overall the educators expressed more observations than any other type of reflection (41.19% of all reflection

codes) indicating that while the educators at Arbor Elementary are able to discuss their observations about Latino students and their families, they are less frequently interpreting their observations (26.23% of all reflection codes), drawing inferences from them (15.63% of all reflection codes), or thinking about what implications these observations had for the future (12.32% of all reflection codes). Lastly, judgments were the least frequently expressed reflection by the educators (4.64% of all reflection codes).

The prevalence of observations is striking given that none of the questions following the prompts specifically asked the educators to provide observations. Whereas several prompts explicitly asked for inferences (see prompts one, two, three, and six) and implications (see prompts four, six, seven, and eight),[6] these types of reflections were less frequently provided by the educators than were observations.

Additionally, each excerpt was also coded with a topic code to indicate about whom the educators were reflecting. The coding process led to four topic codes: child, family, school, and self. Table 3.3 includes a definition for each topic code. These codes were also not mutually exclusive. For example, the following excerpt was coded both child and family because Jackie refers to both a child and their family in this excerpt: “I have a child whose mother says, he doesn’t want to speak anything at home but English but they can't understand him so they have no other choice but to continue speaking to him in Spanish” (Interview, 6/3/14).

Table 3.3 also includes percentages for the frequency of each topic code. Accounting for almost half of all the topic codes, family (48.25%) was the most frequently applied. This is not surprising as the purpose of the interviews was to gather the educators’ reflections about Latino families. The next most frequently applied topic code was school (26.64% of all topic codes),

[6] Prompt 5, the only question not included in this list, was designed to elicit interpretations rather than inferences or implications

perhaps indicating that the educators view the school (as opposed to individuals) as central in understanding Latino families. Comparatively, the educators provided fewer reflections about the children (13.79% of all topic codes) and themselves (11.33% of all topic codes), but this is to be expected given that the purpose of the interviews was to reflect upon families. However, it is interesting that in reflecting upon parents' interactions the educators included statements about the school, the children, and themselves indicating that, in understanding Latino families, they must also consider them in relation to these other groups.

RQ2: Educator Characteristics

The second research question asked how reflections differed by educator characteristics. To answer this question I calculated the frequency of reflection codes by each of the following descriptors: race, grade(s) taught, language, and experience. Table 3.4 contains the percentages of reflection codes by descriptor as well as the percentages of codes for the entire sample. I used percentages in order to normalize the frequencies by descriptor category to account for differences in number of educators within each group. Percentages that differed from the entire sample by 6.53% are marked with asterisks in the table. This percentage was the average difference between the sample frequency and each individual descriptor frequency. Groups of educators whose responses were 6.53% more or less than that of the overall sample are distinct in their responses and therefore the educators with these characteristics differed from the rest of the sample with regard to the reflections they provided.

In examining the race descriptors, the Latino teachers' reflections were most different from those of the entire sample. Specifically, they made interpretations more frequently than the sample, made inferences less frequently than the sample, and discussed implications less frequently than the sample. In other words, these educators provided more explanations about

singular occurrences or specific families, but fewer explanations for regular occurrences and ideas for future actions. The findings by language descriptors were similar to those by race given the overlap in the sample. Specifically, Spanish-speaking educators provided more interpretations and fewer implications. Viewed together, these results might highlight bilingual and bicultural staff members' tendency to recognize the diversity of experiences that exist for Latino students and their families rather than view them as a collective entity. For instance, in response to prompt seven, Gloria (bilingual/bicultural) discussed her reflections with regard to the family specifically referenced in the prompt. She said, "it's the child's responsibility that the mother can communicate in the community and that she is dependent on the child's English abilities and hopes that it will transfer all to her" (Interview, 6/19/14). Whereas, Jennifer reflected upon families collectively when she said, "unfortunately, I know from talking to the children a lot of times they get frustrated because their parents aren't learning their English and of course they have to be children but it makes them almost lose respect for their parents" (Interview, 5/27/14). While true to her experience, Jennifer's reflection may be an overgeneralization about Latino children at Arbor. The tendency by bilingual and bicultural educators to view families individually might also explain the relative lack of implications that these educators provided compared to the entire sample. Since they do not view families as a uniform group, they may be hesitant to suggest future actions towards all families.

In examining differences by the educators' grade/position (K-2, 3-5, or administration), administrators provided fewer observations and inferences about Latino families than the entire sample. Finally, examining educators' teaching experience revealed relationships between years of experience and their level of reflections. First, those educators with the least experience (less than five years) made observations less frequently than the entire sample, whereas teachers with

a moderate amount of experience (11-15 years) made observations more frequently than the entire sample, perhaps indicating that educators need to be working in schools for a number of years before they readily make observations. Additionally, teachers with the most experience (more than 15 years) discussed implications more frequently than the sample. This might indicate that their extended history of working in schools and with families provides them with more ideas for the ways in which the school can act in response to Latino students and their families.

RQ3: Inferences About Latino families

The third research question asked what inferences educators made about the Latino families at Arbor. To answer this question I reviewed all of the excerpts coded "family" and "inference". Specifically, I was interested in the conclusions that educators drew from repeated interactions with families as these conclusions shape the ways that families are viewed within the school.[7] There were five common themes in the educators' inferences: (1) parents are concerned with their children's behavior; (2) parents expect their children to succeed; (3) parents do not readily express their expectations of the school; (4) parents' knowledge of the school and the American educational system is limited; and (5) parents' English abilities impact their interactions with educators. I also considered differences in the inferences of the bilingual and bicultural educators.

Themes from educator inferences.

Concern with children's behavior.

[7] To reiterate, inferences are conclusions that educators made about families from multiple interactions, whereas judgments are just opinions about families without reference to past experiences.

All of the Arbor educators mentioned that Latino parents are concerned with their children's behavior at school. However, educators differed in the inferences that they made about parents' concern. Some educators concluded that parents' persistent concerns about whether their child was behaving appropriately and paying attention in class were a proxy for understanding their children's academic success. In other words, educators inferred that parents thought that if their child was paying attention, then they must be learning and therefore succeeding academically. Matt explained it as, "they just assume that if they're here and they're behaving, then the learning takes place" and that this might represent, "an old school view of teaching and learning" (Interview, 6/2/14).

Other educators felt that some parents cared more about their children's behavior than their learning. For instance, Kristen noted,

> Parents come into the conferences and they want to know, "how is my child behaving?" Once they hear that their child's behavior is good, they're happy; if they have good behavior, then it's fine. Well, but she can't read and she doesn't know her letter sounds. That's not the most important thing. I'd rather your kid have behavior that really needs working on and they are learning something than be perfectly behaved (Interview, 5/20/14).

Still other educators offered a third interpretation. They concluded that parents' emphases on their children's behavior was a reflection of both the family's values and their parenting practices and was therefore something that the parents could control, perhaps more so than supporting their children academically. Michelle stated that,

> I think it's just really important to them. I think they expect their kids to behave. Since curriculum and the study part of it isn't something they can really do much about, I think

> the behavior is something they can do a lot about, so that's their priority (Interview, 5/29/14).

Extant research has also noted parents' concerns with their children's behavior because it was both a reflection of the family as well as an aspect of their child's education that parents can influence (see Valdés, 1996).

Expectations for their children.

There was a consensus among the educators that the Latino parents at Arbor have high expectations for their children. Not only do they expect them to succeed academically, but they also expect them to play important roles in supporting their family. Rebecca referenced this phenomenon when she said, "the mother is telling the child that they believe in the child. There's a need and also that they believe in [their children] and also that they do value the education and they do want to learn" (Interview, 5/23/14).

Moreover, educators knew that parents expect their children to learn English and be able to serve as language brokers for family members who were still learning the language. While some educators expressed concern both about children's abilities to translate and their exposure to mature topics that they might not yet understand, other educators felt that having a responsibility to their family was motivating for some children. Allison noted that, "I could also see their mom inspiring them to do well in school. Again, I can see the kids feeling empowered" (Interview, 5/21/14). And Jackie said, "She's giving her positive motivation; showing her that she is capable of sticking to that goal [of language brokering]" (Interview, 6/3/14). Educators felt that this motivation often led to positive outcomes for children and their families. Rebecca told me, "there's a very loving unit between the families and the kids; everybody has a role to play;

everybody has a major part to do. I don't see tons of moms that don't look like they're being good moms" (Interview, 5/23/14).

Despite some educators' concern with children language brokering for their parents, research on this practice has demonstrated that it is related both to academic performance and feelings of self-efficacy (Buriel, Perez, DeMent, Chavez, & Moran, 1998; Orellana, 2003; Walinchowski, 2001). Moreover, there is also evidence that language brokering strengthens the parent-child relationship (e.g. DeMent & Buriel, 1999; Orellana, 2003).

Expectations of the school.

Despite having high expectations for their children, parents were not seen as having very high expectations of the school, according to some educators. Emily stated that, "they should want us to give [their children] more opportunities, more fieldtrips, more speakers, more opportunities they're not going to get in the house or from a computer," (Interview 5/21/14), but Matt understood that parents might believe that it is not their place to either have or communicate their expectations to the school. Specifically, he said, "I just think that maybe the parents aren't sure – it's kind of hard to stand and say, well I think you could do this and I think you could do that" (Interview, 6/2/14). The dissonance between the high expectations that parents have for their children and the low – or perhaps unstated – expectations that they have for the school may be attributed to "expectation barriers" (Sosa, 1996, p. 344-345). Specifically, if parents feel judged by the school because of their culture, language abilities, educational level, or class, they may intuit that their ideas about their child's education are not valued by the school (Sosa, 1996).

Yet, whether or not they share it with parents, many educators expressed an interest in getting input from parents. For instance, Emily also commented that, "I wish that they would

have more ideas about how to make their kids better" (Interview, 6/21/14). And while parents may have many ideas about "how to make their kids better," for one reason or another, educators did not hear about them from parents. Karen concluded, "parents don't know what they can and can't ask for" (Interview, 5/19/14).

Knowledge about American schooling.

Arbor educators held some deficient notions about Latino families with regard to parents' knowledge about American schooling. Largely, educators felt that parents lacked a general understanding about aspects of the American educational system (e.g., special education, report cards, parent-teacher conferences) that educators considered to be common knowledge. For instance, Karen said,

> I don't know if they all understand the whole A, B, C grade curve, and then there's all those numbers and things. I don't think I ever actually considered that they wouldn't understand the report card in terms of grades (Interview, 5/19/14).

Allison attributed this to school practices that may be different in their home countries. She said, "The schooling that she's used to might be totally different than how things are done here. I feel like a lot of parents don't really–they don't know. They're not here. They've never been through it" (Interview 5/21/14).

While some educators felt that it was the responsibility of the school to inform parents about these topics, others felt that some onus should be placed upon parents to inquire about things with which they were not familiar. Karen felt that parents should come to the teacher to ask specific questions about their children because, "the teacher is the one that knows what the child can do" (Interview, 5/19/14). However, Michelle noted that this was difficult for some

parents as "they don't want to appear vulnerable" (Interview, 5/29/14) especially if they are not confident in their English abilities.

English abilities.

Most Arbor educators made mention of a general lack of English fluency in many of their Latino families which hindered communication between parents and educators, understanding communications from the school, and assisting their children with homework. Other research has noted this as a "language-as-problem" orientation (Coady, et al., 2008) where the onus of learning English is put upon families instead of considering what other linguistic resources families' may possess. Many Arbor educators felt that it should be the parents' responsibility to learn English, but that they did not necessarily see this reflected by parents. Allison noted,

> I think it's great when the parents show interest in that [learning English]—I can tell they want to learn both languages, you know? Even if just to help their kids' education, I wish that more parents would be willing to learn some English. You know? To just communicate with their teachers because I have come in contact with several parents that are kind of… they don't want to learn English. They have this kind of guard up or, I don't know what reasons they have, but like are very resistant to it (Interview, 5/21/14).

Yet, Eleanor noted that this was more a lack of confidence than an unwillingness to learn, "they feel like, 'I might say the wrong thing' which is okay, we all say sometimes the wrong thing. It's okay… I do see a lot of reluctance and pulling back to try but that will come in time. Because sometimes if you only say one or two words, and if you started that's better than not saying anything at all" (Interview, 6/19/14).

The Arbor administration sends school-wide communication home in English and Spanish. However, several educators noted that there were parents who either did not read in

Spanish or who only spoke Mixteco, an Aztec language indigenous to Mexico. Kristen noted that just because many parents were still learning English, it should not reflect how the school views them. She said, “just because you don’t speak English, it doesn’t mean that you are not a person of value” (Interview, 5/20/14). Moreover, she made sure to note that she was also lacking language skills; she said, “the parents come in, they're like, ‘oh I don’t speak English. I'm sorry.’ I'm like, ‘I don’t speak Spanish. I'm sorry’ ” (Interview, 5/20/14).

Bilingual and Bicultural Educators.

Since the analyses for research question two showed that Latina educators discussed their inferences less frequently than the sample, I isolated the excerpts coded “inference” and “family” for this subset of the sample in order to see if there were qualitative differences in what these educators inferred about Latino families. While their excerpts still encompassed the five themes discussed above, they also differed in an important way. Specifically, these educators' familiarity with the educational contexts in families' home countries allowed them to reflect upon how those experiences might influence parents' interactions with American schools. For instance, in response to prompt one Maria said,

> Let’s change the setting—so it’s the principal in El Salvador and you're talking to parents with low socioeconomics, they're very quiet but if you're in El Salvador in a private school and you ask them, they're going to just blurt out whatever they need, they want. Socioeconomics is translated from their home country to here (Interview, 6/4/14).

Additionally, in response to prompt four, Gloria speculated about families' experiences in their home countries as well as her own parents' understanding of report cards when she said,

> I'm trying to think if they were in their native country, if they would think the same thing, if they would think that their qualifications work only just because a child’s paying

attention or not to the teacher. I don't know; my parents never thought that (Interview, 6/19/14).

In both of the above excerpts, Maria and Gloria draw from personal experiences that are rooted in the same or similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds as those of the Latino families at Arbor. Maria does this through referencing how class differences in El Salvador influence to parents' perceptions of how the school sees them. Interestingly, Gloria, in considering parents' experiences in their native countries, uses the word "qualifications" a false cognate of *calificaciones* or "grades" in Spanish when thinking aloud about how families might interpret their children's report cards. Both of these examples illuminate the invaluable insight that bilingual and bicultural educators provide when reflecting about families.

RQ4: Educators' Suggestions for Engaging Latino families

The fourth research question asked what suggestions the educators had for ways that the school could better engage Latino families at Arbor. I reviewed all of the excerpts coded "implication" and "school" in order to understand how educators might be thinking about and planning for future action with Latino families at Arbor. The educators' suggestions are summarized through six common themes: (1) educating and informing parents; (2) translating; (3) completing homework; (4) providing access to resources; (5) creating a welcoming environment: and (6) learning from parents. I also considered differences in the implications provided by seasoned educators.

Suggestions for future action.

Educating and informing parents.

All of the educators in the study agreed that the school should take some responsibility for educating and informing parents about a variety of topics including school policies,

procedures, expectations, American education, language learning, and their children's progress – both positive and the areas where they need improvement. For example, prompt four provided an opportunity for the educators to discuss parents' understanding of the district's report card. Most of the educators agreed that the format of the report was difficult for many parents – not only those with limited English – to understand and that it was the school's duty to teach parents how to read and interpret the reports. Many of the educators expressed a similar sentiment about standardized testing and reporting.

Translating.

Many of the educators discussed the ways in which language impacted their interactions with parents. However, those educators were not in agreement about how the school should work with families who may still be in the process of learning English. Several educators felt that translation would be the best way to communicate with parents and that the school needed a full-time interpreter on site to translate both written and oral communication from the school. Conversely, other educators felt that translation was not something that the school should rely upon both because of the limited access that they had to interpreters and – at least with written communication – many parents were unable to read the documents that were sent home in Spanish. Instead, these educators suggested that teachers should learn to simplify their English, learn some Spanish, design projects for parents and children to do together in any language, and make materials – such as homework – more visual. Some educators also felt that the school should work with parents to help them learn English so that they would not be reliant on their children to translate. Eleanor felt that this was an important step in empowering parents; she said, "we need to work with our moms – our mothers and our fathers – they need to come in and find ways that they can learn the English so that they can translate themselves" (Interview, 6/19/14).

Completing homework.

Homework was a commonly discussed topic in the interviews. Prompt six explicitly asked educators about homework, but many also brought it up in response to other prompts as well. However, the educators expressed differing opinions about whether or not parents should be involved in helping with homework. Many teachers felt that homework should be independent practice for children and that if they were unable to complete it on their own, then the teacher had not adequately prepared them to do it. Other educators felt that many parents expressed interest in helping their children and should be supported in doing so. Educators with the latter view differed in their opinions about whether or not homework should be translated into Spanish. Many felt that this accommodation would enable parents to be aware of what the children were working on and allow them to assist as needed, yet other teachers felt strongly that the homework should be written in simplified English with visual, easy-to-understand examples. Their rationale was that children were not learning the content in Spanish so translation might confuse them and that many parents – even with translation – may either not be familiar with the content or be unable to read the translation. Lastly, many educators noted that the homework help program that Maria ran at the local library was a great resource, but one that many parents either were unaware of or did not access.

Providing access to resources.

Many educators in the study acknowledged that some Latino parents are reliant on the school for resources and support and that the school is able to offer some forms of assistance such as food, winter clothes, and books. Yet many of the educators felt that the school could do more with regard to the ways that they offered families assistance as well as the type of help that they offered. Most everyone that was interviewed agreed that an open-ended offer for help – like

that expressed in the first prompt – was ineffective because it was unspecific and did not reflect any knowledge about the families. However, several educators generally referenced making more "resources" available to parents, but were not specific as to what those resources should be, reflecting a lack of knowledge about families' specific needs. Emily and Gloria (one of the bilingual and bicultural educators) mentioned that the school should have more books available in Spanish, both for children and parents. The provision of resources might be a good starting point for Arbor and a way for educators to learn more about the families of their students. Other research on successful Latino family engagement highlights how families who have their basic social, physical, and economic needs met, are better able to be involved in their children's education (López et al., 2001).

Creating a welcoming environment.

The educators noted that Arbor could do a better job of creating a welcoming environment for Latino families. While educators mentioned the need to create a "safe" and "comfortable atmosphere," reduce "intimidation," "not to make [a parent] feel like an outcast," and "make parents feel at ease," they were not forthcoming about specific ways in which this could be accomplished despite my inquiries. One educator suggested that the school have more parent volunteers, but also noted that she was not sure how this might work for parents who had limited English.

Learning from parents.

Several educators noted that before changing their current practices, the school could benefit from taking time to learn from parents. Renee noted that this should be a school-wide effort. She said,

> Go out and get to know them. Go to their restaurants, go to their stores, invite them into a faculty meeting and talk to the faculty about this and that. Invite all staff members into this faculty meeting, not just the teachers, the cafeteria staff, custodians, other people who see these children every single day (Interview, 5/30/14).

Matt also emphasized that the school should ask parents more questions – instead of assuming that they will be forthcoming with relevant information – in order to understand where they are coming from. Lisa expressed the need for a coherent and shared vision among school staff. She said,

> Have a vision for once you understand what their needs are and what they lack, then you've got to develop some type of vision for the direction you want to go with the school and how it serves the community, how can the school – not just the parents in the school – but how can the school serve our community; have a vision (Interview, 5/30/14).

Seasoned educators.

Analyses for research question two revealed that seasoned educators (those with 15 or more years of experience) discussed implications more frequently than the sample. Therefore, I isolated the excerpts coded "implication" and "school" for this subset of the sample in order to see if there were qualitative differences in seasoned educators' ideas for future action. While their excerpts still encompassed the six themes discussed above, they also differed in an important way. Specifically, these educators' reflections highlighted the school's responsibility to learn from parents as well as to educate and inform them. For example, Renee noted that the school should be listening to parents' concerns when she said, "I think that you have to be… you have to know what your needs are or at least know some of what they are," and Jennifer thought that "having more speakers that talk about their different concerns" would be a good way to

inform parents. However, while these were both prevalent themes, seasoned educators did not necessarily link the two ideas together such that learning from parents might help the school to better inform them or help the school to create a more welcoming environment.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings from this study document educators' reflections about Latino families following a shift in school demographics. The educators' prevalence of observations provided in response to the interview prompts – despite requests for other types of reflections like implications and interpretations – is evidence that the educators are engaging in information gathering (Caspe, 2003) and are sensitive to the experiences of Latino students and their families. However, the relative lack of other types of higher order reflections – specifically, interpretations, inferences and implications – could be seen as an indication that educators are just beginning to identify instances upon which to provide deeper reflection, but are not – at least with the same frequency – making conclusions and planning for future action.

With regard to the associations between educator characteristics and types of reflections that they made during the interviews, two conclusions are apparent. First, bilingual and bicultural educators more frequently provided interpretations than the rest of the sample, perhaps indicating that they felt more comfortable in their understanding of families to explain what they think is occurring during individual instances with families. Additionally, Bilingual and bicultural educators may be more familiar with families' understanding of schools and their culturally-based forms of participation (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994; Ramos, 2014; Valdés, 1996) through their life experiences which allow them to see beyond surface-level observations of families to interpret the meaning behind their actions. This knowledge is invaluable for all educators when reflecting upon linguistic minority families and opportunities should be provided for bilingual

and bicultural educators to share their insights with colleagues. Second, seasoned educators – those with 15 or more years of experience – more readily discussed their ideas for future action. This could be attributed to years of working with families and understanding what might be effective in working with them. They emphasized the need to learn from parents and to keep them informed, yet did not necessarily see a connection between the two. Both of the findings related to bilingual/bicultural and seasoned educators are evidence of the importance of staff members who have both personal and professional experiences from which to draw upon in understanding students and their families.

Through examining the inferences educators made about Latino families, it is clear that their inferences represent a diversity of understandings and there is not yet a shared vision for how to work with Latino families. For instance, educators provided three distinct conclusions about parents' concern for their children's behavior: (1) as a proxy for academic success; (2) as being more important than academic progress; and (3) as evidence of a families' values and parenting practices. These different and in some instances conflicting inferences are evidence both of the diverse experiences that educators have with Latino families as well as evidence of a school in transition whose educators are in the process of transforming their understandings of Latino families. Moreover, the educators in this study often saw themselves as the experts on what is best for children and framed parents' concerns as problematic and/or inaccurate (c.f. Pushnor, 2014). This stance potentially sends the message to families that their participation is not valued by the school (Shim, 2013).

Arbor educators' ideas for ways to engage Latino families also reflect diverse views and understandings about this population. For instance, the educators differed with respect to how they should engage families who are still learning English. Some felt that there should be more

translation; others thought that teachers should find ways to accommodate without translation, and still others thought the school should be more proactive in helping parents learn English. These differences are again reflective of a school that is still striving to understand and respond to its recent demographic changes as well as a staff that is potentially lacking in their understanding of language acquisition. As several educators noted in their interviews, Arbor could benefit from time spent getting know the families of their students as well as establishing a shared vision of how to engage Latino families. Moving forward, Arbor educators need ample opportunities to work together to discuss their interactions with families as well plan for ways in which they will engage them. Moreover, Arbor educators should seek out parents in this process and work with them in planning for future action – a strategy that other research has highlighted for engaging families (e.g. Delgado-Gaitain, 2012; Dudley-Marling, 2009).

As described above, transformative learning theory posits that a "disorienting dilemma" can be the initial trigger for a reassessment of one's frame of reference (Mezirow, 1978, 1991). Through their reflections, these educators show that they are reassessing their frames of reference in order to make and implement plans for action that will hopefully lead to new understandings about students and their families. Mezirow (1996) has noted that this perspective shifts lead to "a more fully developed (and functional) frame of reference… one that is (a) more inclusive, (b) differentiating, (c) permeable, (d) critically reflective, and (e) integrative of experience" (p. 163). This study has documented that through reflecting upon excerpts from Latino families, Arbor educators are beginning the process of shifting their perspectives on this population.

Considering Arbor through the lens of Delgado-Gaitan's (2012) continuum of power in family-school relationships, there is evidence that the school is consistently enacting

conventional means of engaging families in their children's education. Yet some of the reflections provided by educators demonstrate that they are transforming and moving beyond conventional practices. Some educators provided reflections that recognize their student's language and culture as tools for learning. And while the school may currently be limited both in the resources and training needed to effectively move into a more equitable power-sharing relationship with Latino families, the educators' reflections are evidence that a shift is occurring.

Implications

The findings from this study have implications for educators and families at Arbor and at schools serving similar populations. First, this study reveals that educators in a context of demographic change have differing reflections about Latino families that are often related to certain background characteristics and experiences. It is possible that, given frequent, structured opportunities to share their reflections with one another, educators may share their expertise and collectively come to deeper understandings as well as devise collective ways for which they can engage Latino families. In addition to engaging with one another, educators can also benefit from more exposure and opportunities to interact with Latino families in meaningful ways. Given the "language barriers" that many educators addressed, considerations should be made for how both groups can communicate across languages. Another way that educators like those at Arbor could learn from families is through well-planned visits to their homes, a practice in which some but not all educators currently engaged.

It is also important to note that in many schools like Arbor that are presently experiencing demographic shifts, there is also substantial diversity within new Latino and/or EL populations. This diversity exists with regard to language background and ethnicity. Many schools experiencing growth in their minority populations also have students who are fluent bilinguals

and therefore may not be considered ELs. Additionally, while Latino children are a rapidly growing sector of American school children, there are also, often concentrated, pockets of other ethnic backgrounds across the U.S. In these instances, the unique linguistic and cultural backgrounds of students and their families should be taken into account when planning for family involvement.

Limitations

A limitation of this study was that it was not possible to conduct interviews with every educator at the school despite repeated attempts on my part. Therefore, the findings should not be extrapolated beyond the sample described here. I acknowledge that it is possible that those educators that did not participate could have reflections that are wholly distinct from those provided by the sample in this study. However, in my time at Arbor, I observed that many of the teachers that chose to participate in the study were also considered leaders within the school and play an important role in influencing their colleagues, as well as determining school-wide programs and policies.

Additionally, the proportion of the sample that was bilingual and bicultural was an overrepresentation of the entire school population potentially skewing some of the results. Therefore the findings should not be considered reflective of the entire staff. I intuit that these educators' backgrounds made them more interested in participating in the study and I – like much of the staff at Arbor – find their insights invaluable for understanding the Latino families at the school.

Lastly, it is difficult to say whether or not the reflections that educators presented in response to the interview prompts mirrored the transformative learning that they were already engaging in as a result of their experiences with families or if they were simply immediate

responses to the prompts that I presented. Either way, their reflections provide insight into the ways that educators understand Latino families at Arbor.

Future Research

Future research should examine the transformations of educators like those at Arbor over time. This study captured the educators' reflections at one time point, but it would be beneficial to document the ways in which educators' reflections change over time. Additionally, in order to gain more insight into teachers' meaning-making processes, future research should allow educators to document, share, and reflect upon their own interactions with Latino families. While this study only examined the reflections of educators, future work should also consider the reflections of parents in tandem with those of educators in order to understand the cultural frames through which each group is interacting.

Arbor, like many public schools in the U.S., is in the process of responding to recent demographic shifts in its student body. This study documented the reflections of Arbor educators at one point during this transformation as they are working to understand students and their families. Lisa, like many of the educators in this study, observed that there were many ways in which Arbor could better serve Latino students and their families but that "it's gonna take time" (Interview, 5/30/14) before the school is working with families in the ways that it strives to. The reflections that have been documented in this study can be considered a starting point for those changes.

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Table 3.1

Participants

Name	Title	Years in Education	Race	Language(s) Spoken
Emily	K-2nd Reading teacher	7	White	English
Maria	K-2nd ESL teacher	15	Latino	Eng., Span.
Allison	Kindergarten teacher	4	White	English
Jackie	Kindergarten teacher	12	African American	English
Kristen	Kindergarten teacher	3	White	English
Matt	Kindergarten teacher	4	White	English
Karen	1st grade teacher	9	White	English
Lisa	1st grade teacher	12	White	English
Michelle	2nd grade teacher	11	White	English
Renee	3rd-5th ESL teacher	20	African American	English
Jennifer	4th grade teacher	32	African American	English
Rachel	4th grade teacher	30	African American	English
Rebecca	Assistant Principal	8	African American	Eng., Span.
Gloria	Outreach coordinator	2	Latino	Eng., Span.
Eleanor	Principal	35	African American	English

Table 3.2
Reflection codes

Code	Description	Percentage of all reflection codes
Judgment	opinion and/or qualitative assessment about what has occurred	4.64%
Observation	statement about something observed by the educator	41.19%
Interpretation	explanation of a specific instance	26.23%
Inference	expression of the meaning behind and/or conclusion about reoccurring instances	15.63%
Implication	idea for future action	12.32%

Table 3.3
Topic Codes

Code	Description	Percentage of all topic codes
Child	educator refers to one or more ELs	13.79%
Family	educator refers to one or more Latino families	48.25%
School	educator refers to the faculty, administration, and/or school community as a whole	26.64%
Self	educator refers to him or herself	11.33%

Table 3.4
Percentage of Educator Reflections by Descriptor

	Observation	Judgment	Interpretation	Inference	Implication
Race					
White	41.95%	6.33%	23.22%	17.41%	11.08%
Latino	42.02%	3.36%	38.66%**	9.24%*	6.72%*
Black	39.69%	2.72%	24.90%	15.95%	16.73%
Grade					
K-2	44.18%	5.13%	25.05%	14.99%	10.65%
3-5	36.88%	2.13%	23.40%	19.15%	18.44%
Admin	24.82%*	4.26%	26.95%	10.64%	9.22%
Language(s)					
English	41.15%	4.92%	23.61%	16.56%	13.77%
Bilingual	41.38%	3.45%	37.24%**	11.72%	6.21%*
Experience					
<5 years	34.29%*	5.71%	29.52%	19.05%	11.43%
5-10 years	40.44%	8.09%	22.06%	15.44%	13.97%
11-15 years	51.67%**	0%	26.25%	11.67%	7.50%
>15 years	35.50%	2.96%	25.44%	17.16%	18.93%**
Entire Sample	41.19%	4.64%	26.23%	15.63%	12.32%

Note. Percentages represent the proportion of reflection codes for educators with that descriptor. Entire sample percentages represent the proportion of reflection codes for all educators in the sample.
* Indicates a percentage that is ≥ 6.53% less than sample.
** Indicates a percentage that is ≥ 6.53% more than sample.

Appendix

Interview Protocol

Prompt 1[8]:

Ms. Parker welcomes parents to the workshop with the following statement, which is translated into Spanish for parents:

"I just wanted to take a few moments to see if there is something that I can help you with here at the school, hopefully we are working closer together to make things work for your children."

There is a long pause; no parents respond.

In your opinion, why didn't parents respond to her prompt to help them?
What does her request reveal about how the school views parents? Do you agree with this?

Prompt 2:

I often find that during the workshops parents don't ask questions even though I give them the opportunity to, and I am sure that there are parts of what we discussed that they don't understand.

Why do you think that parents do not ask questions about the workshop content?

Prompt 3:

I ask parents, "What do you expect your child's school to communicate to you?"
Parents respond with:

- My child's behavior
- My child's progress
- Whether or not my child pays attention
- In what areas my child has difficulties
- How parents can help teachers

[8] Each prompt was presented to interviewees on a separate page.

Then, I ask the parents: What does the school expect you to communicate to them? Parents respond with:

- Make sure children are not late to school
- Attend meetings
- Ask questions about children's progress

In your experience, is this reflective of the school-home relationship at Arbor?
Why or why not?
What is missing from either of these lists?

Prompt 4:

I ask the parents, why the school sends report cards home. One mother responds:

"They have report cards to show how much attention the child is paying to the teacher."

What does this statement reveal about the mother's view of teaching and learning?
What implication does that have for you as a teacher?

Prompt 5:

A mother says that she is concerned about her child's progress in school so she made an appointment with her pediatrician to find out why her child isn't advancing in school.

Is this surprising to you? Why or why not?
Why do you think that this mother went to her doctor instead of the school when she was concerned about her child's learning?

Prompt 6:

Parents express that their biggest frustration with homework is that they feel like they do not know enough English to help their children.

Do you agree with this statement, why or why not?

What do you and/or the school do to support parents who may have limited English?

Prompt 7:

I tell the parents that having high expectations is an integral part of supporting their children's learning. When I ask for examples of things that they can tell their children to show that they have high expectations, one mother says regarding her English abilities, "nothing is easy and you have to teach me. You can do it and then teach me because I also don't know."

What message is this mother sending her child?
What implication does this have for the way the child sees the mother? For the way the child sees him/herself?
How does this reflect your view of some parents in your school?

Prompt 8:

I suggest to the parents that their children can read the homework instructions first in English and then try to translate them into Spanish so that the mother can understand. One mother (of a second grader) responds, "My child can't translate yet." She says that when they go to the store and she asks him what someone has said he isn't able to translate it. She says that he can ask for things in English, but cannot translate someone's response for her.

What does this mother's statement reveal about her expectations for her child's language abilities?
What implications do her expectations have for his learning?

CHAPTER 4

Contradictory Discourses of Valued Participation: A Principal's Construction of a Parent Literacy Program

"I thought about my Kindergartners as they were coming in and they spoke no English, 90 children—out of 120—spoke no English at all and moms are always walking, coming up to the school and I thought, well, that's an opportunity for parents to get a chance to see the reading, to actually learn the English along with the children if they're in Kindergarten, first, or second grade we can start there. That's how I came up with the Side-by-Side learning."

–Eleanor Parker, Principal, Arbor Elementary School

Introduction

During my first meeting with Eleanor Parker, principal of Arbor Elementary, she told me about a series of initiatives—some already implemented, others still in planning form—that were targeted at engaging and supporting her students' families. She told me, "We are not *just* a school" and explained how she wanted Arbor to be a place where parents could access resources and programs to benefit their families beyond the classroom. In the time that I spent at Arbor Elementary—a school some might consider under-resourced—I observed how Eleanor led the school's efforts to support and engage parents, particularly those parents of students designated as English Learners (ELs), the largest sub-population in the school.

This study examines her discourse around one initiative, a program called, "Side-by-Side Learning" (SBSL) that Eleanor developed and piloted in the 2013-2014 school year. This program aimed to encourage parents of K-2 students who were primarily recent immigrants from Mexico and Central America to visit their children's classroom during the daily language arts block in order to learn about the school's literacy curriculum. Eleanor viewed SBSL—a program she developed—as a potential solution to several of the school's challenges: engaging families in their children's learning, increasing interactions between parents and teachers, and improving parents' English language and literacy skills. Through analysis of transcripts of interviews and observations before, during, and after the program's initial implementation, this study examines the ways in which she discursively constructed the SBSL program. Specifically, I utilize positive and critical discourse analysis (Rogers, 2013) to examine how she talks about the program in

order to understand the Discourse, or the "being and doing" (Gee 1999, p. 20) of valued EL parent participation that she promotes within the school. This study contributes to other literature on role that school leaders play in influencing parent involvement by highlighting the nuanced ways that her language reveals conceptualizations of Latino families and their involvement in the school.

Literature Review: School Leaders' Influence on Parent Involvement

Elementary teachers and administrators play an important role in influencing parent involvement in their schools (Barnyack & McNelly, 2009; Griffith, 2001; Hindin, 2010). They frequently create and inform parents about specific opportunities for involvement and encourage their participation in them. There is evidence that administrators in particular are uniquely positioned to encourage families' participation. Specifically, a qualitative study using parent focus groups from urban schools showed that,

> Parents are more likely to be engaged with schools where the principal is perceived as welcoming and supportive of their involvement, and less likely to be engaged where the principal is perceived as inaccessible, dismissive or disinterested in supporting their involvement (Barr & Saltmarsh, 2014, p. 491).

A comparative case study of three urban elementary school principals—part of a cohort of administrators working on building capacity among parents as a means of transforming underperforming schools—revealed successful strategies for working with families (Giles, 2006). Some of the strategies employed by these school leaders included instilling a shared vision in the school community, setting high expectations at all levels, getting parents into leadership positions, and showing their willingness to grow and learn along with teachers and

families (Giles, 2006). A key to one principal's leadership approach was instilling in parents a sense of "ownership." Specifically, the researcher noted,

> This sense of ownership emerged from developing the personal and interpersonal capacity of parents, an emergent synergy of involvement, engagement and empowerment in the school, and by consciously leading parent involvement with an outward as well as an inward-looking community orientation (Giles, 2006, p. 278-279).

However, these successful practices may not be the norm among all school principals. In fact, there is evidence that principals may view parents as resources in their children's schooling, but not leverage their support. For instance, in a survey of urban school leaders, Ferrara (2009) found that less than 18% of principals found ways to involve parents in academic programming or school governance. As well, parents' opinions were not frequently taken into consideration when determining topics for parent learning opportunities such as workshops and trainings despite principals' expressed interest in seeing parents get involved in such activities (Ferrara, 2009).

Similarly, a review of Title I school-family compacts—documents that are explicitly framed to "build and develop a partnership" between schools and families (Improving America's Schools Act, 1994, sec. 1118)—revealed that schools tended to "reinforce hierarchical models of parental involvement and emphasize transactional encounters over and above partnership activity" (Evans & Radina, 2014, p. 107). In other words, these compacts reflected a power differential between teachers and parents rather than a partnership model. Specifically, these documents positioned teachers in the role of instructing families whereas families were seen as needing to follow rules and support the teachers through tasks the school deemed to be important (Evans & Radina, 2014).

Moreover, there is evidence suggesting that some educators' beliefs about students and their families may not always be congruent with their practices. In a study of 97 urban educators, Barnyack and McNelly (2009) found that many teachers and administrators held strong beliefs about what constituted effective strategies for communicating with parents, though in practice they did not consistently implement these strategies. Other research points to teachers' potential lack of interest in working specifically with parents of minority backgrounds due to a lack of knowledge about the families. Specifically, some teachers may have deficit orientations about parents' abilities or levels of interest in their children's education (Pushnor, 2014). In schools with large EL populations, these misperceptions about parent involvement do not necessarily stem from language differences, but rather a lack of knowledge about families (Hernandez, 2010). While Pushnor's (2014) and Hernandez's (2010) studies both examine teachers' perceptions of minority families, it is safe to assume that some administrators might also have similar deficit orientations.

As a result of these beliefs, most parent involvement programs become school-directed and focus on incorporating parents into school activities, teaching new skills, and/or reinforcing school practices (Pushnor, 2012). Such programs often position parents as either the recipients of these services and/or aides in facilitating programming for children (Epstein, 1995; Pushnor, 2012). While these types of involvement are initiated with the best of intentions, they can leave parents in the periphery of school life and their child's education (Pushnor, 2012).

The ways in which educators position parents is crucial for how they will be involved in their children's schooling (Griffith, 2001; Giles, 2006; Christianakis, 2011). In one study of teachers' narratives about an under-resourced urban elementary school, all of the teachers viewed parents' primary role in the school as that of helpers in their children's classrooms

(Christianakis, 2011). While this notion of help does not necessarily align with broader conceptions of parent involvement (c.f. Delgado-Gaitan, 2012), the teachers felt that it was an adequate fit for this particular school, which lacked necessary classroom aides—positions that the school's parents were willing and able to fulfill (Christianakis, 2011). While the teachers initially positioned parents in a way that met the school's needs, eventually through participation in their children's classrooms, parents also became more informed about the school, their children, and other ways that they could be involved. However, using parents as classroom aides might not always be a successful endeavor in all schools; rather, it is important to consider how positioning parents into a deferential role might negatively impact their involvement.

Research that analyzes the discursive construction of parents by leaders of low-income, minority, urban schools documents inherent tensions between dominant and counter Discourses about families (Briscoe, 2014; Briscoe & de Oliver, 2012). Specifically, in interviews about the effects of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) on their schools, principals' dominant Discourse reified deficit notions of EL families, asserting links between deficient parenting practices and the need for remediation—both for parents and children—from the school. At the same time, principals also put forth a counter Discourse to their dominant Discourse about systemic problems affecting families (such as poverty and low literacy) that called for systemic, societal solutions (Briscoe, 2014; Briscoe & de Oliver, 2012). These two Discourses are in contrast with regard to who is held responsible for students' life situations. The former blames parents, whereas the latter places that onus on the larger societal context within which families live. The authors further note that these interwoven, yet potentially contradictory Discourses are reflective of school leaders under NCLB's punitive accountability policies. Specifically, when principals' find that their school is repeatedly deemed as failing despite their tireless efforts to

support teachers and students, they are left with two external options from which to place blame—families and society (Briscoe, 2014; Briscoe & de Oliver, 2012).

In summary, extant research documents that school leaders play a key role in shaping their schools' parent involvement, but at the same time may unconsciously contribute to contradictory Discourses about families. While there is evidence of principals successfully engaging families in a multitude of ways, there are also principals who perpetuate unfounded deficit notions, particularly about language minority families. The current study is principally concerned with the ways in which a principal at an urban elementary school with a large Latino, EL population discursively constructs parents' participation with a literacy program targeted at incorporating parents into their children's literacy instruction. Ultimately, through her construction of the program, she presents contradictory Discourses of valued participation in the school.

Theoretical Frame: D/discourse

Gee's (1990, 1999) work distinguishes between the lower case 'd' discourse—strings of connected language—and capital 'D' Discourse—ways of being and doing (Gee, 1999, p. 7). While the former encompasses instances of every day interactions, the latter goes beyond language to encompass "forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, social identities, as well as gestures, glances, body positions, and clothes" (Gee, 1990, p. 147). Discourse analysts have used the framework of D/discourse in various ways to explore practices in numerous educational contexts. These include: examining the ways in which competing Discourses shape accountability practices in U.S. schools (Buxton, Kayumova, & Allexsaht-Snider, 2013), identifying how social practices are enacted in bilingual students' non-fiction texts (Bryce, 2006), critiquing the ways in which indoctrination stifles expression by students from

diverse backgrounds (Carmody Hagood, 2000), and analyzing children's identity negotiations in the lunchroom (Heffernan & Lewison, 2005).

Gee (2014) notes, "Discourses are how we know what we are to each other and what we are doing with each other in encounters" (p. 28). Within the context of a school, Discourses inform the ways in which teachers, students, parents, and administrators interact with one another because they influence both the ways that individuals enact their identities as well as the activities in which they engage (Gee, 1999). In her position as principal, Eleanor plays a key role in shaping the Discourses about parents' recognized roles within the school. With regard to this study, analysis of Eleanor's "little d" discourse about the SBSL program provides insight into the "big D" Discourse that she shapes at Arbor, particularly around parents' roles in their children's literacy learning. Moreover, Eleanor plays a crucial role in shaping not only the activities that parents will engage in, but also the classroom environments into which they will enter, both of which are influenced by larger school Discourse.

Current Study

The focus of this study is to understand a principal's discursive construction of parents' roles within a literacy program aimed at Latino, immigrant families in an urban elementary school. Through the analysis of this school leader's discourse, this study reveals that there are potentially contradictory Discourses about valued EL parent participation in the school that she promotes.

Setting

Arbor Elementary is a K-5 school of about 500 students located in a mid-sized, South Atlantic city. In many ways, Arbor is a stereotype of many urban schools. The facilities are dated, access to technology is limited, and most students receive free or reduced price breakfast

and lunch. In less than four years Arbor has experienced a rapid demographic shift in its student body. Both due to changes in the surrounding neighborhoods and citywide redistricting to cluster Spanish-speaking students, the once largely African American school is now predominantly Latino. In 2010 the school was evenly split between the two groups, but in the 2013-2014 school year Latino students made up 85% of the school with the lower grade classes being nearly 100% Latino and nearly 100% ELs. Arbor is located in a city that has a history of segregation and continues to be marked by its economically, racially, and ethnically bifurcated populace, where low-income non-white minorities live on one side of city and wealthier white families live on the other. Additionally, most of the city schools are considered "failing" under local and national accountability policies. Yet under these metrics Arbor stands out from the crowd because in recent years that school has experienced measureable gains on state standardized tests. These achievements are largely credited to its principal, Eleanor Parker.

Participant

Eleanor Parker comes from a large family—she has 10 brothers and sisters—and her favorite pastime is getting her siblings' families together. She sees herself as the "organizer and peacemaker" among this large group and says that she feels responsible for everyone's well being—a disposition she also brings to her professional endeavors. With over 35 years of experience in both public and private schools in and around the city, Eleanor has taught middle and elementary school and was an assistant principal at another school before becoming the principal of Arbor six years ago. She is also a parent and says that she frequently reflects upon that role when working with Arbor families.

An African American in her late 50s, Eleanor's home language is English, and she at times uses African American vernacular in speech. She has slowly been learning some Spanish

in response to Arbor's shifting demographics. She does not view her presently limited fluency in Spanish as a hindrance to her work with the many Latino families at Arbor. Instead she firmly believes that—often with the help of a translator—she can understand parents because essentially they "all want the best for the children."

Eleanor is humble about her successes. During my time at Arbor, she received the district's principal of the year award, an honor that she immediately attributed to the hardworking students, parents, and teachers at her school. Eleanor is credited with leading the school to passing scores on the state standardized tests—an achievement that few schools in the city can claim. Yet Eleanor knows that her job is never done; she works tirelessly to assure that the school is continually making improvements to best serve its students and their families both in the classroom and within the larger community. From our first meeting together, it was apparent that she did not lack ideas for new programs and initiatives—particularly those aimed at supporting families. During her tenure the school began providing families with food assistance, created extended day and Saturday academic programming, provided bilingual homework assistance afterschool, and started home visits by teachers and administrators.

I chose to focus on Eleanor's discourse of SBSL and parents' roles within it for several reasons. First, within the city, she has proven to be a successful school leader and is therefore someone from whose work there were lessons to be gleaned. Second, from our initial meeting, I recognized that Eleanor expressed an unequivocal commitment to engaging Arbor families; the SBSL program was one realization of that effort. And lastly, she designed the SBSL program as a way to improve family engagement and literacy learning—two areas that are common challenges for urban schools like Arbor—and I wanted to examine how she constructed the program and parents' roles within it with these goals in mind.

Methodology

Data Collection

The data for this study include observations and interviews collected over the course of the seven months (December-June) that I spent at Arbor working with staff to put on a series of parent workshops. Through the process of planning and conducting the workshops I worked closely with Eleanor. She and other educators attended bi-weekly planning meetings and monthly workshops. With her consent, I audio recorded every planning meeting and workshop, and I used the recordings to write reflective field notes after each event. I also conducted three formal, semi-structured interviews with Eleanor between January and June.

Researcher role and positionality.

During the 2013-2014 school year I spent seven months as a participant researcher at Arbor Elementary School. I worked with school staff to plan and present a series of parent workshops aimed at parents of Latino ELs—the largest demographic in the school. As part of my research I participated in planning meetings, attended school events, conducted in-class observations, and interviewed school staff and parents. It was during a workshop-planning meeting with me and the Reading teacher that Eleanor first discussed her interest in launching the SBSL program. Since the workshops had been well attended by Latino parents, she suggested that a future workshop be used to introduce SBSL to parents. I worked with her, the ESL teacher, and the reading teacher to plan and present a workshop on SBSL. I also helped parents sign up for times to visit their children's classrooms, called to remind them of their appointments, and observed parents participating in the program.

In doing my due diligence as a researcher, I recognized that while engaging in the data collection for this study I began to develop some biases about the potential success of SBSL.

From the first time Eleanor mentioned SBSL I became skeptical about whether or not it would work because of the assumptions that it made about parents, their language abilities, and their place within the school. I became immediately aware of this bias, and made sure not to express personal opinions about the program during any interactions with Eleanor or other Arbor staff. When I began reviewing transcripts for this study, my concerns were still present. I feared that my initial choice to employ critical discourse analysis (CDA; Fairclough, 1992; Halliday, 1994) as a methodological tool in this study would only reify the biases I had toward the program, therefore resulting in findings that confirmed my initial speculations. For this reason I chose to also include positive discourse analysis (PDA; Rogers, 2013) as a way to counter my assumptions and view SBSL through a new lens. I acknowledged that there could be more behind Eleanor's discourse around the SBSL program, and I wanted to be open to uncovering it. In the words of Rogers (2013), I knew that "focusing only on unrealized moments (through critique) denies the complexity of human experience and the process of learning and becoming" (p. 30). Through employing both CDA and PDA I was able to document contradictory Discourses that Eleanor constructed through her design of SBSL—ones that illuminate the complexities in developing parent engagement programs for school leaders like Eleanor.

Excerpt selection and transcription.

I began this study with close readings of all of the field notes and interview transcripts for instances where Eleanor discussed SBSL. Once identifying these excerpts, I used the original audio data to transcribe every instance of discourse on SBSL. I transcribed the data into message units—the smallest unit of conversation that carries meaning such as a word or phrase—in order to analyze her discourse at a both micro and macro levels (Bloome, Power Carter, Morton

Christian, & Madrid, 2008; Green & Wallat, 1981). This resulted in 24 transcripts that I organized chronologically into one document in order to see her construction of SBSL over time.

Data Analysis

This study employs two layers of analysis. In the first, I used the "recontextualization of social practice" (Van Leeuwen, 2008) as a macro-level discourse analysis tool to document and describe *what* Eleanor says about SBSL, and the transformations that occur within it. Second, I utilized critical and positive discourse analysis to examine micro-level features of her discourse in order to understand *how* she talks about SBSL. Collectively these two analytic approaches facilitate an understanding of the discursive construction of parent participation within the SBSL program and the contradictory Discourses that stem from it.

Recontextualization of social practice.

In describing his approach to discourse analysis, Van Leeuwen (2008) notes "social practices are socially regulated ways of doing things" (p.6). Moreover, he adds that discourse about social practices reflects the "social cognition" of how these practices are represented and enacted (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 6). In other words, speakers both create and recreate social practices in their discourses about the activities in which they are engaged. Eleanor, in her position as principal and architect of SBSL constructs and reconstructs both the "socially constructed knowledge" (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 6)—or the ways in which groups collectively establish understandings—of the practice of SBSL as well as the role that parents play in the program.

In analyzing her discourse, the first step in my analyses was to devise the "recontextualization chain" (Van Leeuwen, 2008) that appears in Table 4.1. This chain aims to summarize and encapsulate the social practice of the SBSL through the identification of acts,

participants, performance modes (aka, the "stage directions" that indicate how participants are expected to act), times, locations, and resources. In addition to these elements that Van Leeuwen (2008) includes in his chain, I have also added "intended outcome(s)" as a part of the chain sequence since Eleanor identifies specific goals that she hopes the program will achieve. The process of creating the chain allowed me to begin to establish an understanding of Eleanor's discourse and possible points of analysis through CDA and PDA.

I also borrow Van Leeuwen's (2008) notion of "transformations" or the ways in which the discursive construction of a practice might differ from the actual practice. Specifically, Van Leeuwen proposes four forms of transformation: (1) substitutions—elements of the social practice that have been replaced with semiotic elements, (2) deletions—removal of an element of the social practice, (3) rearrangements—shifts in the order of events, and (4) additions—elements that are added to the social practice. In identifying the recontextualization chain and analyzing the transformations within Eleanor's discourse, I am able to examine *what* she discursively constructs through her discourse on SBSL. I then analyze *how* she constructs both through critical and positive discourse analysis.

Critical and positive discourse analysis.

Critical and positive discourse analysis serve as both analytic and interpretive frames in my micro analysis of Eleanor's discourse on SBSL. CDA is typically used to study how oppression and injustice are enacted through discourse (e.g. Fairclough, 1992; Rogers, 2011). My initial hesitations about how parents were positioned within Eleanor's construction of the SBSL program led me to CDA. Critical discourse analysts deconstruct speakers' language in order to understand the ways in which power is wielded, and thus reinforces social inequities (Fairclough, 1992; Rogers, 2011). This method was an adequate fit given the program's focus on

immigrant families—a population that is often marginalized within schools (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). In addition, as mentioned above, I also chose to employ PDA as a way to move beyond my acknowledged biases about the SBSL program. PDA is used as a method to focus on inclusivity and emancipation rather than social critique (see Barlett, 2012, Janks, 2005; Rogers, 2013; Rogers & Mosley Wetzel, 2013 for other studies using PDA). Likewise, there is also criticism of CDA as a method in that it "cherry picks" data to assert an ideology, thus resulting in blame rather than recognizing strengths and contributing to constructive growth (Barlett, 2012). In this way I use PDA as a check on any potential essentializing of the data as well as to further a positive dialogue about SBSL and other parent literacy programs aimed at EL, immigrant families. While CDA and PDA may appear to be oppositional analytic frames, through employing both I am able to show the tensions and contradictions inherent in Eleanor's discourse of SBSL, which ultimately influence the Discourse of parent involvement at Arbor. I acknowledge that in using both methodologies simultaneously, there may be a risk of appearing to waver between two conflicting ideas or appear inconclusive with regard to findings. However, school leaders' relationships with and understanding of EL families is complicated and ripe for potential contradictions (cf. Briscoe, 2014; Briscoe & de Oliver, 2012), and so the simultaneous use of both PDA and CDA allows for highlighting such tensions.

In both approaches I use a modified version of Roger's (2013) "Survey of linguistic features and functions" to analyze Eleanor's discourse on SBSL. This framework is informed by the work of other discourse analysts, specifically Gee's (2014) building tools and Fairclough's (2011) semiotic resources. Gee's (2014) approach to discourse analysis recognizes that people use language to build the worlds around them and to accomplish social goals. His building tools are devices for inquiry to analyze language-in-use. In a related vein, Fairclough (2011) explores

speakers' uses of semiotic resources in interpreting social practices through understanding their ways of interacting, ways of representing, and ways of being. From this framework, he proposes that we can understand discourse and its relationship to the context within which it exists. Rogers (2013) combines these frames to define "questions to ask of the text" in CDA and PDA (pp. 34-35). Rogers' (2013) framework guided my identification of discrete pieces of language in order to analyze them through her "questions to ask of the text" (see Table 4.3). In employing her framework, I only surveyed those linguistic features that were present in Eleanor's discourse. Then, I interpreted each from critical and positive stances.

Findings

The *What* of Eleanor's "discourse"

Through our conversations, Eleanor constructed the details and sorted out the logistics of the SBSL program. In other words, she was "talking it into being" (Heritage, 1997) through her thoughts and ideas of how it would be carried out, and the benefits it would provide to Arbor parents and—as a result—their children. What follows is evidence of this process through her discourse about the SBSL program.

Recontextualization chain.

In order to provide an initial structure for understanding Eleanor's discourse on SBSL I utilized Van Leeuwen's (2008) notion of a recontextualization chain (see Table 4.1). At times I include direct quotations (denoted by italicized text in Table 4.1) from her discourse in order to use the data to illustrate the recontextualization. Conversely, there are aspects of the program that I observed within the classrooms, yet go unmentioned by Eleanor (denoted by bracketed text in Table 4.1).

Eleanor contextualized the SBSL program through specific acts. These acts are presented in Table 4.1 in the order in which they took place during the implementation of the program. However, and as noted below, they did not necessarily occur in this order during Eleanor's discourse. First, she, along with members of her staff and the district's parent liaison, *promoted the program* through presentations, flyers, and the district's robo-calling system, ParentCall. Even at this initial stage of the program, Eleanor stressed the need to make parents "feel comfortable," about coming into their children's classrooms for SBSL. Eleanor and other staff at Arbor then assisted parents in *signing up* for SBSL times. She stressed that the school should be flexible about allowing parents to come when they are able for as much time as possible. After an initial round of sign ups, it became apparent that many parents were unable to participate because they had to take care of younger children during the school day. In order to accommodate parents, Eleanor arranged for ad-hoc *childcare* as needed. The heart of the SBSL program is the parents' participation during the *literacy block* in their child's classroom where they sit beside their child and follow him or her from station to station. Beyond being present during this time, Eleanor talks about parents *learning beside their children* and *assisting teachers* with literacy instruction. While these two aspects were not initially part of her conceptualization of SBSL (explained in further detail below), they became part of her expanding construction of it as the program went on. Finally, Eleanor anticipated that after participating in SBSL, parents would be better equipped to support their children in completing homework.

Eleanor's discourse on SBSL details performance modes—what Van Leeuwen (2008) deems as the "stage directions"—that tell participants how something should be enacted. These are important elements of Eleanor's discourse as they set expectations for the roles that parents are expected to enact within SBSL. When participating in the literacy block, she noted that

parents, teachers, and students will "go through the whole routine." Teachers established this routine at the beginning of the school year. They start the block by giving students an overview of all of the stations they will visit that day. If any station has a new activity, the teacher models this for the students. Additionally she puts the children into groups and denotes a leader. While this routine may not appear to be overly complex, for a parent who is unfamiliar with station-based, self-directed learning and/or may have limited English to comprehend the teacher's instructions, it could leave them confused or unsure about what is occurring and limit their ability to learn about and from the literacy program. Likewise, in analyzing the resources required for each level of action in Eleanor's representation of SBSL, there are notable absences with regard to the linguistic, literate, and pedagogical resources that are required for parents to fully participate in SBSL.

Finally, in Eleanor's construction of SBSL she expanded the potential outcomes that may result from parents' participation. Eleanor's initial vision for SBSL was for parents to learn about Arbor's literacy curriculum, which will boost their confidence and make them feel "at ease." But, over the course of several meetings about SBSL Eleanor also began to recognize potential additional benefits of SBSL: parents improving their literacy skills and English abilities, beginning to assist their children's teachers during the literacy block, and reinforcing learning at home. Finally, beyond the initial pilot of SBSL in the K-2 literacy classes, Eleanor started to see how it could be expanded to other grades and subjects. She said, "then we will do it for the upper grades for Reading, then for Mathematics as well. To the point that we will extend it to, 'you can come now to any class. You want some History? You wanna learn about the History? Come sign up.' "

Transformations.

The expansion of potential outcomes was not the only transformation in Eleanor's contextualization of SBSL. Table 4.2 contains a summary of four transformations—substitutions, deletions, rearrangements, and additions. First, Eleanor made *substitutions* by replacing a specific element of the social practice—in this case, Arbor parents, a diverse group with complex lives and backgrounds—with a semiotic element—a generalized parent voice. In her framing of SBSL, Eleanor generalized the parent experience through a hypothetical re-voicing, or speaking from another's point of view. For instance, when describing parents' participation in a SBSL session she said, "that will really motivate our parents to say, 'hey, I'm gonna really get into this reading; I want to find out,' " and later "I would feel better if they feel comfortable in the classroom and feel like, 'oh, I like being in here and I like learning and I see how it is.' " Through these re-voicings she created new meaning about the role that all parents are expected to play in the program. She set up the expectation of a singular parent experience, one of universal interest and enjoyment on the part of the parents.

Related to this substitution is an important *deletion* from her discourse—denoted by the bracketed text in Table 4.1. In framing the singular parent experience of SBSL she set up the notion that other parent experiences are not possible and therefore she did not foresee potential challenges that parents might experience in visiting their children's classrooms and participating in a literacy program. Notably, there is an absence of discourse that considers how teachers might integrate parents into the literacy block when they may have limited English abilities, literacy skills, and/or unfamiliarity with literacy instruction in an American elementary school. Additionally, Eleanor did not discuss how parents might leverage their literacy skills in Spanish to facilitate the children's learning.

Van Leeuwen (2008) asserts that social practices and the discourses that reconstruct them follow a specific order of events, yet Eleanor's discourse on SBSL revealed several *rearrangements* of the order of SBSL events. This was due to the fact the SBSL was a new program, so there were many logistical matters to resolve. Specifically, the need to facilitate parent sign-ups and handle childcare concerns are scattered throughout her discourse. These reoccurrences reflected the challenges that each of these actions presented in the implementation of the program. First, each grade's literacy block occurs at a specific time everyday, which was often challenging for parents to attend due to work schedules and/or finding childcare for children at home. Eleanor wanted to make sure that interested parents could come whenever it was convenient for them, even if only for 30 minutes. And so instead of having parents sign up to come for the entire, two-hour literacy block, she said that they could come for an amount of time that was feasible for them. With regard to childcare, Eleanor was determined to do everything in her power to accommodate parents. When several parents noted that they were unable to participate in SBSL because they had to take care of a younger child at home, she arranged ad hoc childcare by other staff in the school including the counselor and herself. The revisiting of these logistical issues reflects Eleanor's construction of the program to adapt and change as circumstances demand—a trait that could prove valuable as the program expands.

Lastly, examining the complete text of Eleanor's discourse on SBSL over time revealed several *additions* to the social practice, particularly with regard to parents' roles within the program and the benefits ascribed to them through participation. In initial discussions of SBSL, Eleanor framed the program as, "parents being invited to come to the school and sit in the classroom. They sign up [for] a time that they sit right there beside the children and they go through the whole reading program with the child." However, she later stated that parents, "can

be of assistance in helping with reading, you know with the sounds, identifying letters, then the sounds and blending." Eleanor also shifted in her understanding of what benefits she thought that parents would reap from participation in the program. Initially she framed SBSL as a way for parents to learn about the school's literacy curriculum in order to support their children's learning at home. Over time she also asserted that SBSL was a way for parents to also learn English and build literacy skills. There are two possible interpretations of these additions to the social practice of SBSL. First, these additions might reflect a lack of sound understanding about parents and their potential contributions to the program or second, as she talks the program into being, she heightens her expectations for what the parents and the program are able to achieve. The former is a documented trend among principals serving populations like Arbor's (see Hernandez, 2010; Pushnor, 2014) while the latter—setting high expectations—has been recognized as a strategy of successful principals (see Giles, 2006).

The *How* of Eleanor's "discourse"

After analyzing transcripts of Eleanor's discourse at a macro level to describe *what* she was saying in her construction of SBSL, I then analyzed her discourse at a micro level in order to understand *how* she was constructing SBSL through the use of specific linguistic features. Below I present these micro level findings by aspects of Roger's (2013) "survey of linguistic features and functions" and their accompanying "questions to ask of the text" (italicized in sub-headings below).

Voice: Is the agent represented?

The first time that Eleanor presents the idea of SBSL she placed herself at a distance from it. She said, "there's a program called Side-by-Side Learning…" The way that she said this led me to believe that SBSL was a curriculum or program that originated from outside of the school.

Later, in another meeting when I asked her where the idea for SBSL came from, she claimed ownership and explained that she came up with the idea after seeing so many kindergartners enter Arbor with little or no English abilities. She then went on to say, "and moms are always walking, coming up to the school, and I was asking, well, that's an opportunity for parents to get to see the reading; to actually learn the English along with their children." There are two possible interpretations of her initial distance. First, in her initial presentation of SBSL, Eleanor does not mention an agent in the framing of the program; she uses the passive voice to say, "there's a program." This could be seen as a hesitation about whether or not the program will be effective, but as she grows more confident in the design of SBSL her speech reflects that and she positions herself as the agent and architect of the program. Another interpretation is that—as mentioned before—Eleanor is a humble leader and does not like to take personal credit for the school's achievements. Instead she likes to express collective ownership of the school's efforts in these areas, which is further explored below through her choice of pronouns.

Pronoun usage: What pronouns are used and where?

Eleanor's pronoun usage across the transcripts reveals that she frequently uses "we" as the agent when talking about the program, even though it was designed and instituted by her. Analyzing each instance of "we" revealed that she used it to represent the school—she and the teachers—reflecting both a unification and exclusion. She presented the school as a unified group working together on the program, but excluded parents from designing and implementing the program. For instance, the following statements illustrate how SBSL was something that the school does to the parents: "it's continuously encouraging parents to come and every opportunity we get we're going to do that and we're going to have it available as many times as possible," "we still want to encourage parents to come in," and "I think that there is a better way that we

can expose parents to how the program works." However, her discourse did include parents' voices in another way—through re-voicings and quote speech, both of which are explained in further detail below.

Intertextuality: How does the text draw on other voices?

While intertextuality can refer to a speaker's reference to other written or oral texts, in the case of Eleanor's discourse she literally draws upon others' voices through hypothetical re-voicings—general statements made from another's perspective—and directly quoted speech. In doing so, she took on the voices of Arbor parents, and demonstrated how she talked or will talk to Arbor parents. In both she reflected her hope that parents experience positive outcomes through their participation in SBSL. For example, in re-voicing what a parent might say about their participation in SBSL, she said, "I understand how this works, this word study guide; I understand what this means." She also re-voiced herself, and addresses me as if I were an Arbor parent. For instance, in discussing how she will promote SBSL, she said, "Have you had a chance to go into the reading class and see what this reading is all about? Oh, no you haven't? Well, come on, let me tell you a little more about it!"

Eleanor also embedded quoted speech into her discourse about SBSL. For example, in recounting one parent's experience with SBSL, she said, "I was having difficulty with his reading. He was having trouble at home, but once I went into the classroom, I saw some activities and things that I can do with him." Additionally, during one conversation about SBSL she told the story of an exchange that she had with an Arbor parent about learning and using English to interact with her child's teacher. In doing so, she connected one parent's success in learning English with the possible outcomes that other parents could have through SBSL. She said,

> It was so- it was just a great inspiration, I was talking to a mom and she needed to speak to the teacher, and she was speaking some English. I said, "okay great!" And she said, "we need to meet the teacher," so I call the teacher, and she says, "yea, we have a meeting, that's fine," and then I look at her and say, "she'll be down in a few moments." I said, "Do you need someone to translate?" She said, "yes, I do," she said, "but not very long, I'm in class, I'm taking English, and I will be out in May." I say, "you're doing a great job right now!" It was such an inspiration, because I remember when she used to say nothing, not at all, she was like reluctant. And I say, "I'm so proud of you. Please let me know when you're finished class, that will be (claps) congratulations, I'll give you the biggest shout out ever!" I was so proud of her. Excellent, see then we could have other parents to do the same thing.

Through this story, Eleanor demonstrated her pride and belief in parents' abilities to learn English—a burgeoning goal of SBSL. Overall, through her re-voicings and use of quoted speech, Eleanor demonstrated her attempts to view SBSL from the perspective of Arbor parents and empathize with their experiences—a leadership strategy that has proven successful in working with families (Giles, 2006)—as well as how she positions herself as friendly and open when speaking to Arbor parents.

Relexicalization: What words or phrases show up again and again in the transcript?

As noted across the various acts of the recontextualization of SBSL, it is apparent that making parents "comfortable" was a high priority for Eleanor. Her repeated use of these words is a relexicalization (Rogers, 2013, p. 34). Across the 24 transcripts she used the word, "comfortable" 11 times, making it the most frequently used adjective about how she wants parents to feel during SBSL. She also said that she wanted parents to feel "relaxed" (two

occurrences), “at ease,” (one occurrence) and “good” (one occurrence). Prior to SBSL, parents did not regularly spend time in their children’s classrooms and Eleanor was aware of this. From her interactions with and observations of parents, she intuited that the school might be an intimidating place for them and therefore she strived to make them feel welcome and comfortable. However, her discourse presented a contradiction in the logical conditions necessary for the program to work: she needed parents to feel comfortable enough to sign up for the program, yet believed that this comfort would be a natural recourse of participation in SBSL. It was difficult to have one without the other and her discourse on these matters reflected a tension in the program.

Exclusion: What information is being excluded?

My initial hesitations about SBSL and the ways in which Eleanor was constructing the program were mainly because of the general absence of parents’ contributions to its design. While it is possible to analyze Eleanor’s transcript from many different angles to determine what she had excluded from her discourse on SBSL, one notable exclusion—given the population of Arbor students—is her lack of recognition for the potential funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) that Arbor parents could bring to SBSL. As noted above, the majority of Arbor students are ELs, many of whom have parents with limited English and/or literacy abilities. However, they bring with them “cultural ways of knowing” and “repertories of practice” (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003) that could possibly enhance literacy teaching and learning for their children in classrooms with teachers who do not share their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. To give her credit,, Eleanor did express her desire for parents to assist teachers in the classroom, but this is only after they had experienced the SBSL program. And while her statements about their assistance could insinuate this type of cultural and linguistic support, she

did not explicitly mention it. Moreover, this positioning reflected a unidirectional transmission of knowledge from the school to parents, one that can be considered problematic and rooted in deficit notions of minority families (Delgado-Gaitan, 2012; Hernandez, 2010; Pushnor, 2012, 2014).

Modality: How is obligation expressed in the text?

Speakers use modal verbs to express obligation within a text (Rogers, 2013). In examining Eleanor's discourse, the most frequent modal verbs in the transcripts were *can* (34 occurrences) and *will* (33). She has almost never used *may* (2), *might* (3), *could* (7), and *should* (1). The former indicate more compulsion and commitment while the latter are typically used to hedge speech and express less obligation (Rogers, 2013). I interpreted her frequent use of the former as a reflection of her unwavering confidence in the program, the school, and parents' interest in engaging with the school in this way. For instance, in discussing promotion of the program she said, "the more they hear about it, the more parents *will* feel comfortable with coming in" (emphasis supplied). Additionally, there was not a consistent single subject used with the modal verbs *can* and *will*, rather Eleanor expressed commitment on both the part of the school and on that of the parents. For example, she says both, "[the parents] will be strong and say, 'hey, I can help to reinforce what you did at school," and "every opportunity that we can, we're gonna encourage our parents to come in and be a part."

Discussion: Contradictory Discourses of Valued Participation

In my first meeting with Eleanor—before the SBSL program was instituted—she told me that Arbor was, "more than just a school." This statement was an expression of her aspiration to build a community where parents were regular, valued participants in their children's education.

Yet at this time, Eleanor's vision for Arbor was very much a work-in-progress and continued to be so throughout my time at Arbor. SBSL was one attempt for her to realize her vision.

As mentioned above, I initially had reservations about the SBSL program, and in order to minimize my biases during analysis I employed the analytic and interpretive frames of CDA and PDA. These frames proved an adequate fit for uncovering the tensions in Eleanor's discourse. While Eleanor is, in every sense of the term, well meaning, my analyses reveal that in the discursive construction of SBSL, she presents contradictory Discourses of valued EL parent participation: first, a *Discourse of responsivity* about parents and the shifting demands of the program, and second, a *Discourse of rigidity* with regard to the program structure and positioning of parents.

Discourse of Responsivity

Eleanor's discourse about the SBSL program contributes to a Discourse of responsivity to parents at Arbor Elementary. This is seen through her initial motivations in creating the SBSL program: to present an opportunity to engage parents in their children's learning. Moreover, this Discourse of responsivity is advanced as Eleanor shows a disposition to adapt to both the needs of parents and the demands of the program during its implementation. Eleanor also demonstrates a willingness to grow and change along with the SBSL program—a quality that has been documented as fundamental in school leaders who effectively engage parents (see Giles, 2006). Her discourse also documents several attempts to empathize with parents in order to understand their experience of SBSL as well as a commitment and an unwavering confidence in what the program can potentially achieve. These qualities are essential for school leaders when encountering setbacks or challenges in parent-directed programs and further a Discourse of responding to the needs of families.

Discourse of Rigidity

Conversely, Eleanor's discourse on SBSL also furthers a Discourse of rigidity with regard to valued EL parent participation. Specifically, she frames SBSL as an endeavor owned by the school and devoid of parent input, which manifests a unidirectional transmission of information from school to parents (Delgado-Gaitain, 2012). This rigidity is also evidenced through her expression of a singular parent experience of SBSL as well as a failure to recognize the contributions that parents can potentially bring to both the construction of the program and children's learning. This is despite evidence that parents, regardless of background, want to provide input into their children's education and more specifically contribute to school decision-making (Ferrara, 2009). There is evidence that such oversights often stem from a lack of knowledge about families and their potential contributions (Hernandez, 2010; Pushnor, 2014). Likewise, Eleanor does not recognize that parents have funds of knowledge—linguistic, literate, and life experiences—that can potentially facilitate learning for their children (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). Instead, her positioning of them within SBSL is primarily as beneficiaries of the literacy curriculum rather than as contributors. This stance may further inequities that families experience at school. Given the large number of immigrant students at Arbor, it is important to recognize that—for many immigrant families—school is typically one of the first institutions that immigrant families interact with, and parents may therefore defer to teachers and administrators with regard to their children's education as well as their role in it. (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).

Implications

The findings from this study have important implications for Eleanor as well as other administrators working schools with populations like Arbor. While it was not the focus of this

study, the ways that Eleanor discussed families and their participation in the SBSL program have implications for the ways the families engage with the program as well as the ways in which the participate more generally in the school. Administrators can benefit from a close inspection of the Discourses that they put forth about parent participation in their schools and how these Discourses not only influence family engagement but also the ways that teachers conceptualize families and their involvement. This might be accomplished through partnerships with university researchers and/or developing relationships with administrators at other schools who might be able to provide both critical and positive feedback.

In the case of Arbor, the majority of students were Spanish-speaking Latinos, however there are many growing communities across the U.S. of other linguistic and cultural backgrounds. When designing parent involvement programs, these unique characteristics should be taken into account when planning for parent involvement. Additionally, this study highlighted the need for administrators to include parents in the design of programs that they will participate in and benefit from. Policy makers should include requirements for parent involvement in the design of programs aimed to benefit them and their children.

Limitations and Future Research

This study of Eleanor's discursive construction of SBSL at Arbor Elementary is bounded by time and is limited to our interactions with one another. I acknowledge that Eleanor was constructing and continued to construct the SBSL program before I arrived, after I left, and in interactions with other staff and parents at Arbor when I was not present. Therefore, there are likely other aspects of her discourse that I did not capture and ways in which it continued to change after I left. A follow-up study to see how SBSL grows and changes would help to document the relationship between her discursive construction and eventual outcomes of the

program. Moreover, an examination of the discourse of other participants—teachers, parents, and students—would help to show the ways in which her discourse shaped larger Discourse within the school community.

Conclusion: From discourse to Discourse

The contradictory Discourses of valued EL parent participation warrant both attention and discussion because Eleanor, in her role as principal, has the power to influence—both through her direct speech and through the programs and policies that she implements—the ways that language minority families are positioned within the school. Specifically, I argue that her discourse on the SBSL program simultaneously perpetuates two versions of a Discourse of valued participation: one of responsivity and one of rigidity. This study points to two practical implications both for Eleanor and other school leaders trying to implement parent involvement programs. First, regardless of the school demographics, school leaders should strive to gather parent input about the ways that they are interested and able to be involved in their children's education. Principals can recruit parents to serve leadership roles in order to be part of regular decision-making processes and connect with other families (Giles, 2006). Second, this study demonstrates the needs for schools to be flexible in their design of programs; they should be prepared to adapt and shift programs as context and parent experiences demand.

Lastly, this study utilized the analytic and interpretive frames of critical and positive discourse analysis. While the former tends to be more prevalent in discourse research, this study serves as evidence for how the two can be complementary and serve to illuminate tensions and contradictions. Moreover, employing the two frameworks together allowed me to see past my initial hesitations about SBSL and instead view both the strengths and contradictions inherent in

Eleanor's discourse. Future discourse analytic studies should consider both frames in their analyses in order to further constructive dialogue.

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Table 4.1
Recontextualization chain of SBSL (Adapted from Van Leeuwen, 2008)

Acts	Participants	Performance Mode(s)	Times	Locations	Resources	Intended outcome(s)
Promote program	Principal Teachers Parent Liaison	*Make them feel comfortable.* *Contact them by phone and remind parents that they have appointments and a scheduled time to come in.*	Before, during, and after school	School Home	Presentations Flyers ParentCall	Parents become interested in SBSL *The more our parents see it the more they will feel more comfortable about "Hey, yea. That sounds really good; I wanna sign up."*
Sign-up	Principal Teachers Parents	*Let them know that we'll do everything to make sure they feel comfortable- and they don't have to stay the whole two hours if they want to, they can stay for 30- an hour, whatever time they want to stay, it's fine.*	Before, during, and after school	School	Sign-up folders	Parents sign-up for SBSL times
Provide childcare	Principal Staff Parents Children	*We will keep a good eye on them, have toys, have things out there for them.*	During K-2 literacy blocks	Available space in the school	Staff members' time; toys	Parents are able to visit children's classrooms without worrying about care for younger children
Participate in literacy blocks	Teachers Parents Students	*Go through the whole routine*	During school day	K-2 classes	Curricular materials	*Parents will feel at ease, they won't feel like, "Oh, I can't do that, it's too hard." It's not.*

Learn beside your child	Parents	*Sit right there beside the children and they go through the whole reading program with the child.* *Feel comfortable.*	*Not just one time, but you have an opportunity to come as many times as you like.*	K-2 classes	[Language/ literacy levels to understand instruction]	Parents learn about Arbor's literacy curriculum; improve English and literacy skills* *And you know even to the point where, "I'm learning some English."*
Assist teachers*	Parents	*They can be of assistance in helping with reading—you know—with the sounds, identifying the letters, then the sounds and blending.*	During K-2 literacy blocks	K-2 classes	[Knowledge of literacy curriculum/ pedagogy]	*They will be here and not only that, they know the program so they will be assisting the teachers with the stations, preparing the activities for stations and working with children.*
Complete homework*	Parents Students	*You can go home and you can say, "oh, your teachers are working with this and I'm understanding how this works, this word study guide. I understand what that the means."*	Outside of school time	Outside of school	[Language/ literacy levels & content knowledge to comprehend and assist with tasks]	Parents are able to assist children with homework* *They'll say, "Hey, I can help, to reinforce what you did at school because I understand what they're doing with this reading program."*

Notes. Acts are presented here in sequence, not in the order that they were discussed. Italicized text is quoted from transcripts of principal's speech during meetings and interviews. Non-italicized information is summarized from transcripts. Text in brackets reflects components that were not explicitly mentioned in Eleanor's discourse. Asterisks denote elements of Eleanor's discourse that were not initially considered part of SBSL, but became incorporated as she discussed it.

Table 4.2
Transformations

Type of transformation	Van Leeuwen's (2008) Definition	Findings
Substitutions	Replacement of elements of the social practice	Singular parent experience of SBSL
Deletions	Removal of elements from the social practice	Negation of other parent experiences SBSL
Rearrangements	Change to the "order of events" in social practice through its recontextualization	Revisit the logistics of sign-ups and childcare in order to address challen to implementation
Additions	Elements added to the social practice	Parents' roles: shift from consumers the literacy program to classroom assistants Benefits to parents: shift from impro ability to help children at home to learning language and literacy along their children

Table 4.3
Results of Critical & Positive Discourse Analysis (Adapted from Rogers, 2013)

Linguistic feature	Question to ask of the text	Evidence	Finding (CDA)	Finding (PDA)
Voice	Is the agent represented	Initial use of passive voice, later claiming ownership	Expressions of hesitation	Expressions of collective ownership by the school
Pronoun usage	What pronouns are used and where?	Exclusive "*we*"	Parents not positioned as owners of SBSL	Parents positioned as receivers and beneficiaries of SBSL
Intertextuality	How do the transcripts draw upon other voices?	Re-voicings Quoted speech		Positions self as open, friendly, and empathetic
Relexicalization	What words or phrases show up again and again in the transcript?	Repeated uses of "*comfortable*" and "*at ease*"	Dilemma between needing parents to be comfortable enough to sign up vs. becoming comfortable through SBSL	Dilemma between needing parents to be comfortable enough to sign up vs. becoming comfortable through SBSL
Exclusion	What information is being excluded?	Absence of parents' funds of knowledge	Unidirectional transmission from school to parents	
Modality	How is obligation expressed in the transcripts?	Frequent use of *can* and *will* Limited use of *may*, *might*, *could* and *should*		Unwavering confidence in the SBSL program