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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Making the margin visible:

Out-of-school literacy practices among Mexican heritage

English learners in an English-only district

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

in

Teaching and Learning

by

Shivani Linda Burrows-Goodwill

Committee in charge:

Professor Alison Wishard-Guerra, Chair

Professor Michael Cole

Professor Ana Celia Zentella

2009

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2009

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the children and their families who opened up their homes and their hearts to me to make this study possible.

Bless you all, you opened my eyes.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Making the margin visible:

Out-of-school literacy practices among Mexican heritage

English learners in an English-only district

by

Shivani Linda Burrows-Goodwill

Doctor of Education

University of California, San Diego, 2009

Professor Alison Wishard-Guerra, Chair

The Hispanic academic achievement gap in California is often attributed to language difference, low economic status, and assumed cultural deficit within families (Neufeld & Fitzgerald, 2001; Saracho, 2007). When students who fit these descriptors achieve academic scores of proficiency and above, we can benefit from examining their repertoires of family literacy practices. This qualitative study examined the summer literacy practices within the nine Spanish-speaking families of a second grade cohort attending a small Title 1 urban school in Southern California. At home adult support was in Spanish, and material means were limited by low-income status, yet six of the nine achieved above average on state tests in

English. In this descriptive, two-phase study I used semi-structured interviews and video elicitation to answer these questions: 1. What do Mexican-heritage children do during the summer vacation? 2. What funds of literacy are available to them? 3. How do home and community ecological and cultural- linguistic contexts influence their engagement with these funds of literacy? The goal was to identify patterns of literacy engagement with local resources as they emerged through daily family routines within an apparently homogeneous sample. I used the framework of ecocultural activity settings to capture literacy events involving adults and children in their naturalistic settings. Inductive analysis of multiple data sources revealed a wide range of practices and an abundance of literacy resources within each home. Four of the six higher achieving children were found to be involved in church or bible study community activities that required literacy in Spanish. Adults in these cases provided structure and engagement to summer practices, with the purpose of moral education. In two of the cases fathers were the dominant agents of literacy. In all cases older siblings mediated practices in English. These findings complicate the deficit assumptions associated with low-income, linguistic minorities by providing illustrating how families leverage local *funds of literacy* to support their children's overall literacy development. The study claims the need for a new framework of literacy research that integrates the role out-of-school literacy activities in overall literacy development, and the need to acknowledge the literacy resources Mexican-heritage students bring to the classroom

CHAPTER I

Studying literacy practices outside of schooling

The starting point is the ecology of everyday human activities.

(Cole, 1996, p.141)

Introduction

Dominating the current debate in education policy is the academic achievement gap between low-income, linguistic minority students and their middle class native- English-speaking peers. After a decade of intensive curriculum reform yielding limited success in raising Hispanic test scores and reducing high school drop out rates, we need to ask the question, what is missing in research attempts to engage with the phenomenon of underachievement by ethnic and linguistic minority students? Since the passing of No Child Left Behind (2000), 'one-size fits-all' state curriculum standards have left schools in low-income, ethnically diverse, areas to suffer the stigma and penalties of 'school improvement' status, because high percentages of their English Learner students fall behind on English only tests. Yet learning is not confined to the bounds of the classroom setting and the school day (Hull & Schultz, 2002). Children continue learning within the cultural-linguistic communities they engage in outside of schooling. Learning is not always formal. Roles and resources change, and modalities of learning shift according to the activity setting in which it occurs. How learning continues outside of school is usually invisible to monolingual teachers of linguistic minority students, unable to access the multilingual family resources used to support children's learning. Research based only on school measures of reading omits these dimensions of a child's literacy profile that nevertheless contribute to her performance at school. I seek in this dissertation to begin to make visible what has often been ignored, by viewing literacy through the ecology of everyday activities, as part of an integrative approach to the study of literacy.

Rationale for the study

Low average test scores by Mexican-heritage students in California and a high dropout rate after ninth grade concern educators and policy makers alike. The explanations commonly offered for this trend are based on the notion of linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic differences, often perceived as deficits. When viewed through a lens that assumes the Anglo-middle class culture as the unmarked category, these explanations appear plausible. Historically, economic disadvantage has led to social deprivation and limited access to the symbolic capital¹ (Bourdieu, 1991) of the mainstream culture, such as [J]. Here I attempt to minimize this cultural bias by adopting a non-causative, descriptive lens to analyze data on the same low-income, linguistic minority students. My objective is to examine family practices and beliefs to reveal ‘what is there’, without pretense of comparison with mainstream practices as a benchmark. Running through the literature are contradictions between patterns of deficit achievement statistics and more hopeful findings by empirical research. I suggest that highlighting ‘what is there’ at the heart of these contradictions can yield clues to the wide variation of achievement by Hispanic students, a variation that has been little addressed in the literature. This is particularly so in the case of high-achieving students. For example, cultural and linguistic discontinuities between teachers and parents have led to a breakdown in communication over expectations of home learning support (Gallimore & Reese, 2000). Low parent attendance at school activities has led to negative perceptions by school personnel of Hispanic families’ motivation to support student achievement (Saracho, 2007). Yet key studies of Hispanic family literacy found a wide range of practices among Mexican-heritage families, as well as a strong belief in the

¹ Symbolic capital refers to status and recognition and functions as an embodiment of cultural value.

value of supporting the child's education (Anderson, Teale & Estrada, 1980; Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Now newer studies are needed to document the family literacy practices (Volk & Long, 2005) among Spanish-speaking families in California, since the abolition of bilingual education. Changes in home early literacy practices indicate an upward trend in the past decade across all subgroups, including Hispanic families (NCES, 2006). My own professional experiences, teaching children from low-income, Spanish-speaking homes, also complicate the deficit argument by anecdotally recording average-to-high student achievement levels over the past ten years that fail to match the 'disadvantaged' expectation of school failure. In the light of these changes I claim the importance of investigating the current out-of-school practices by Mexican-heritage families that informally support literacy.

The problem of linguistic discontinuities

The public school landscape in California has changed with regard to children from Spanish-speaking homes since the end of bilingual education in 1998, when literacy instruction in Spanish virtually disappeared from public school classrooms. Teachers in monolingual classrooms are unlikely to draw on a young child's emergent literacy in Spanish as a strength in the high-pressured, test-driven atmosphere now prevailing. Educators attribute the failure of low-income Hispanic children to a cultural-linguistic deficit in the family. The language barrier between monolingual teachers and Spanish-speaking parents can inhibit the home-school communication of family practices that incorporate literacy and contribute to the bilingual child's identity as a reader and writer. Those bilingual students whose cultural communities require Spanish literacy for full participation have no avenue through which to demonstrate their skills in biliteracy within the narrow bounds of monolingual classrooms.

During the school year children transition daily between participating in the institutional culture of the classroom, and participating in the less structured setting of the family. For ethnic and linguistic minorities, these changes of setting that children experience between school and homes and communities can be described as transitions between cultural-linguistic communities (Rogoff, 2003), in which culture is construed as participation in one or more communities based on common cultural practices. The nine-month routine of cultural-linguistic transitions during the school year, is replaced during the summer by a foregrounding of the ecocultural niches of the home, extended family, and community as the daytime environment. These contexts become the dominant activity settings in which children engage, aligning cultural and linguistic identities more closely to the dominant language of family and cultural community. By describing the out-of-school literacy practices found within the daily lives of young Mexican-heritage English learners in the context of family and community interactions this study aims to identify cultural-linguistic factors that influence literacy engagement in families where the dominant language spoken is Spanish, but school instruction is entirely in English.

Achievement gap, summer learning losses and deficit perspectives

The Hispanic academic achievement gap in California is often attributed to language difference, low economic status, and cultural deficit within families (Neufeld & Fitzgerald, 2001; Saracho, 2007). In addition, research suggests that the school calendar plays an important role. According to Alexander and Entwisle (2007) twelve weeks of school summer vacation in the USA represents a hiatus of structured learning activities that can result in a widening of the educational achievement gap for children of families with a low socioeconomic status: “summer learning rooted in family and community influences widens the achievement gap across social lines, while schooling offsets those influences” (p.167).

Scholars concur that summer learning losses represent the largest cumulative factor contributing to the achievement gap among students from low-income families (Downey, 2004; Heyns, 1978). The scarcity of studies investigating summer activities among Latino families suggests we can benefit from examining their repertoires of family literacy practices away from school. The cultural-linguistic ways families engage in literacy activities shape a child's understanding of the meaning and purpose of reading and writing in daily life. Longer periods away from school, like the summer vacation, become opportunities for investigating the ecocultural, and linguistic nature of these family literacy practices, within the cultural-linguistic communities in which they engage.

Perceptions of home literacy support: What counts as literacy in home and community?

Constructions of deficit among minority and low-income children arise when the world of their primary socialization interfaces directly with the implicit socialization expectations of the dominant culture embodied by the ecology of the classroom. This is further complicated when the child's primary socialization occurred in a language other than English. Monolingual educators frequently perceive language difference as a deficit of the mainstream currency of communication, American English, and consequently as a deficit of knowledge itself. Non-Spanish speaking teachers of young Mexican-heritage children have very little access to the prior literacy socialization process of their students. This results in a negation of the bilingual child's complex cultural and cognitive identity. In this study I attempted to neutralize the deficit lens by using ethnographic methods to examine 'what was there' within the routine family literacy practices of nine young Latino students who were apparently 'beating the odds' of low income and cultural-linguistic difference through their average to high levels of academic achievement. Using a qualitative approach I explored the ecology of cultural-linguistic assets, specifically resources

supporting literacy that I term, 'funds of literacy', completely outside the realm of schooling. This dissertation seeks to complicate the prevailing deficit assumptions attributed to Latino families by describing the ways children from low-income Spanish-speaking families engaged with the bilingual funds of literacy in their environment mediated by the ecological constraints of the community context.

Expanding the concept of literacy

Within an overarching sociocultural framework, I used the lens of literacy as a social process (Barton, 1994) to encompass the ecological, cultural and linguistic resources available in the activity settings of homes and community. The uses of print in everyday life cannot be excluded from consideration within a comprehensive concept of literacy that includes both academic and other genres of literacy outside the classroom. The concept of multiple literacies (Street, 19923) affords an inclusive consideration of academic, informal, and purposeful, print literacies (Purcell-Gates, 2003) that transcends the home-school literacy divide by examining the domains (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988 Teale, 1986) of literacy engagement, and the cognitive task demands. This has the potential to lead to a syncretic (Duranti, 1996; Gutierrez & Baquedano-Lopez, 1999), or integrative concept of literacy that recognizes the incorporation of school literacy practices beyond the walls of the classroom, and validates the introduction of cultural and bilingual domains of literacy into meaningful curriculum activity.

Situating the study

There is a growing body of research on young Hispanic students and literacy, including national studies of literacy in early childhood (Garcia, 2009), and studies on the academic achievement gap (Arzubiaga, Artiles, Gutierrez) with a focus on the ecology of schooling. I chose as a model for this study the corpus of work by Gallimore, Goldenberg and

Reese (1993, 2000) that used a sociocultural approach to study literacy in both home and school settings. In their longitudinal study of low-income Spanish-speaking children and families Ronald Gallimore, Claude Goldenberg, and Leslie Reese & (2000) challenged the claim that cultural discontinuities between family and school, can explain the academic achievement gap, when they identified several areas of continuity with mainstream home literacy practices (Reese & Gallimore, 2000). A range of similar studies, undertaken more than a decade ago, found a wide variety of literacy materials in low-income Spanish-speaking homes, but often with limited complexity, with relatively few childrens' books, and thus a reliance on school homework materials to help their children learn to read. (Purcell-Gates, 1996; Reese & Goldenberg, 2006; Saracho, 2007). Explicitly drawing on the work of Gallimore, Goldenberg and Reese in the use of activity settings with a similar population, I seek to build on their findings over a decade later, under the changed educational conditions of post-Proposition 227, and No Child Left Behind. The ecocultural model I used incorporates a sociocultural study of local activity settings, nested within the broader ecological system (Bronfenbrenner, 1976), in line with the Vygotskyan view that activities occur within many layers of context (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993).

Summary

While findings from studies based on large scale data can be used to infer family cultural and linguistic deficit as a contributing factor to the Hispanic achievement gap, there is very little empirical data to support the specificities of these assumptions. Overall Hispanic school test scores may be low, but buried within the averages are moderate to high-achieving children whose parents nevertheless fit the deficit profile of language and cultural difference, and low income status. Assuming heterogeneity among cultural linguistic community practices, this study claims the importance of investigating the actual routines

of literacy practices children of Mexican-heritage families engage in away from the culture of schooling.

CHAPTER II

Conceptual Framework

In this chapter I outline the conceptual design that frames this dissertation, an ecological study of literacy practice¹s within a framework of cultural-historical activity theory. I make the case for using this eco-cultural framework to address out-of school multilingual literacy practices among Mexican-heritage families as a complement to the many large-scale, positivist, analyses addressing the lagging academic performance among Hispanic students. While purely quantitative studies provide important evidence of achievement trends among minority student populations, they are limited by the lack of empirical data needed to analyze intragroup variation. In this study I aim to complicate the large-scale trends by using a constructivist paradigm to access detailed contextual data from which to develop new lines of inquiry. I address the evolving nature of the literacy as a social process paradigm, emphasizing its usefulness as part of an integrative theory of literacy. I make explicit the ecological dimensions I include within the activity setting framework, and I introduce the notion of using Bourdieu's interconnected constructs of habitus, field and capital as descriptors for literacy practices and resources, or *funds of literacy*.

Overview

This study is grounded in the conception of literacy as a socially embedded, artifact-mediated activity (Vygotsky, 1978). Each of the theoretical approaches used in the analysis connects directly with this core notion. The overarching framework I use to explore literacy practices recurring within child and family routines is based on cultural-historical activity theory (Cole & Engestrom, 1995; Leont'ev, 1971), nested within an ecocultural framework (Weisner, 2002), incorporating multiple layers of ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1971). I situate

literacy practices within the broad theoretical framework of literacy as a social process (Barton & Hamilton 1998). Emerging in response to questions arising from the initial activity setting analysis, Bourdieu's (1986, 1991) constructs of *habitus*, and *capital*, afforded me additional conceptual tools for distinguishing variation in the roles of language, culture, and symbolic capital within an apparently homogeneous sample. Some literacy researchers have framed critical studies of literacy within Bourdieu's descriptive framework (Carrington & Luke, 1997; Marsh, 2006) to identify inequities in the social distribution of power inherent in access to hegemonic literacy practices. Here I propose using the construct *funds of knowledge* (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Velez-Ibañez and Greenberg, 1992;) to reverse the hegemonic lens, usually associated with Bourdieu's theory. In this within-group analysis I purposely situate the *habitus* and *cultural capital* of literacy *practices* within the cultural-linguistic community that constitutes the *field* as a way of identifying cultural skills, knowledge and dispositions that hold value and status, or *funds of knowledge* (Moll et al) within that frame of reference. I narrowed Moll et al's (1992) construct to *funds of literacy*, using literacy as the nexus of cultural capital, generated in ecologies of household and community literacy. The dynamic notion of *funds of literacy* implies engagement with a network of available resources, encompassing the multiple ecological layers that influence micro activity settings, as well as the linguistic choices, cultural beliefs and schema embodied by the participants.

Section I: Cultural-historical activity theory

Activity settings within the framework of cultural-historical activity theory provided a multidirectional model for analyzing the complexity of interactive ecologies of literacy in Mexican-heritage households and community. Activity settings constitute an expansion of Vygotsky's central tenet of mediation of human activities by cultural artifacts. My starting

point is the core concept of learning as mediated human activity, leading to Vygotsky's theory of literacy development. I discuss the possibilities of applying Vygotsky's work on foreign-language learning to the developmental dilemma of emergent literacy through a second language. Finally I address the advantages of using the activity setting framework that Leont'ev and later Engestrom elaborated from Vygotsky's work.

Learning as culturally mediated human activity

Vygotsky conceived of learning as a social and constructivist activity by which children, use "changing means...to appropriate the cultural tool kit of their society in the process of becoming adult members..." (Cole, 1996. p.181). Central to Vygotsky's theory of learning is the development of cognition as "culturally organized meaning" (Lantolf and Thorne, 2007, p.5) through the mediation of human engagement with the world by tools and signs, including language as a uniquely human 'artifact' (Cole, 1996). Unique to human beings is the dual process of outer and inner experience, mediated by cultural artifacts.

Vygotsky described this dual, reciprocal process:

Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first on the social level, and later, on the individual level: first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals. (1978, p.57).

Mediation of our intentional actions by tools and signs, according to Vygotsky, is uniquely human, since the knowledge embodied in these tools and signs facilitates a level of activity not possible without tool and symbol mediation. Scholars in the field of cultural-historical theory describe the human advantage of mediated cognition, over direct action, as doubling the range of potential experiences available:

The enormous advantage is that their world doubles. In the absence of words, human beings would have to deal only with those things which they could perceive and manipulate directly. With the help of language,

they can deal with things that they have not perceived even indirectly, and with things which were part of the experience of earlier generations. Thus , the world adds another dimension to the world of humans...Animals have only one world, the world of objects and situations. Humans have a double world. (Luria, 1981, p.35).

The dual phenomenon of mediating artifacts. Tools, the outer, material means of mediation, facilitate many functional areas of our daily lives, while the less tangible signs and symbols mediate our interaction with the cultural context, to develop 'higher mental processes' (Vygotsky,1978). Vygotsky transformed this dualism of outer and inner, or material and conceptual, into a dialectic in which material tools embody the ideal cognitive processes of their creators, while the ideal signs and symbols require a degree of materialization for effective functioning. According to Vygotsky, tools and symbols are both aspects of the same phenomenon, what Cole usefully terms "cultural artifacts" as a nexus to communicate the understanding that both tools and signs mediate the "...ideal-material quality of human activity" (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006, p. 63). Thus, the artifact axe that chops the material wood embodies the cultural-historical purpose that mediates the human activity of chopping. The converse, the cultural artifact of language, appears abstract, yet claims an objective reality, since "no word exists apart from its material instantiation" (Cole, p. 117). Children appropriate these tools and symbolic systems during mutual or apprenticeship activities with adults and more expert peers, within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) performing at levels beyond their current mastery through guided assistance. Through repeated social, outer, and inner, conceptual, interactions children gradually internalize the cultural tools and symbols, enabling them to move ahead within their ZPD. Cole and Engestrom summarize the mediating principle of the cultural-historical approach to human activity:

The cultural environment into which children are born contains the accumulated knowledge of prior generations. In mediating their behavior

through these objects, human beings benefit not only from their own experience, but from that of their forebears. (p.9)

Mediation by language and literacy. Vygotsky regarded language as the master mediating artifact in human activity, constituting a vehicle of cognition and communication not available to the animal kingdom. According to Cole (1996), it is the mediating cultural artifact of language that makes our inner ideal conceptual experience possible, while we simultaneously experience the physical world directly, creating the dual consciousness that is human. Language and cognition embodied in written text constitute a level of abstraction removed from the immediacy of a conversation mediated by oral language in present time. Printed text requires the ability to make meaning without other visual cues available in face-to-face encounters, using what Vygotsky called internalized or 'inner' speech. Children in the process of developing this capacity to engage with the abstractions of print can grapple with levels of complexity beyond those they could navigate unassisted, both in content and vocabulary, when provided support by a more expert other within the ZPD. This is relevant since this study, by contrast with the many household studies that focus on emergent literacy among younger children, explores literacy practices among elementary aged bilingual children already capable of reading in English. The participating children had mastered the basic requirements of reading in English, their second language, and were entering the academic stage where reading becomes a tool for learning, a different set of cognitive challenges.

Stages in Vygotsky's theory of learning

Vygotsky recognized stages of a child's development through evidence of a leading activity, mastery of which unfolds the conditions needed for the subsequent stage. Development in early childhood is organized around the development of language through speech. This task occupies the central role while other functions operate in a supportive

peripheral role. Once basic mastery of spoken language is established, speech development yields its leading role to support the child in the new task of mastering early literacy skills. For most children this natural evolution begins to unfold around the age of four, a little prior to school entry, so that they enter kindergarten with an emergent knowledge of the functions of literacy derived from early experiences at home, or in preschool. The child, making meaning through the mediation of spoken language, gradually appropriates the mechanical processes of reading, that eventually become a new 'language' that operate more or less automatically, continuously mediated by a semiotic process of meaning making:

The understanding of written language is first effected through spoken language, but gradually this path is curtailed and spoken language disappears as the intermediate link...(Vygotsky, 1987, p. 116).

For the children in this study, the dual skills of spoken language and reading written language had been acquired simultaneously, in English, their second language, but hidden within their consciousness were latent emergent skills precursors to literacy in their first language, Spanish.

Developing inner speech: Reading to learn. Language functions in a dialectical and transformative way as inner speech evolves out of outer "... intermental activities with others, particularly dialogue," that "... become intramental..." as "language between people eventually becomes spoken speech for self, then silent, mental, speech-like inner speech." (Miller, 1993, p. 421, cited in Cole, 1996, p. 179). This transition to reflective inner speech marks an important stage in the child's cognitive development in thinking, and the ability to make meaning of literacy texts. Vygotsky's key to understanding the child's semiotic development is through this continuum from speech to literacy. According to Vygotsky, a

radical change occurs in the child's consciousness when this transition to academic literacy can occur under normal conditions:

We need only to imagine the enormous changes in the cultural development of children that occur as a result of mastery of written language and the ability to read and of thus becoming aware of everything that human genius has created in the realm of the written word.
(Vygotsky, 1978, p.116).

Variation on the language-literacy continuum: Non-native speakers learning to read

Vygotsky refers above to literacy in the context of school learning, but the semiotic foundation of spoken in the home, during the early years is implicit. The notion of leading activities within the stages of development can also be viewed as critical nodes of crisis or challenge as the child negotiates her development. Thus, for the native English speaking kindergarten child, learning to read represents a natural crisis, or challenge, of development. How should we view this developmental trajectory for a child raised within a different linguistic ecology, who developed emergent literacy in a language not used in school? Is it feasible to apply Vygotsky's language-literacy continuum to children first learning to read in their second language (L2)? Existentially, at the node of normal developmental challenge, learning literacy, non-English speaking children encounter a second, parallel crisis, acquiring English for communication, that challenges the foundation of their early meaning making through native emergent literacy. I argue here that the switch from one language to another, during the continuum of language transformation from speech to literacy, constitutes a crisis¹ that does not exist for a native English-speaking child. Children, kindergarten through second grade, whose native tongue is different from the one used in school literacy instruction, cannot leverage the capital of emergent literacy

they accumulated since birth, because the transition between speech and literacy is broken by introducing a new language. Within the convergence of cognitive demands by the dual challenge, the question arises: How does the dynamic between the two leading activities influence overall literacy mediation?

In search of a theoretical framework for emergent literacy in a second language

The nine Spanish-speaking child participants in this study had all learned how to read within a school ecology of English-immersion, with no access to primary language support. By negotiating two leading activities simultaneously, acquiring English while learning literacy, they experienced different cognitive demands than would have prevailed with either activity alone.

The developmental dilemma exemplified by the study's participants is multiplied in schools across the country by the waves of immigration from Spanish-speaking countries. There is an urgent need for a valid theoretical framework to address the learning trajectory of English learners negotiating first literacy, that has been hindered by disciplinary insularity among the relevant fields within the research community: Linguistics, emergent literacy, and second language acquisition. According to Neufeld and Fitzgerald (2001), "...no theories or models have been described for the development of young English learners' emergent English reading" (p.66). Instead scholars have relied on the similarities between literacy acquisition in first and second languages, based on the theory of cognitive literacy transfer across languages (Genesee et al, 2005, p.370). When August reviewed empirical studies of second language learning and literacy (2006) she qualified the claims of equivalence and transfer of literacy knowledge because of a pre-requisite emerging from

the research: “...first-language reading skills *are* related to second-language readings skills, but... children must have first-language literacy in the skill for this relationship to exist ; oral proficiency in the first language is not sufficient.” (p. 351).

Vygotsky might well have agreed since his and Leonte’ev’s work on second language learning was premised on studies of children who could already read in their native tongue. Vygotsky, in his time, did not encounter the phenomenon of second-language learners immersed en masse in English-only classrooms, but he did investigate the different cognitive processes at work in developing both school literacy, and foreign language learning. Vygotsky situated foreign language learning within the overall development of language, and literacy, “...all three of these processes...interact with each other in complex ways.” and noted the “profound differences” among these processes (1987, p.179-180). Specifically Vygotsky likened the cognitive demands of foreign language learning to mathematical or scientific processes operating on a higher level of development.

...first we must show that the learning of a scientific concept differs from the learning of an everyday concept in much the same way that foreign language learning differs from learning a native language. (p. 222).

Current policy, based on existing research, conflates stages of emergent native literacy with English literacy acquisition by non-native speakers, failing to account for the interaction between the two demanding processes. In the absence of a developmental theory encompassing the dual leading activities of literacy and second language acquisition, the tendency is to situate the ‘problem’ of English learners within a paradigm of learning disabilities (Artiles, 2005; Foley, 1991; Gutierrez, 2006; Klingner, 2006) when English learners score lower than native speakers on state measures of literacy. The higher cognitive challenge of making meaning through print for the first time in a new language embodies a different zone of proximal development, requiring a community of more expert

others, since no single person in the child's school or home ecology embodies all dimensions of the bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate, world she inhabits (Bialystok, 2007; Leont'ev, 1981; Vygotsky, 1987) The bilingual child's ZPD changes as formal literacy development continues at school in English while informal native language literacy emerges through household and community. The added complexity includes an ongoing multidirectional transfer of concepts and vocabulary across languages and cultures, with the child as the bridge. I discuss later how the ecocultural construct of activity settings itself constitutes the Zone of Proximal Development supporting literacy practices and development.

Consciousness and volition in foreign language learning. The higher cognitive challenges of learning in a new language embody a different level of consciousness. Both Vygotsky and Leont'ev highlight the role of consciousness in foreign language learning. Relying on a prior foundation of meaning making in the native language, functioning in a second language involves more volition on the part of the learner in consciously choosing words (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). Words no longer relate directly to the objects concerned, because they are mediated by the meaning the native speaker has already learned in L1 for the same concepts, thus heightening the student's awareness of meaning. For Spanish-speaking children who learned to read first in English, this process has the possibility of reversing itself, as they learn new concepts in English that they had not previously encountered in Spanish.

In the absence of a framework through which to address the cognitive demands of first literacy acquisition for non-native speakers, I rely on Vygotsky's theory of cultural mediation to describe the empirical phenomena of multilingual literacy practices occurring within their ecocultural frameworks. Moving on from the initial mediation triangle and

Vygotsky's developmental theory, I now explore the opportunities activity theory offer to incorporate context explicitly within the mediated activity.

Cultural-historical activity theory

Leont'ev and Engestrom's work in activity theory (Cole & Engestrom, 1995; Leont'ev, 1971) expanded Vygotsky's mediation triangle by explicitly acknowledging the roles of cultural community, division of labor, and rules as constituent elements in any instance of mediated activity (see Figure 1.).

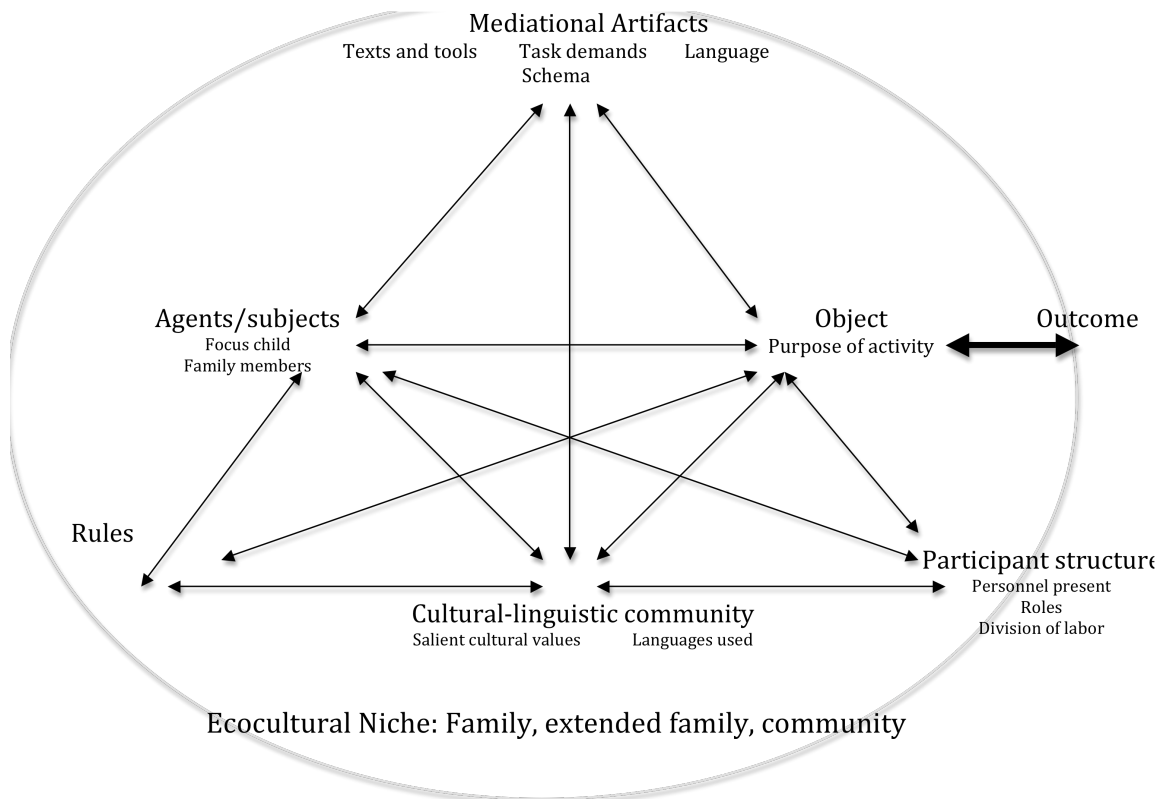


Figure 1. *Multidirectional activity setting showing interactivity of variables*

Activity settings

Based on cultural-historical activity theory, the activity setting framework permits me to incorporate in the analysis dimensions not accessible by studying only individual students out of context. Addressing these ecocultural elements required a conceptual framework to integrate cultural and ecological elements within the phenomenon of the activity. Inspired by the work of Gallimore (1988), Gutierrez (1996), and Rueda (2001), using activity theory to analyze Latino literacy practices, I adopted the activity setting framework because of the dynamic, interactional potential it embodies. Cole reported that this framework facilitates a “...thoroughly relational view of context.” (1996, p. 141). Rogoff suggests that activity theory embodies the view that “individual and cultural processes are *mutually constituting* rather than defined separately from each other” (2003, p.51). Tharp and Gallimore (1988) conceived of activity settings as scenes of learning within the zone of proximal development, “contexts in which collaborative interaction, intersubjectivity, and assisted performance occur”, as well as representing microcosms of the greater society: “...Activity settings arise from the pressures and resources of the larger social system...(They are) the habitats or eco-cultural niches of human groups.” (72-73).

I return in the chapter on methodology to a more detailed description of the application of an activity settings framework to research design. Here I move on to the second strand in the conceptual matrix used in this study, the role of ecology within cultural-historical activity settings.

Section II: The ecological in the ecocultural framework

For the purposes of this study, I extend the activity setting model to incorporate the ecological planes of influence present within culturally situated literacy practices, influenced by the work of Bronfenbrenner (1972), Rogoff (1995), and Weisner (1997). Bronfenbrenner is the architect of a comprehensive system of ecological influences on

multiple levels, that Rogoff simplified to three essential 'planes' for greater applicability. Weisner emphasized the role of ecology within a sociocultural framework, in his ecocultural theory of development. Adopting the construct of 'developmental niche' from Super and Harkness (1986) Weisner regards a child's participation in activities within a local ecology as "...the single most important influence on development.." (p.182), using the "power of the daily routine" as a key to uncovering multiple layers within activity settings, nested within the support and constraints of their social, structural and economic ecological contexts. Here I explore the roots of the theoretical construct of ecology in developmental research.

Ecology as interweaving context

An ecological approach takes as its starting point the interaction between individuals and their environments. (Barton, 1994)

The role ecology plays in this study goes beyond describing the setting as container or background. Ecology is a metaphor used in a variety of social science disciplines, always with the implication of describing phenomena within natural, everyday occurrences. Borrowed originally from the biological sciences, ecology evokes a living, interconnected, and interdependent construct that usefully describes the multilayered, always changing, interrelationship of individuals, and their activities, with their environment. Barton chose the organic metaphor of ecology to convey the multiple strands we need to consider when we study the phenomena of literacy practices embedded in everyday routines. Cole countered the static image of context as container by using the metaphor of weaving to convey the constantly changing permeability of environment by the agents who interact with it, create and recreate it, and respond to the constraints and affordances it embodies.

The ecological model. Bronfenbrenner's (1972) pioneer work identified the multiple layers of ecology at play in a child's development, from the *micro*, the immediate family level, through occupational and institutional influences at the *meso*, or between level, to the

socio-political or *macro* level indirectly influencing the family through the socioeconomic and sociocultural choices they can make. Bronfenbrenner (1976) emphasized the need to create a picture of the dynamic relationship between the person and the “situation” (p.6), based on Goethe’s suggestion that we need to see more clearly “what is there before us”. Bronfenbrenner developed his ecological systems theory in direct response to an increasing trend of dissociation among disciplines by American researchers. His goal was to reverse this process by emphasizing the interconnections that exist and understanding their influence. He used the term “nested arrangement of structures” (p.5), in conceiving of the relationships between the environmental influences on children’s development, or the “ecological structure of the educational environment” (p.5).

The model, offering a grand picture purporting to explore the multiple contexts mutually influencing human development, would be difficult to apply in its entirety. Rogoff cites Bronfenbrenner in the genealogy of her developmental theories. Working within sociocultural theory (1995) she identified three essential levels or planes of ecology for consideration: the personal plane, the interpersonal plane, and the community or institutional plane, all of which are connected through the mediation of language. The power of activity theory lies in the fact that the smallest unit of analysis contains, in microcosm, all three planes simultaneously, although for purposes of analysis, it may become necessary to foreground, rather than isolate, one plane, while considering all three. (Rogoff, 1995; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Within this theoretical framework it is important to note that even on the personal plane, the individual is never isolated from the activity setting but embedded within it.

Bronfenbrenner’s metaphor of a series of nested dolls successfully conveyed the concept of layers, but failed to represent their mutual interactivity. Recognizing the

inherent limitations of abstract figures to convey the interactivity of the ecological layers of activity settings Rogoff (2003) experimented with actual human images. Using a photographic image of a child engaged in an activity in context, Rogoff used the zoom effect, first isolating the child in activity, secondly including the child interacting with proximal others in the activity, and finally, panning out to reveal the greater context in which child, proximal other(s), and more distal others were active in a community setting. I adopt this highly graphic approach in my analysis, to complement the use of abstract figures, in rendering the complexity of thinking in ecological terms by visually representing some of the interweaving forces that the researcher witnessed at first hand.

The role of socioeconomic status (SES) in an ecological approach

Many factors contribute to the layers of influence on a child's daily routines, one of which is socioeconomic status or SES, typically defined by family income level, parent level of education and status of occupation. In this ecocultural study, I use a broader construct including descriptive features of status, such as social network, lifestyle, family structure and status within the community (Gonzalez, 2001). These features, interacting with the constant variables of age, gender, ethnicity, and language, as well as the outer physical environmental factors, constitute the local ecologies, or ecocultural niches within which each participant family engaged. The reasons for making this distinction in studying ethnic and linguistic minority groups, is to allow for the variability of mediation by family characteristics of the harmful effects of poverty on children's development and achievement, as suggested by Gonzalez's findings among Mexican-heritage, low income families. She lists, quality of home environment, family structure, quality of parent-child relationship, and familistic values, as factors mediating the effects of poverty, or 'protective mechanisms' (p. 359), that complicate the assumption of family deficit based on SES.

Section III: Literacy as a social process and language socialization theory

The study of literacy practices, as conceived within the framework of literacy as a social process (Barton & Hamilton, 1998), is neither isolated within the head nor imprisoned on the page. Emancipated from the narrow definition of autonomous (Street), or essayist (Cole) literacy practiced in schools, literacy, viewed through the lens of socially mediated activity, can be examined within the multiple domains of human life where it plays a role. The ecologies of literacy practices, according to theories of literacy as a social process (Barton & Hamilton, 1998) and language socialization (Heath, 1983; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986), derive meaning through patterns of literacy events interacting with their socio-cultural contexts. Barton takes up the ecological theme in his work within the framework of literacy as a social process. Referring closely to sociocultural theory, he looks to the organic metaphor of ecology to promote an integrated theory of literacy, “..to understand how literacy is embedded in other human activity, ...in social life and in thought,” and to examine this embeddedness in a way that always allows for change. (1994). Language socialization theory, emphasizes routine language practices as a source for understanding the attitudes, values and beliefs present in local family culture relating to the importance and nature of literacy. Literacy as a social process (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Street, 1993) aligns with the eco-cultural framework of this study by using a practice approach, specifically the construct of ‘literacy practices’ (Street, 1993) constituted of ‘literacy events’ (Heath, 1983; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986) as a unit of analysis.

Literacy as a social process

Literacy as a social process, promoted by scholars within New Literacy Studies (NLS), defines literacy as a social practice, as multiple, and ideological. The theory, developed through work by Street (1984), Gee (1991) and Barton and Hamilton (1998)

emphasizes the situated practice notion of literacy embedded within social relationships and institutions. Barton identifies three seminal strands of previous research that contributed to an ecological view of literacy: The work by Cole and Scribner, in the cultural psychology of literacy outside of schooling among the Vai tribe in Liberia; Street's ethnography of multiple literacies among rural communities in Iran; and Heath's socio-linguistic study of literacy among three communities in south-east USA. The impulse behind each of these endeavors was to explore literacy beyond the traditional notion of literacy as a set of cognitive skills to be attained and measured. Drawn from separate disciplines, theoretical constructs derived from these three bodies of work find a place within Barton's proposal of six principles that describe literacy as a social process:

1. Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts.
2. There are different literacies associated with different domains of life.
3. Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationships, and some literacies are more dominant, visible and influential than others.
4. Literacy practices are purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and social practices.
5. Literacy is historically situated.
6. Literacy practices change and new ones are frequently acquired through processes of informal learning and sense making.

(Barton & Hamilton, 2000,p.8)

These principles appear within the design of the current research study, and I will refer to them again in the analysis of findings.

Multiple literacies

The academic achievement gap between mainstream and minority, second language, or low income students is premised on a narrow definition of literacy as practiced in schools, with no explicit reference to the uses of literacy in real-life social, institutional or occupational settings (Purcell-Gates, 2007). Literacy studies of minority populations using

theory based on this definition of academic literacy as a standard, what Street calls the 'autonomous model of literacy' (1993), exclude purposeful everyday literacy activities as meaningful resources, and bridges for instruction. The notion of multiple literacies (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Purcell-Gates, 2007; Scribner & Cole, 1971; Street, 1984. 1993) that emerges from literacy as a social practice, situates academic, or school literacy alongside a variety of purposeful literacies embedded in daily living, as well as occupational settings, known as vernacular, or 'local' literacies (Barton & Hamilton, 1998). Viewed through this broader perspective academic, or 'essayist' literacy (Scribner & Cole) is contextualized within the domain of education, rather than autonomous, and independent of context. This approach to literacy opens the door to valuing local, out-of-school literacies as resources for instructional support. Complementary theoretical constructs such as funds of knowledge (Moll & Gonzalez, 1992), and cultural and linguistic hybridity, or third space (Gutierrez et al, 1999) offer promising bridging concepts to facilitate culturally compatible instruction (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Language Socialization theory

Language socialization theory, evolved out of linguistic anthropology in the study of bounded ethnic communities (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986), has also proved useful in studying diverse cultures within a heterogeneous context, such as large urban areas in the southwest United States. Schieffelin and Ochs, the pioneers of language socialization studies, define language socialization to mean both socialization through the medium of language, and socialization to use language, in which,

...Children and other novices acquire tacit knowledge of principles of social order and systems of belief (ethno memories) through exposure to and participation in language-mediated interactions. (1986, p.2)

In-depth studies using a language socialization framework offer descriptive patterns of socialization into situated cultural communities through language (Pease-Alvarez, 1994; Schecter & Bayley, 2002).

Language socialization is an interactive, not unidirectional, theoretical framework in which the socializers, caregivers, are themselves also socialized by the novices, or children they socialize, using language use as “the major tool for conveying sociocultural knowledge” (Ochs and Schieffelin, p. 3). Applying Vygotsky’s “zone of proximal development”, they suggest

...children develop social and cognitive skills through participating in structured cooperative interactions with more mature members of society.

using what Bruner called, “scaffolding”. The dominant assumptions of language socialization theory are: 1. That a language system is interpenetrated by social worlds that are themselves bound by conventions, yet open to creativity and adaptation; 2. That language and culture are both intrinsic, and extrinsic to the person, containing “super-individual” information; 3. And that an important question in language socialization is, ‘how do novices develop mutuality of orientation with others?’ (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, p. 344). The bi-directionality of the process, allows for adaptations by caregivers as well as children or novices. This is especially relevant in multigenerational communities of immigrants, where children frequently function as translators for adults, and socialize the first generation adults into the new culture through their experiences at school.

Researchers in urban American settings have countered the hypothesized ‘problem’ of cultural difference based on a construct of trait-based homogeneity of culture by introducing the concept of “communities of practice” in which membership derives from agents’ social and interactive engagement in practices which may be multiple for each

individual (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2002; Howes, Wishard Guerra & Zucker, 2007). This construct provides a tool to examine complex, multiple community memberships, and border-crossing communities, that cuts right through geographical and language boundaries. In this study I use language socialization theory to supplement the framework of literacy as a social process with the added focus of bilingualism.

Challenging the dichotomy within literacy studies: Towards an integrated theory of literacy

The artificial separation of literacy in and outside of schooling is confounded, in this study, by the carry-over of school-like practices in households and communities. Hull and Schultz, with their focus on out of school literacy practices, challenge the binary 'rut' that literacy as a social process research appears to have fallen into. Challenging the dominant concept of literacy as an 'autonomous' (Street, 1984) entity, something to be attained through 'essayist' (Cole) practices in school, NLS researchers posit the existence of multiple 'literacies' beyond the institution of schooling. On a conceptual level, this theory includes school literacy as one of the multiple literacies, within its own institutional ecology, and itself embodies the possibility of a new, integrated theory of literacy, as proposed by Barton (1994). However, within the context of an overwhelming history of the 'essayist' paradigm within literacy studies, NLS researchers have sought to right the balance by focusing on informal, out-of-school literacies, primarily among adults (Barton & Hamilton, 1998). In asserting the importance of the new paradigm, NLS has given the impression of overvaluing out of school literacies over traditional essayist literacy, creating a false dichotomy that poses problems when researching children. The dialectic is between research paradigms, not the actual literacy practices themselves. In a study like the current one, of school going children during an extended period away from school, it is inevitable that school-like literacy practices will carry over into the child's home life. Purcell-Gates devoted a whole

book to addressing this theoretical problem, which she partially resolved by neutralizing the polarized literacy constructs with the umbrella term, 'print literacy'. In this study I join Barton, Hull and Schultz, as well as Purcell-Gates, in proposing an integrative theory of literacy that embraces the totality of a child's experiences, rather than constraining the view of literacy to the narrow bounds of school requirements

Section IV: Habitus, capital and funds of knowledge

Bourdieu's theory of practice examines the dialectical relationship between objective social structures and individual activities, where, "...spoken and written textual practice forms a powerful mediating moment where human agency and social structure, motivation and norm are realized." (Carrington & Luke, 1997, p. 100). Core concepts in Bourdieu's sociological framework are *habitus*, *capital*, *field* and practice. *Habitus*, according to Bourdieu, is,

...a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks. (1977, pp. 82-83).

The collective descriptors of *habitus* and *field* were useful constructs by which to render culturally and ecologically specific constellations of agent dispositions congruent with the descriptive focus of the dissertation. I conceptualized these within the additive construct, *funds of literacy*, as *capital* within the local ecology. These *funds of literacy* are defined according to the criteria of literacy as a social practice, and differentiated according to the domain of life in which they play a part. Accompanying the construct of *habitus* is the concept of cultural or symbolic capital, typically considered to describe access to the normative hegemonic culture. Capital, however, combined with the appropriate *habitus*, must operate within a *field* with its own repertoire of discourses and rules, 'playing the game'. On a grand, macro, scale, Bourdieu's work depicted the lower classes of France, and

Algeria, as lacking in the symbolic capital of the hegemonic ruling classes, because of their incongruent *habitus*, and thus excluded from gaining power in the higher echelons of society. Within the micro and meso levels of this study, I use Bourdieu's descriptors to enhance descriptions of activities within ecocultural niches. Within any cultural milieu, knowledge of language, rules, and expectations for division of labor are necessary for success. Capital within a field, demonstrated through practice, represents what Velez-Ibañez and Moll termed 'funds of knowledge', by which social networks of low income immigrants from Mexico mutually support each others' survival. Moll's contribution was to apply the cognitive knowledge inherent in demonstrated skills and services within a different field, the field of education. Here I adapt the concept to *funds of literacy* as an intentionally additive term to describe the literacy practices and resources upon which the families in this study relied.

Funds of knowledge

Funds of knowledge as a theoretical construct in conceptualizing cultural diversity, represents an alternative to the deficit view. Velez-Ibañez and Greenberg (1992) developed the term, *funds of knowledge* to describe their findings in an anthropological study of Mexican-American networks of household and occupational resources. Their stated goal was to counter the "deficiency model" used to instruct minority children in public schools, by demonstrating the value of the cultural systems in which Mexican-American children "are ensconced". They sought through their study to improve the perception of "minority" children by helping teachers understand the socio-cultural background of their students with a view to discover potential clues to cultural ways of learning. The findings portrayed semi-independent, and experimental learning processes used in the home for transmission of skills, based implicitly on a self-regulating approach, through which the child learned to

evaluate herself by results, and to build *confianza* (trust) in the relationships of support and apprenticeship within this cultural framework, corresponding to Vygotsky's ZPD. Similar findings emerged from studies of preschool children in native Hawaiian homes (Levin, Brenner, & McLellan, 1991). Moll and his colleagues undertook a longitudinal study involving teachers as ethnographers, capitalizing on the reciprocal effects of the research process to transform deficit perspectives of Mexican immigrant families by their children's teachers (Mercado, 2005; Messing, 2005). Andrews and Yee (2006), among many others, have adopted the concept *funds of knowledge* as a tool for identifying and representing cultural capacities normally outside the knowledge framework of school culture, as valuable in supporting, and bridging the overall learning process for minority, low-income students. While the funds of knowledge researched in Moll and Gonzalez's series of studies ranged over several different areas of expertise, in this study I propose to consider literacy as the organizing feature for local sources of literacy support within families, by coining the term *funds of literacy*.

Using the theoretical framework to situate the research questions

In this ecological study of literacy practices within a framework of cultural-historical activity theory I address out-of school multilingual literacy practices among children in Mexican-heritage families by asking the following research questions:

1. What are the out-of-school funds of literacy available to young Mexican-heritage English learners during the summer vacation?

Questions two, three, four, and five address the overarching question: In what ways did the eco-cultural contexts of home and community influence literacy engagement among elementary-aged Mexican-heritage English learners during the summer vacation?

2. What are the patterns of home and community literacy practices that children and families engaged in, including language choice, participation structure, frequency, and activity settings?
3. How do family characteristics: parent education, level of bilingualism, family constellation, availability of siblings, and extended family network, influence engagement in literacy practices?
4. How does the neighborhood and community language environment: Community resources, neighborhood commerce and advertising, church practices, influence children's literacy engagement?
5. How do these patterns vary by levels of children's school literacy achievement?

In the following chapter I review areas of existing research relevant to the scope of this dissertation, with a view to build on earlier findings.

CHAPTER III

Review of the literature: Building on prior research

Introduction

Emerging from the Civil Rights Movement, concerns about equity in American education have prompted generations of researchers to wrestle with the fact that children from low-income, ethnic and linguistic minority families achieve at a significantly lower average level than children from Anglo middle class families. With the end of discrimination on the basis of genetic difference among ethnicities new explanations were needed based on the democratic warrant that all children should have the possibility to succeed academically. The rising popularity of the field of sociology in the 1960s encouraged a socioeconomic explanation, captured in the 'War on Poverty', broadening the racial focus to include urban deprivation. Cultural psychologists and anthropologists in the 1970s and 1980s shifted the focus to examine the implications for learning of children's cultural differences from the mainstream culture enacted in schools. Parallel with these explanations, recurring waves of anti-immigrant sentiment, mirroring fluctuations in the economy, supported the claim that language difference was the major obstacle to success. Thus, over the past fifty years the focus has shifted from the individual's innate or genetic intelligence, to environmental, social, and economic factors, yet the questions remain the same. How do children learn, and what influences their performance?

In this review of the literature I address two common threads, and one major assumption, woven into the ongoing debate. First, the question of literacy: At the core of school achievement is the mastery of academic literacy as a vehicle to higher learning. Second, the role of the family: Explorations of social, class and cultural differences inevitably involve an examination of the family and how the child is supported in learning.

Third, the common benchmark assumed within this debate is the attainment by minority children of middle class standards of achievement. The assumption is to compare social, economic, cultural, and linguistic conditions with the unmarked category, middle class, native-English speaking, white cultural expectations. While this is the social and cultural reality within which we live, as researchers our task is to question culturally biased assumptions that may stand in the way of deeper understanding of the phenomena in front of us. Although the benchmark of middle class literacy expectations cannot be completely excluded from a study of minority family literacy practices, the focus on within-group variation can illuminate important features obscured by the study of differences. In this study I propose to build on a complex and evolving body of research that addresses the changing understanding of literacy and the role families play in children's literacy, with a focus on cultural and linguistic minorities.

First I address home literacy support in low-income and Mexican-heritage families, I then supply definitions used in the study derived from the literature. Next, I address the issue of literacy through a sociocultural lens, examining studies of emergent literacy, home literacy, literacy as a social practice, and studies of literacy among Mexican-heritage families. Finally, I review recent sociological literature on seasonal learning losses, and its implications for low income and minority populations. Viewing the data on seasonal learning loss alongside the first two categories, I claim the need for a descriptive study of successful young English learners from low-income, Spanish-speaking families.

Standing on the shoulders of giants

This study would not have been possible without reliance on the genealogy of important landmarks in literacy research over the past three decades. I refer to the fields of emergent literacy (Teale & Sulzby, 1986), family literacy (Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988),

literacy as a sociocultural process (Cole & Scribner, 1981), multiple literacies and literacy ecology (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Street, 1993) literacy socialization (Heath 1982, 1983), and Hispanic literacy (Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1993; Gallimore & Reese, 2000).

Studying literacy practices among linguistic minority families

Learning begins in the home, where every child engages with an ecological-cultural context that provides pathways for development towards cultural competence within their community (Weisner, 2002). These pathways, built of routines of everyday life, create zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) through which children learn to engage in cultural activities as they interact with more expert others, such as parents, older siblings, and grandparents (Levin, 1990; Rogoff, 1990). Language and literacy socialization occur within these cultural pathways, initially in the context of home and family, where children acquire the primary discourse (Gee, 1992), or cultural-linguistic framework through which they make meaning of the world. This primary discourse incorporates a variety of language and literacy practices embedded in the familiar routines of everyday life (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). School constitutes a new ecocultural context, with different expectations for cultural competence, through the secondary discourse (Gee) of academic language and explicit attention to literacy. Much of the early literature on minority students addressed the cultural differences between school and home practices as discontinuities that complicate student academic success (Ogbu, 1982). Other studies using a sociocultural approach to literacy, add the dimension the ecological factors influencing patterns of socialization (Heath, 1983; Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1988; Goldenberg & Gallimore, 1995; Reese & Gallimore, 2000), revealing a complex picture including areas of continuity and wide within-group variation.

According to this view, including scholars from several disciplines, literacy events, patterned within literacy practices, (Barton and Hamilton, 1998; Heath, 1983) occur in all the ecocultural contexts the child traverses in the space of each day, taking different forms for different purposes, some more explicit than others. For the child school constitutes one, albeit the dominant, ecology of literacy among several she engages with between home, school and community. How the child engages with school literacy depends on a multitude of factors, including language of instruction, familiarity of discourse used, and support in the home for literacy engagement. For the teacher, and educational policy maker, school, or 'autonomous' literacy (Street, 1993) constitutes the primary purpose and medium of learning, and many teachers of linguistic minority students remain unaware of the range, diversity, and complexity of other literacy practices occurring in the diverse ecologies of students' homes and communities.

Abundant research has been devoted to the modalities and discourse models common in the explicit ecology of school literacy (e.g. Cazden, 1981). Less abundant, but of great value, is the body of studies devoted to specific ecocultural factors relating to literacy engagement among children outside of school, specifically children from low-income, or ethnically minority families. Large-scale data sets do provide a useful overall demographic profile of school achievement in literacy by ethnic and linguistic minorities, but they fail to investigate the diversity of practices embedded in the daily lives of similar groups. Context, a core element in sociocultural research, is seen through a relational view, and constitutes an active agent in events (Cole, 1996), thus activity is part of the context that it engages with. The focus on situated interaction around text implied by an ecocultural approach to literacy, using activity settings as the unit of analysis, provides a glimpse into socialization patterns in real time, allowing for adaptation and change, in contrast to the essentializing

effect of demographic variables. I will draw most explicitly on the body of work by Gallimore, Goldenberg and Reese, as well as a pioneer study by Anderson, Teale and Estrada (1980).

Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) outline five components of activity settings to analyze factors contributing to emergent literacy among inner-city, Mexican-heritage children: personnel present; salient cultural values; scripts and schema for conduct of activities; task operations and demands; and individual purposes or motives. Drawing on findings from a number of their own studies (including Reese as a team member), they ‘operationalize’ the construct of activity settings by using each component in turn as a lens to examine the data according to a set of conditions needed for emergent literacy practices (Mason & Allen, 1986). This approach yields a more differentiated picture of home literacy practices than the stereotyped view that low-income Mexican-heritage homes do not support literacy and are devoid of printed materials. Using the first two components, personnel and cultural values, the authors suggest that parents are available for, interested in and capable of engaging their children in literacy activities, and that they place high value on education. While the homes were found to contain many literacy experiences, the third component, they did not measure up to the optimal emergent literacy conditions because of the parents’ scripts, the fourth component, regarding the process of developing early literacy, which in turn influenced the parents’ purposes in the activities, the fifth component. Gallimore and Goldenberg were thus able to explore in more depth the issues of scripts and purposes, exploring the use of language, the role of meaning, and the reciprocal factor of the children’s own interest in literacy, emphasizing the role of ecological features. Anderson, Teale and Estrada (1980) studying twelve families, Black, Anglo and Mexican-American, were interested in “how the social environment organizes and conducts literacy

events” (p. 319) for children, specifically what messages are conveyed about the purpose of books and print in the child’s ecocultural niche.

Incorporating wider ecological influences in two of the components of activity settings has special relevance to this study: 1. The participant structure, who is present, is not by chance, but related to the environmental opportunities and constraints. For example, care-giving of the children may be distributed among members of the extended family, adult siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, when parents with little education and limited English skills are forced to work multiple jobs at low wages to meet the family’s basic needs. 2. Operations, what the activity involves, also depends on the wider eco-cultural constraints and opportunities for the nature of artifacts available for engagement by the agents. For example one family may have few books in their household, but an abundance of coupons, magazines, and free advertising media; another may claim to have many books for the children, but do not engage in reading adult material themselves. Extending the activity setting to the neighborhood, the relevance of the local public library becomes an artifact in the potential literacy arsenal of families with limited means. The groundwork laid by these, and other studies on using an ecocultural framework effectively to examine literacy practices among Mexican-heritage families suggests a promising model for the present study

Definitions used in the study

Literacy: For the purposes of this study, I use the concept of literacy as multiple, and as a social, and cultural process (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Street, 1993). The term ‘multiple text literacies’ combines both academic, or school literacy, and vernacular, or the local uses of literacy necessary for everyday living. This is intended as an additive approach, in contrast to the subtractive monocultural notion embodied in schooling.

Literacy as a social process. The social conceptualization of literacy departs from the traditional notion that literacy resides in the head of the reader, or within the text itself. Instead, literacy is integrated in the interaction around text situated within the local context.

Literacy practices. Literacy is social in that it is constructed of cultural literacy practices (Street, 1984), or ways a community uses, makes meaning of and interacts around written text.

Literacy events. Literacy practices can be inferred from observable literacy events (Anderson, Teale & Estrada, 1980; Heath, 1983), activities where “a piece of writing is integral to the nature of the participants’ interactions and their interpretative processes” (Heath 1982). Such a situated approach to literacy, as opposed to a universal (Bernstein, 1970) ‘autonomous’ conceptualization (Street, 1993), implies an ecological approach (Barton & Hamilton) where literacy is ‘integral to its context’ (p.4). Literacy events within a local ecocultural niche are often embedded within routine social practices requiring literacy as a resource, not an end in itself. Participants in these activities may not immediately regard these meaning making practices as related to literacy, because of the functional role it plays.

Texts. The mediating role of written texts in literacy events changes from one cultural context to another. Texts in themselves do not constitute meanings independent of the social context of the literacy event, and may serve several functions within the activity (Barton). Heath’s work in the piedmont Carolinas illustrates the collaborative, social and negotiated function and meaning of texts in the Trackton community (1983).

Ecology. Here I take ecology to mean the resources and constraints, social, economic, and structural, influences on the families in the study, while cultural refers to the families’

values, beliefs, and schemata with regard to literacy. This ecological dimension, referring to Bronfenbrenner's (1976) complex system of contextual influences on the child's development provides a link between everyday literacy activities and the social structures to which they are related.

Ecocultural. An ecological-cultural, or ecocultural, framework similarly incorporates the dimension of ecological effects, and responses, within a broader socio-cultural approach (Weisner, 1992). Rogoff suggests identifying three planes of study: personal, interpersonal, and community, as a framework by means of which to actively engage the environmental influences with micro-level studies of human interaction. For example, Weisner uses this framework to learn about the way ecological structures impinge on families with children in disabilities.

Importance of home literacy support for academic success

Studies on pre-school, and home literacy (Teale & Sulzby, 1986; Anderson, Teale & Estrada, 1980), as well as studies on literacy development in a second language (Bialystok, 2007) conclude that children entering kindergarten who are familiar with print and its functions, are more successful in transitioning to the formal literacy of school (Mason & Allen, 1986; Purcell-Gates, 1996). For children whose family culture reflects similar expectations to those enacted in the classroom, primarily middle class children socialized to engage in discourse around books, the bridge from home to school is easy to cross. Their emergent literacy background takes the form of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1991) that the teacher naturally responds to because it is familiar and maps on to the literacy of schooling. For students whose families socialized them according to different cultural schema regarding literacy, where communication around books was not part of everyday practices, their understanding of the purposes of literacy will reflect the uses observed in the home.

Heath's (1983) comparative study of literacy socialization in three communities illustrates the importance of recognizing that ecocultural differences among families in literacy practices does not imply deficit, but calls for a deeper understanding of the multiple roles of literacy in everyday life. Heath (1982,1983), Chall & Snow (1982), and Teale and Sulzby (1986), concur that a child's apprenticeship (Levin, 1990; Rogoff, 1990) to the community's ways of using written texts can not be considered separately from: a) the child's cultural socialization to language competence, because of the social and contextual nature of what it means to be literate; b) the context, because of the social nature of literacy; c) and the purposes the community attributes to literacy (Mason & Allen, 1986).

Constructions of deficit among minority and low-income children arise when the world of their primary socialization interfaces directly with the implicit socialization expectations of the dominant culture embodied by the ecology of the classroom. This is further complicated when the child's primary socialization occurred in a language other than English. Monolingual educators frequently perceive language difference as a deficit of the mainstream currency of communication, American English. Non-Spanish speaking teachers of young Mexican-heritage children have very little access to the prior literacy socialization process of their students. Any cultural capital derived from home literacy practices in Spanish, that could potentially transfer to the classroom, is thus devalued, along with the cultural identity embodied in their home language. This negation of vernacular cultural capital in home literacy practices by the institution of school represents a challenge that the child of a Spanish-speaking home learns to negotiate. Bialystok (2007) asserts that language difference outweighs other variables, such as socioeconomic status, or ethnicity, in influencing the early literacy achievement of bilingual children learning to read in a second language.

Emergent literacy: Cultural capital, cultural deficit, or unrecognized resource

In spite of the fact that all the children in the present study had mastered elementary level reading skills in English, the construct of emergent literacy remains relevant with regard to the unexamined role of emergent literacy in Spanish, before entering the English-only school environment. Students socialized according to different cultural schema regarding literacy, with no bedtime stories or talk around books, lack the specific cultural capital of storybook literacy teachers expect.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the new concept *emergent literacy* (Clay, 1966, reprinted 1993) awakened interest among researchers in exploring precursor skills for literacy development (Chall, 1983; Anderson & Stokes, 1984; Schieffelin & Cochran-Smith, 1984; Teale, 1984, 1986). The four domains of language activities, listening, speaking, reading and writing, are seen to develop concurrently and interrelatedly, rather than sequentially, as was previously believed (Teale, 1986). Concern centered on the needs of low-income children from working class families whose literacy achievement in school lagged behind middle-class children. Over two decades, several longitudinal studies (Chall et al, 1983; Hart and Risley, 1995; Lareau, 2003; Purcell-Gates et al, 1994; Snow et al, 1991; Sulzby & Teale, 1987; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1995) set out to discover the actual roots of literacy (Goodman, 1986) in the homes of low-income pre-school, and grade school children, seeking the specific elements needing intervention. Findings from these studies established the role of the parent, usually the mother as the primary influence on children's later reading development, through not only educational level, and access to literacy resources, but in the degree of positive affect surrounding literacy events (Chall et al; Snow et al; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines; Hart & Risley). Out of these studies emerges the central influence of storybook reading on emergent and later literacy: "Meaningful experiences

with simple texts are probably the most important influences in early literacy development." (Purcell-Gates, 317). Teale and Sulzby (1986)

Cultural variation in modalities of home literacy support

In the 1980s and 1990s researchers seeking to counter the prevailing cultural deficit approach used cross-disciplinary ethnographic research to document the complexity of literacy and cognitive resources available within different ethnic, socio-economic and cultural contexts (Heath, 1982,1983; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Sociocultural studies on family literacy practices (Anderson, Teale, & Estrada 1980; Heath, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 1991; Teale, & Sulzby, 1986) also found a wide range of out-of-school literacy practices in low-income homes, but with limited complexity. Similar studies on Mexican-heritage families, (Arzubiaga, Rueda & Monzo, 2002; Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993; Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1995; Saracho, 2007), though few in number, found convergence in parents' belief in education, despite the linguistic and cultural discontinuities that often inhibited direct involvement with their children's schools.

Heath's (1983) landmark study of literacy socialization illustrates the importance of recognizing that ecocultural differences among families in literacy practices does not imply deficit, but calls for a deeper understanding of the multiple roles of literacy in everyday life. Purcell-Gates (1994), and Teale and Sulzby (1987), recognize the socioculturally situated nature of literacy practices in different cultural communities, what Lareau (2003) calls the *habitus*, and Kainz and Vernon-Feagan the 'ecology of reading'. Studies on family literacy practices (Purcell-Gates, 1996; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 1991; Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Teale, & Sulzby, 1986) found a wide range of out-of-school literacy practices in low-income homes, but with limited complexity. Studies on Mexican-

heritage families and literacy, (Arzubiaga, Rueda & Monzo, 2002; Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993; Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1995; Saracho, 2007), found limited literacy materials, and reliance on school literacy materials, especially worksheets to help their children.

Hart and Risley (1995), criticized for lack of attention to the role of culture in language development, included English-speaking minority families in their sample of forty low-income families of pre-school children, but chose to use socioeconomic status as the principal variable. They explored the complexity of oral language in children's emergent literacy, by measuring the quantity, frequency and complexity of words used in family interactions. They found that parents at all socioeconomic levels engaged with their children in speech from infancy, especially around topics that occur in daily routines. The socioeconomic differences they discovered were in quantity and range of words used and frequency of utterances, over a period of almost three years. For example, by age three, children from middle to upper income families were using a range of words equivalent to that of the parents of the lowest income children, single parents on welfare. The second important finding was in the genre of language use. While all families engaged in language with infants on topics necessary for daily life, the discrepancies in quantity of utterance arose around two areas: first, working class, and especially middle class families devoted time to talk about non-essential topics, extending vocabulary by expanding scope of topic, and second, these groups also included substantially more positive encouragements in their language.

A similar, earlier study in Britain (Tizard & Hughes, 1984) compared patterns of discourse among pre-school children of working class families at home and at a daycare center. Contrary to Hart and Risley's findings, Tizard and Hughes found no evidence of

language deficit, or 'restricted code' in language activities in the home (Bernstein, 1970), but rather a 'window' on to the intellectual vitality of three and four-year olds in their use of questions to guide the conversation. This mutual agency in language socialization was in stark contrast to the subdued passivity demonstrated by the same children within the structure of day-care. Within that setting, their utterances would have qualified for Bernstein's 'restricted code', limited, and non-universal. Tizard and Hughes's findings point to the danger of relying only on school assessments and observations in evaluating children's language development. Without access to language events within the familiar ecology of home, a very different profile of these children would emerge. The language performance of reticent young Hispanic students may belie a more articulated language proficiency in the familiar ecology of home, something that an unsuspecting teacher may mistake for a deficit, especially if there are language barriers to communication with the family.

Heath's study of language and literacy socialization among three adjacent communities in the piedmont Carolinas integrates the broader economic and societal influences in her description of family interactions around literacy. Her observations of the range of child-rearing practices adopted by white working class, white and black middle class, and black working class groups map onto the child- to situation-centered continuum used by Schieffelin and Ochs (1986) in the degree to which the parents accommodated the child's speech and activities, (white middle class), or expected the child to observe then imitate, as a scaffolding for apprenticed participation, (Black working class). Lareau coined the term 'concerted cultivation' to describe the degree of attention and organization middle class parents devote to their children, compared with the 'accomplishment of natural

growth' she used to describe the more situation-centered working class families in her study (2005).

Findings by Pease-Alvarez and Vasquez (1994) in a study of language socialization among Mexican heritage parents of young children seem to contradict a common claim that minority cultures do not accommodate language to young children in the process of socialization, a claim that has been used as an explanation for quality of language differences from Anglo cultural practices. In the Pease-Alvarez study, Mexican families actively encouraged conversation and accommodated talk with infants, contradicting Hart and Risely's (1995) findings among single mothers on welfare, as well as Heath's (1983) findings among low-income African-American families. The author's findings reinforce the emphasis in language socialization that the process is reciprocal, "children and parents are key players in one another's language socialization" it becomes a "mutual endeavor as they negotiate language and culture" (p. 91)

The Gallimore and Goldenberg (1993) study of activity settings of early literacy among Hispanic families mirrors the intentions of my own study with the different conditions that prevail almost twenty years since their data were gathered. The main differences derive from new political constraints on elementary literacy instruction in California. Goldenberg studied Mexican-origin students in a bilingual classroom, at a time when reading instruction was introduced at first grade. Since 1998, bilingual instruction in California has been virtually eradicated, and reading instruction begins in kindergarten. Thus, students in the present study simultaneously began learning English and learning to read and write when they entered kindergarten.

Young Hispanic English learners may become involved in tasks that contribute to the household at an early age, such as translators for their parents (Dorner, 2007; Orellana,

Reynolds, Dorner, & Meza, 2003; Orellana, 2001) a process that requires greater consciousness of dual language capabilities, and may yield cognitive advantages (Orellana, 2001; Vygotsky, 1987). Orellana highlights the work immigrant children do as active agents in supporting and sustaining their families, households, and schools. She maintains that we should not see immigrant children only as a problem or a challenge for education and for society while overlooking their contributions to family and school. Integrated into her discussion are examples of immigrant children's work illustrating lenses for viewing these activities— as volunteerism, as opportunities for learning, and as acts of cultural and linguistic brokering between their homes and the outside world. (pp. 366–389)

Goldenberg and Gallimore, (1992, 2005) in a longitudinal study of low-income Hispanic families and primary grade children, found strong support among the parents for their children's learning success. This is echoed by Monzo, and Rueda, (2001) in their study on motivation for achievement among Hispanic families. Monzo and Rueda conclude that motivation takes different cultural forms, based on the children's experience of parent stories of economic struggle intended as *consejos* or advice to strive for academic achievement and better occupational choices.

Many of the studies of Hispanic families described variation within what might appear as a homogeneous cultural group (Howes, Wishard-Guerra, & Zucker, 2007). Differences in immigration history, household composition and family resources, were reflected in membership in a series of different within-group cultural communities, as well as manifesting in different parenting styles. Studies such as these provide detailed articulation of cultural resources that can be identified as “assets in families that promote their children's positive development” (Saracho, 2007, p.104). Throughout the studies of Hispanic family involvement is woven the theme of family support, *familism*, or a belief in

educacion a core value of moral preparation for life (Delgado-Gaitan, 1992; Farver, Xu, Eppe, & Lonigan, 2006; Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 1993; Ortiz, 2004). Delgado-Gaitan found that the parents she studied all expressed a value on literacy achievement for their children's future. The way Hispanic families show this support varies, yet there does appear to be a pattern of child-initiating literacy activities (Goldenberg et al, 1992) and a reliance on school materials, with a preference, among the parents, for worksheets over books. Finally, in many of these studies the school experience, in the early grades, continued the first language continuum into literacy through bilingual education. This leads to a further consideration of the particular challenges for Spanish-speaking Hispanic children learning to read in English.

What counts as literacy in home and community.

Heath (1982,1983), and others suggest that a child's apprenticeship (Levin, 1993; Rogoff, 1990) to the community's ways of using written texts can not be considered separately from: a) the child's cultural socialization to language competence, because of the social and contextual nature of what it means to be literate; b) the context, because of the social nature of literacy; c) and the purposes the community attributes to literacy (Mason & Allen, 1986).

Barton and Hamilton (1998), in their six-year ethnography of a northern English town, list a staggering diversity of literacy artifacts tied to daily activities, for which literacy served a purpose. Studies with similar findings have dismissed the value of everyday literacy in a child's development, because it does not match the complexity of thought involved in reading books. I would suggest that the purposeful nature of 'local' literacies is qualitatively different from reading for pleasure, or for testing, as happens so often in school. Students who are socialized into competence in everyday literacy may develop a

different awareness to print in their lives, that is just as valid a literacy experience as reading 'Frog and Toad'.

Heath (1983), and Lareau (2003) contrast the child-centered and situation-centered approaches to literacy support in the homes of different social groups, derived from the work of Ochs and Schieffelin (1986) in language socialization. Heath also elaborates categories of literacy materials based on the purposes and uses of written texts in the communities she studies. Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988) extend these categories, and Barton and Hamilton (1998) suggest the need to allow for multiple uses of the same text by different agents, including during the same literacy event. Teale, Anderson and Stokes (1980), Chall & Snow (1982), Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines (1988), and Purcell-Gates (1996), all considered a wide range of literacy-related domains, including story reading, as well as functional 'phrasal' level literacy domains in the child's environment. Chall and Snow anticipated Hart and Risley's findings in studies of early home language experience among low income families, that depth and range of language complexity in the home influenced the child's vocabulary, though not necessarily reading comprehension. The influence of affective climate on reading and writing development: "...the positive self-concept...the emotional climate of the home also related closely to the students' word production in writing tasks." (Chall, 1983) is a recurring finding, echoed by British researchers Tizard and Hughes (2002).

Goldenberg (1992) describes activities involving school materials in the Mexican-heritage homes in Southern California and parents' attitudes or schema towards literacy. Based on research into Mexican-heritage parents' schema of literacy during the 1980s and 1990s, he found a tendency for Spanish-speaking families to rely on school materials, with very little book reading, based on their own experience of school. When asked by the

teacher to help their child to read, with materials in Spanish, they preferred the worksheet approach, or regarded their role as correcting mispronunciations, rather than engage in conversation about the content of the text.

Based on the finding that “literacy is woven into the lives of low-SES homes as well as middle class ones” (p.409) Purcell-Gates (1996) undertook a follow-up study to examine more closely the different types and frequencies of home literacy practices and their relationship to children’s knowledge of concepts and functions of written language. This study of out-of-school literacy as cultural practice of low-income students yielded similar findings to Goldenberg et al’s (1992) work with low-income Hispanic families, in terms of parents’ beliefs about literacy learning. In both cases, parents were engaged with their children, primarily around materials sent home from school. In both cases, parents adopted an explicit letter-word teaching approach, even when encouraged to focus on a reading little books sent home to encourage comprehension (Goldenberg et al, 1992). This pattern of direct literacy teaching among low-income and ethnically diverse families, observed by other studies, appears to be rooted in the learning schema parents derive from their own experience of education (Purcell-Gates, 1994). Native Hawaiians, whose home culture embodied an apprentice approach to teaching children skills in the home, switched to a direct instructional modality, clearly imitative of their own schooling, when working with literacy learning (Levin, 1990).

Effects of extended seasonal school breaks on literacy

Concerns about summer learning losses have appeared in educational research since the institution of the standardized American school calendar to accommodate the needs of the majority (85%) rural and agrarian population in the early 1900s (Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay, Greathouse, 1996). Recent sociological studies reveal a persistent pattern

of seasonal loss, highly concentrated among low-income students. A renewed interest among sociologists in the distribution of summer learning losses among students from different income groups points to a need to investigate this season of the year as a particular ecology of informal learning.

According to a meta-analysis of 39 studies (Cooper, et al.) all income groups sustained losses in the subject area of mathematics, but the losses in reading comprehension reveal socioeconomic inequities, averaging a gap of three months between middle and low income students. Entwisle and Alexander (1992,1994), and Heyns (1978), working longitudinally with inner-city student cohorts in Atlanta and Baltimore, suggest this gap is related to income constraints on access to learning and enrichment opportunities. Findings from a more recent ethnographic study of summer activities across income levels (Chin & Phillips, 2004) support this structural hypothesis, framing it within a comparative study of child-rearing practices. The authors challenge Lareau's (1990) cultural explanation of class differences in child-rearing, that middle class parents focus "concerted cultivation" in organizing their children's activities, while lower class parents provide less structure, instead relying on the "accomplishment of natural growth". Following 32 students from a mixed income fourth grade classroom through a representative range of summer activities, Chin and Phillips (2004) concluded that parents' differential access to material and human resources outweighed differences in parent values and expectations as a determinant of quality of summer activities. Low-income parents lacked both the money to afford organized summer activities, and the flexibility of work-hours to carry them out. According to a social reproduction framework, they also lacked the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1978), to know what might be enriching opportunities to maximize their children's talents, and the social capital (Coleman, 1990) to leverage

access to programs through the kinds of social networks middle class families rely on. The ethnographic nature of this study highlights the need for an ecological dimension to studies of family support of summer activities.

Discussion in the field of seasonal learning loss

Cooper et al (1996) review of studies, from 1906 to 1995 revealed uneven findings, with at best, no change, at worst, a one-month loss of equivalent grade level skills. Leading the field in the 1970s, Barbara Heyns's (1978) study of 3,000 middle school students in Atlanta, Georgia, concluded that achievement gaps measured by family socioeconomic background, as well as race and ethnicity, widen more during the summer months than during the school year. Alexander, Entwisle & Olson (2007) summarizing nine years of their own seasonal learning research among 790 children from 20 schools in Baltimore, suggest that their findings replicate Heyns's thesis. Downey, von Hippel & Broh (2004), and Burkham et al. (2004), working from large national data sets (ECLS,2006), concur, but offer a methodological critique of earlier studies. The problem centers on the validity of measurement, since assessment data used in earlier studies included several weeks of school instruction. Cooper et al previously issued a similar caution on the conservative nature of their findings based on the same concern, methods of comparison testing. The comparison between spring and fall test results was based on assessments given two to three weeks prior to the end of school, and three weeks after the start of school in the fall. Combining these weeks of instructional time within the summer vacation masks the true effect of the loss of instructional time. Cooper, Burkham, Downey and others suggest that, allowing for the instructional effect during these weeks, the decline in summer achievement would be even steeper.

A further discussion has arisen around the within-group variation of summer effects, through studies like Chin and Phillips, and Burkham et al. in investigating the summer activities engaged in by different socioeconomic groups of students. Burkham's team used a survey method for a data set of 3,664 students during the summer between kindergarten and first grade. Their findings on summer literacy learning suggest not only that not only were there were no gains, but summer activities did not appear to have a significant influence. Using a multivariate model, they indicate that the demographic variables, ethnicity, gender, home language, and single parent status used in other studies, did not account for the continued achievement gap between low and middle-income students. Downey et al. (2004) also using ECLS data for kindergarteners going into first grade extends this argument suggesting that ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status can only explain ten per cent of the inequality in learning rates. Downey argues for recognition of the role of school as equalizer, since so many studies describe a higher rate of learning during school among low income and minority students, when they work to catch up on the losses over the summer. Downey's contribution is to open the debate over the 90% 'unexplained' inequality, among children of similar race, gender and socioeconomic status that he attributes to variation in family and neighborhood experience.

Relevance to present study

The latest publication of Alexander and Entwisle's findings (2007) caught my attention both in my capacity as a teacher and as researcher. The teacher in me immediately recognized my lack of direct knowledge concerning my students' summer activities. The researcher in me took Downey's account of the '90% unknown' factors in the summer achievement gap as a rallying cry to take up a study of students during the summer. For the nine months that constitute the school year students' daytime hours follow a predictable

structure of cultural norms and expectations within the bounded ecology of the classroom. Summer vacation represents a shift of pace, structure and ecology, with wide variations among children from different communities. Longitudinal studies in Baltimore and Atlanta both indicate a cumulative gap in achievement among low-income students, exacerbated by the summer break. The broad demographic variables suggest a weak level of academic support within family and community. However, concealed within the variables, lies a diversity and heterogeneity that only descriptive studies can address.

From macro to micro: The value of unpacking variables in large data sets

Building on the findings from these large data sets of summer learning losses, I used this small descriptive study to explore the range of summer activities that may support literacy learning among the Mexican-heritage students in my sample. Within the nationwide statistics of early childhood, lies the wide within-group variation that makes it possible for students who lack social and cultural capital yet to succeed against all the odds. Unpacking the variables of ethnicity, home language, socioeconomic status, parent education, and family characteristics, enabled me to tease out patterns within home and community ecologies that influenced literacy engagement that remain undetected by large-scale surveys.

Rationale for present study

Role of home literacy support for Mexican-heritage student academic success

Learning begins in the home, through language and literacy socialization, often by apprenticeship, in the multiple vernacular literacies that support daily routines of living. Since many of the studies reviewed here, Mexican-heritage parents' schema of literacy learning appear to be changing, according to national surveys of reading at home. Over the period from 1993 to 2005 the percentage of Hispanic, and low income, as well as parents

who had not completed high school, who read to their children and taught them letters and sounds, all increased by at least ten per cent, in some cases more, including fathers. (NCES, 2006). The influence of popular culture via television, and school communications may be responsible for this shift. It remains to be seen how this shift can influence the overall literacy achievement of low-income and minority students, when we consider Heath's findings, as well as Teale and Sulzby, Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines, and Purcell-Gates, that working class and low income families lack the cultural capital to socialize their children to a more universal (Bernstein, 1970) transferable discourse around literacy.

Examining variations in summer activities that foreground literacy, or in which literacy is purposefully embedded in the lives of young Mexican-heritage students, builds a new dimension to the studies reviewed here. Not only is there a need for new data, since much of the research cited took place over a decade ago, but conditions have changed in education, linguistically, by the elimination of bilingual education in California, and ideologically, in terms of the accelerated expectations of literacy by young learners. Studies of home literacy previously compared home and school factors and were carried out during the school year. This study proposes to enter relatively uncharted territory by studying children in their own ecocultural niches, during an extended period away from school. Literacy is a social process, beginning in the home, where the ecological-cultural context socializes children towards cultural competence within their community. These school-age children live in the interface between the ecologies of school and home literacy practices, taking meaning from both, and contributing to their own socialization. Home literacy resources in the families of these English learners may prove to be limited, as many of the studies here found, but literacy is present, in a wide variety of everyday practices. How these practices engage the children, what scripts and purposes lie behind the way they are

used, will contribute a vital dimension to understanding how young Mexican-heritage students approach literacy in their lives.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Research design and demographic data to introduce the study

Organization of the chapter

This chapter consists of two related sections. Section I is devoted to a description of the research methods and data collection strategies employed in this study. Section II introduces the families and children participating in the study through demographic and ecological data. I also include academic data obtained from the children's school records. I use the data in Section II as a baseline for the analysis in Chapters Four through Seven.

Section I: Research design

Introduction

The change of setting children experience as they move between school and home can be described as a transition between cultural communities (Rogoff, 2003). The construct of cultural communities (p. 80) shifts the theoretical lens on culture from categorical variable, to participation in one or more communities based on common cultural practices. Children make the home-school-home transition daily during the school year, maintaining a routine of alternation between participating in the institutional culture of the classroom, and participating in the less structured setting of the family. This nine-month routine of transitions, both cultural and linguistic, is replaced during the summer by a foregrounding of the ecocultural niche of the family. At home for three months, the contexts of home, extended family, and community become the activity settings in which children primarily engage on a daily basis, reorganizing the cultural and linguistic emphasis within their hybridized identities from the school day pattern. Children 'out of school for the summer' continue to make meaning of their surroundings and interactive experiences using language and literacy in a wide variety of domains within the structure of family and

community activities. The design of this study is concentrated on methods to elicit how children and other family members go about making meaning of their daily experiences in context through language and literacy.

Research Design

This is a qualitative study of nine families with five embedded case studies. A major goal of this study was to understand the influence of context on informal literacy engagement in the homes of young English learners in Spanish-speaking homes. My goal, to focus on the child in context, led me to design a methodology to capture literacy events involving adults and children in their naturalistic settings, matching as closely as possible the routine practices common in each case. I used a two-phase qualitative study based on an ecocultural model including the case study approach. The first phase of the study included interviews and observation of all nine families. The second phase of the study, in-depth case-studies, was designed according to data derived from the first phase, to elicit an in-depth *emic*, or insider's perspective using video and photo elicited interviews, and participant diaries.

Qualitative methods do not seek to test theories or hypotheses, but rather to build concepts based on a descriptive or interpretive analysis of data that is ultimately mediated by the researcher's own perception. Within the qualitative framework of this study, I used some of the tools of ethnographic fieldwork (Heath & Street, 2008) to describe children's cultural interactions with literacy in their family contexts through multiple home visits, over a period of three months. This "ethnographic perspective" to qualitative research implies the use of ethnographic tools of inquiry within a framework that usually includes theories of culture, language and learning, while not in any way claiming to describe a classic anthropological ethnography. I used ethnographic methods of data collection to elicit both emic and etic perceptions of family activities, including interviews, video, photographic

and audio recordings, field note observations, and document analysis. This study can also be described as naturalistic, since I collected the data in settings natural to the participants.

The current research is situated within the field of education, with the purpose of adding to the research knowledge of literacy engagement in Spanish-speaking homes, and thus influence educational policy. The academic field of education allows for the inclusion of theoretical frameworks derived from a variety of relevant disciplines, including psychology, sociology, anthropology and linguistics. Specifically I drew on the sociocultural theory of language and learning, using the framework of activity settings as a lens for analysis. I introduced the ecological dimension within this same framework in an attempt to elicit converging and overlapping environmental influences according to the transformative interaction of three planes of activity: personal, interpersonal, and cultural-institutional (Rogoff, 2003). To inform my understanding of the data on family activities involving literacy I used core constructs from the frameworks of, literacy as a social process: Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices that are purposeful and embedded in broader social goals and social practices (Barton & Hamilton, 2000) ; and language socialization theory: children are socialized into their ecocultural niche through language, as well as being socialized through the cultural norms and schema within their ecology to the uses of language and literacy (Schieffelin, & Ochs 1986).

The ecocultural model represents a marriage of sociocultural learning theory with the dimension of ecological influences (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993; Weisner, 2002). This framework supports the nesting of multiple ecological and cultural spheres of influence that converge and overlap within the ecocultural niche of the family setting. Ecologies in this study included both the immediate contexts of the family home, including human participation, and the structural and socioeconomic constraints present within the broader contexts, including access to community resources, and parents' occupational status. The

sociocultural dimension referred to the patterned way each family engaged with environmental literacy resources, according to cultural norms and schema. As described in an earlier chapter, literacy was conceived throughout this study as a social process, incorporating multiple domains of literacy, one of which is the academic literacy commonly associated with schooling.

Unit of analysis and activity setting variables

The unit of analysis was any activity involving children in literacy, reading or writing, within everyday life settings in Mexican-heritage homes and communities. I used the activity setting as a unit of analysis to capture the intersubjectivity of interactions within the family, and to highlight the dynamic engagement of family members with their home and community contexts. I designed my data collection strategies, and analysis, to explore the sociocultural and contextual dimensions of these activity settings. I incorporated the following variables within my interview protocols, and used them as lenses for data analysis (see Figure 1; see also summary of literacy practices by activity setting variables, p.120): Participant structure (roles and personnel present); language choice; rules, schema and scripts with regard to literacy; purposes; mediating artifacts and task demands of the activity; and the contextual dimensions cultural-linguistic community.

Using activity setting variables. The interactivity of all variables within the activity setting poses a complex challenge for the researcher in analyzing the influences at work in each event observed. Gallimore and Goldenberg's (1993) solution to this challenge was to use each variable separately as a lens to compare the activity settings they observed with a predetermined set of criteria, desirable conditions for emergent literacy derived from research. By matching the variables with the criteria, they were able to identify areas of congruence, and areas of discontinuity, providing a more narrowly defined basis for

designing interventions. Rogoff in her ecological studies of cultural communities, proposed the strategy of foregrounding and backgrounding levels of influence for closer scrutiny.

In this descriptive study, I used the variables as lenses to uncover cultural-linguistic influences at work in literacy events. The relational dimension among the variables emerged as I reduced the data, guiding the coding process, through clustering and comparison. I used student state test scores in English literacy as a benchmark for identifying emerging patterns across cases using comparison of variables.

Participant structure and language choice emerged as the core variables determining cultural community rules and schema, choice of text, purpose and task demands of the activity. The semi-structured interview protocol used a cluster of prompts to elicit each of these variables through participant reports of a range of activities. I sought to validate this data using videotaped observations, and participant observations of examples of literacy events, using the same activity setting variables as a lens for analysis.

Figure 1. *Multidirectional activity setting showing interactivity of variables*

Case Studies

Merriam (1998) characterizes the case-study as a “bounded system” based on the boundaries of: number of participants, time spent gathering data, or number of data sources used. Yin, (1989) describes a case study as an “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.” (p.23). These criteria are relevant to the current study since it asks *how* questions with regard to the role of context in literacy engagement within a cultural community. Each *case* was usually bounded by the immediate family, but also extended to other family member constellations, and engagement in community activities such as church study groups. Both Merriam and Yin suggest that the case study approach can be descriptive,

interpretive or explanatory. The case study phase of the current research is primarily descriptive in the way it offers thickly textured accounts of activities in real-life contexts. But, it is also interpretive, using the analytic framework of activity settings within each of the five case families as well as across cases.

Participants

Phase One: Baseline data

I selected low-income, Spanish speaking, Mexican-heritage families who had a second grade student in Sacagawea Academy, an urban southern California school with a high percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch (Title 1). Child participants included all eligible second grade students of Mexican-heritage (n=9), from low-income, Spanish-speaking families attending Sacagawea Academy¹ in June of 2008. Adult participants were the parents and/or extended family caregivers of the selected students, who were willing to participate, including both men and women (n=14). I used a criterion-based, and convenience sampling approach to participant selection. I derived the criteria for participant selection from the primary research questions investigating the out-of-school funds of literacy available to young Mexican-heritage English learners in their eco-cultural contexts of home and community. The decision to focus on second grade children was derived from research suggesting literacy at this age can already be used to predict long-term academic success or high-school drop-out rates (Biemiller,2002). Low-income, Spanish-speaking, Mexican-heritage children's activities during the summer between second and third grade could be considered critical in either reinforcing academic gains during the school year, or undermining their school-based literacy practices. The focus on low-income, Spanish-speaking families reflected the largest subgroup in the school, and

¹ This, and all other names are pseudonyms used to protect the anonymity of participants.

across California, with rates of proficiency in language arts significantly lower than their native English-speaking peers (CDE).

Sacagawea Academy, a small K-8 charter school (n=285) consistently attracts a population of 45%-50% Mexican-heritage students, most of whom are English learners. With only one bilingual teacher on staff, in addition to bilingual Spanish-speaking office staff, there tended to be a communication gap between the school and Spanish-speaking families. Well-meaning monolingual teachers, lacking direct knowledge of students' home lives, held deficit assumptions regarding literacy resources among these families and their capacity to support children's continued literacy at home. Informal anecdotal inquiry among generations of Spanish-speaking parents and grandparents by this bilingual teacher had revealed counter-indicators to these assumptions, reinforced by the average to high achievement scores of many of these children.

For the purposes of this study I selected families from the most recent cohort of children in second grade. For access I relied on the trust built up between myself, as former teacher, and parents as a basis for recruitment to participate. I invited all families that fit the criteria of Mexican-heritage, low income, Spanish speaking, with second grade students as of June 2008 (n = 12) to participate. I bounded the group of participating child subjects by limiting them to former second graders (2007-2008), even though I could have had access to a range of former and prospective students' families who otherwise fit the criteria for participation. This criterion, combined with the demographic criteria of socio-economic status, home language use, and country of origin, provided a matrix of independent variables, common to all participants, through which to explore the within-group variation of home literacy activities. The dimension of convenience sampling derived from my privileged access to these children as their former second grade teacher at Sacagawea Academy. Before the study began, one family became inaccessible by returning to Mexico

permanently. I excluded two students as ineligible based on their special needs in academic learning, since the study assumed a normal range of learning ability, based on assessment measures. The final group of participating families, (n=9) thus included all possible candidates from the population defined by my criteria, and accessible through consent of the school's governing board. The children, aged between seven and eight years demonstrated a range of academic levels from basic to advanced, and all but one were designated as English Learners. Reflecting the gender distribution in the second grade class they all attended, the group I researched comprised three boys, and six girls. Parents from all nine families were first generation immigrants from different regions of Mexico, with an average of fifteen years in the United States. They represented a wide range of educational backgrounds ranging from elementary to college, with the majority having completed at least part of high school. There were older siblings in all nine cases, and all declared low income.

Phase Two – Case Studies

I selected five families from those interviewed in Phase One for descriptive and interpretive case studies. The criterion for selection, recurring literacy events that could be observed with the minimum of intrusion, was based on analysis of the data collected in Phase One. Adults in all of the five families relied on Spanish for communication, with varying degrees of emergent spoken English. Four of the five child participants were girls, with one boy. Three of the case families were actively involved with Spanish-speaking church communities.

Research setting

This qualitative study covered a three-month period, from June through August 2008, and took place in a large urban area of Southern California. The city neighborhoods within which the participating families lived are clustered to the south of a major freeway,

that defines the boundary between upscale suburbs to the north, and low income multi-ethnic communities to the south. These micro-neighborhoods lie within a four-mile radius of Sacagawea Academy. My criterion for selecting the contexts for data collection was the most naturalistic setting in which children spent time during the summer vacation. In the majority of cases it was the child's home, but on occasion I visited the child in the care of other family members away from their primary residence. I also conducted fieldwork while accompanying several families to community activities such as church study groups, visits to the library, and family social events.

For the majority of families, home comprised tiny, well-kept one or two bedroom apartments in small, two story apartment complexes, adjacent to one of two main commercial arteries. Interviews typically took place in the living rooms or kitchen areas of each dwelling, although bedrooms were occasionally included as multi-purpose sites of activity. Interviews, arranged at the convenience of participants, typically took place during late summer afternoons, when the adults had come home from work. One stay-home mother preferred late mornings, and one accommodated me at the end of her night-shift, before she took her rest. In Phase Two I conducted field work in the community on Saturdays and Sundays, but interviews all took place during the week.

Data collection procedures

Role of the researcher as observer and interviewer

Interviewing families in the intimacy of their homes, in spite of a degree of familiarity already established through my role as teacher, required a special form of tact, sensitivity, and patience while maintaining a focus on the domains of literacy practices I wished to address in data collection. Parents and other family members responded positively to the interest I was showing by volunteering narratives around their own and their children's literacy. Multiple visits, especially in the five case study families, established

me as an accepted *amiga de la familia*, friend of the family, a role that eased the way into the extended family and community context. Children likewise relaxed when engaged in the 'game' dimension of the initial sorting activity, easily opening up rich conversations that departed from the traditionally asymmetric relationship between child and teacher.

Protection of human subjects

Prior to beginning any portion of the research study, I obtained written permission from each participating family. I provided each participant with an oral and written explanation of the purposes, design, and confidentiality procedures of the study, in Spanish and English. Adult participants signed permission forms, in English or Spanish, agreeing to participate in the study and giving permission for audiotaping, videotaping and photography. Parent / guardians of student participants signed permission forms giving agreement for audiotaping, videotaping and photography of children. Student participants signed child-assent forms, witnessed by their parents, and were free to decline participation even if their parent/guardian had given permission allowing their participation. No student or parent was required to participate, with no adverse consequences for those who might have chosen not to participate. I took great care to explain the difference between my role as teacher, and as researcher, so participants understood their freedom to decline, if they wished. Of the nine eligible families, none declined. See Table 1 for a summary of data collection procedures.

Table 1. *Data collection procedure summary*

Methodology	Sources	Procedure
Phase One- Broader Study		
Interview	Adult (n=14)and child (n=9)participants	Recorded semi-structured interviews on a digital voice recorder, then logged and transcribed
Demographics questionnaire	Adult participants (n=10)	Interviewees completed during home visit
Photographic observation	Neighborhood ecology	Recorded salient community resources, environmental language use, neighborhood features using digital photography
Photo elicited interview	Child participants (n=9)	Recorded open-ended interviews over child-participant photographic journal of environmental features of interest
Phone follow-up activity log	Child participants (with adults' permission) (n=5)	Recorded open-ended conversation with child describing day's activities
Observation	PI Observed in home and neighborhood.	Recorded field notes in digital recorder before and after each visit.
Document analysis	Assessment materials available from school	Read all materials. Documented descriptive statistics related to child interviewees
Phase Two – In-depth Case Study		
Video observation	Child (n=5) and adult (n=8)participants	Recorded child and adult interactions over literacy
Video elicited interviews	Child (n=5) and adult (n=8)participants	Recorded open-ended interview with child and adults over video footage of interactions around literacy
Participant diary	Child participants (n=5)	Child recorded daily activities for one week

After setting up a schedule convenient to the participants, I visited families in their homes to conduct interviews and naturalistic observations of children and parents in daily activities. As a non-native Spanish-speaking researcher, I gathered data in the language preferred by each participant. Most of the adults chose to communicate in Spanish while the children varied between English, Spanish, and code-switching.

Semi-structured interviews

The interviews took the form of a guided conversation in the style of the “Ecocultural Family Interview” (EFI) (Weisner, 2002) (see Appendix) with an emphasis on elements relating to literacy. Interviews with adults were separate from the child participant interviews, though in many cases they took place with other family members present. The protocol included five topic areas: child activities, uses of reading and writing in the family context, parents’ experience of education, adult literacy activities, supporting child’s learning, and parent characteristics: opinions about literacy development. Interview questions consisted of prompts derived from sorting tasks designed to elicit frequency and distribution of literacy related activities in the family in the five topic areas. These prompts were based on the activity setting variables of, participant structure, mediating literacy tools, purpose, scripts and schema, and language use. The sorting task consisted of sorting word and picture cards depicting a wide range of common out-of-school activities, some of which included literacy. A colorful ‘game board’ provided categories of frequency, *every day*, *sometimes*, *never* to assist in sorting. The most frequent activities were sorted a second time using categories of language use, *English*, *Spanish*, *both*. The researcher recorded results on a sheet corresponding to the sorting task categories.

Media-elicited interviews

I left a disposable camera with each of the children during their Phase One interviews, with instructions to take pictures of ‘important things’ they noticed around

them during their daily activities. I conducted photo-elicited interviews with eight of the nine target children, based on the images they had captured of meaningful features in their surroundings. I used a simple protocol for these interviews based on reason for choice of subject, activity related to the picture, and prompts eliciting participant structure, purpose, cultural characteristics, language and context. This technique provided additional information on types of activities, participants, and settings not otherwise accessible to the researcher. These second child interviews yielded more descriptive and anecdotal detail, supporting themes emerging in the first interview, as well as supplementing with domains not mentioned. I used the new data to follow up with field visits to some of the settings depicted in the photographs and described by the child.

In Phase Two, five families agreed to having a literacy activity videotaped, followed by a video-elicited interview over the literacy event. The protocol for these interviews was designed to elicit participant meaning and schema around the activity observed. In three of the cases the interviews involved the whole family commenting on what they observed. The researcher encouraged participants to control the playback of the video sequence as a further emic dimension to the elicitation experience. These interviews proved most valuable in eliciting adult participants' schema around literacy and learning.

Observations

Each home visit included at least one interview and informal observation. These observations included recording the literacy resources in the home, and family interactions during the visit. Personnel present varied according to the purpose of the visit. For example, child interview visits included at least one parent, the target child and other family members who happened to be present, but adult interview visits sometimes excluded target children, who were being cared for elsewhere. Each home visit lasted from one to two hours, usually in the late afternoon, prior to the dinner hour. I recorded observations after

each visit in the form of field notes, that were catalogued and summarized. I then transcribed the dictated field notes and uploaded them to Hyperresearch for coding purposes.

I spent time visiting the immediate neighborhood of each family dwelling, taking photographs, and recording field notes, of the local ecology, including community and commercial resources, churches, libraries, parks, shopping areas, and the use of language in each micro-ecology.

For the first four weeks of the study five of the target children attended summer school for four hours a day. I observed for several days as a passive and later as a participant observer with the purpose of gathering background data on the type of literacy activities in which they were engaged. As a passive observer I was able to write detailed notes for several hours each visit, and gather examples of literacy tasks assigned to the children. I postponed my visits to these families during the period of summer school, so that I could record their actual out-of-school experiences. I arranged my data collection schedule so that I could visit other families during this period.

Following each interview I attempted a series of follow-up phone conversations with each child to document the patterns of daily activities. I was only successful in making between two and four follow-up calls each with five of the target children. Timing and access provided an obstacle in the other cases.

In the second phase of the study I videotaped a literacy event, selected from the interview and observation data in the first phase, involving the target child and at least one adult caregiver. I used a very small, unobtrusive video camera, and adult participants who consented to this process were asked to ignore my presence. After initial self-consciousness, four of the five sets of participants relaxed and carried out the routine literacy practices

reported through the interviews. In one case the interviewer followed the target child as she interacted with the junior section of the local public library on her weekly visit there.

Finally, I observed five of the families in community activities, church study groups, social events, and homes of extended family members, as a participant observer. I created field notes to describe these events, based on the same activity setting variables used throughout the study.

Documents

Academic Measures

I gathered current academic information about student participants through the assessment documents listed in Table 2. All students were assessed between May and June in academic literacy in English, using, the annual California Standards Test (CST), the final Summative Test provided by the textbook publishers, Houghton Mifflin, and the oral reading and comprehension assessment, Developmental Reading Assessment. I assessed students in their knowledge of literacy in Spanish using the. IDEA Language Proficiency Test. I included the English proficiency measures (CELDT) in listening, speaking, reading and writing, based on the most recent assessment, fall of 2007. I used this , and other documentary data to triangulate other forms of data in the analysis.

Other documents

I gathered documentary examples of literacy activities used during the summer school that five target children attended. During home interviews, six of the target children provided me with a sample of writing created while I was interviewing another family member.

The five case study target children created a participant diary, based on the activity categories in the interview protocol sorting task. In three of the case studies I was able to acquire samples of the religious texts, in Spanish, used by the families with their children.

Environmental photographs of salient features of each micro-neighborhood provided a wider ecological dimension to the family studies.

Table 2. *Academic measures used in data collection.*

Measure	Skills measured	Date assessed
<i>Houghton Mifflin Summative Assessments End of Year English Language Arts (Grade Two)</i>	Reading comprehension Word analysis skills Writing conventions Grammar Writing strategies	June 2008
<i>Developmental Reading Assessment (www.sandi.net/dra)</i>	Reading fluency Reading strategies Reading comprehension	June 2008
<i>California Standards Test 2008</i>	Reading comprehension Word analysis skills Writing conventions Grammar Writing strategies	May 2008
<i>CELDT California English Language Development Test 2007</i>	Listening Speaking Reading Reading comprehension Word analysis skills Writing conventions Grammar Writing strategies	October 2007
<i>IDEA Language Proficiency Tests (IPT) – Spanish (Ballard & Tighe, 1991)</i>	Reading comprehension Word analysis skills Writing conventions Grammar Writing strategies	June 2008

Analytic approach

Theoretical framework

This study used the guiding constructs of sociocultural activity settings, to examine planes of ecology and language socialization, through everyday family activities. The use of

ethnographic data collection techniques facilitated a continual and recursive analysis as data was collected. Emerging codes, identified through a process of open coding, as described in the literature on grounded theory, contributed to each successive phase of data collection

This approach to analysis is both top-down, in using pre-determined activity setting variables, and bottom up, in allowing unanticipated themes to emerge in the course of data reduction. The sociocultural framework, specifically the activity setting as unit of analysis, provides a structure for these emerging themes through the pre-established variables guiding the study. The domain of socialization to literacy, from language socialization theory, provided a lens to examine literacy phenomena, using the unit of literacy event, nested within overlapping planes of ecology. Language socialization, and sociolinguistics frameworks use a structure of variables similar to activity settings to analyze data with a more explicit reference to issues of language use, register between participants, and the expectations based on use of literacy in everyday events.

Data Reduction

Upon completion of each interview and observation I created descriptive field notes and made a summarized transcript of the interviews. I reduced the data from the frequency measures within the interview protocol, based on the sorting task, using a table to compare features across cases. I created research memos on a weekly basis during data collection to summarize emergent findings and reflect on issues arising in the process of data collection, such as problems of access, and connections between themes in different families. I continued to transcribe interviews and uploaded interview transcripts, field notes and research memos into Hyper Research to create a common bank of codes to use across data sources. After the first three weeks of data collection (n=5 families) I summarized all

emerging themes in a table comparing occurrences across cases, and providing brief examples for each case.

There was a recursive nature to my data collection and initial analysis: I met with different families at different points during the summer, (using the same protocol) recording each contact through audio recordings, and field notes. Data analysis involved identifying relevant factors within the domains of inquiry relevant to the constructs guiding the study, as well as allowing themes to emerge out of the raw data as I collected it. By identifying these themes in my weekly research memos, and summarizing them after I had interviewed four families, I had developed additional factors to be alert to in each subsequent contact. These emerging themes across the first four cases were important layers of understanding since they were tangential to but often unanticipated as sub-questions to explore. They included the role of the mother in literacy events, the use of Spanish as a mediator of literacy, and the use of literacy as a tool for cultural family practices, such as bible study.

Video and photographic data were stored digitally and catalogued by date and case using Hyperresearch. I used Inqscribe to annotate the video segments prior to the video-elicited interviews, and create initial codes emerging from Is' perspective.

The participant diaries used a measure similar to the sorting task, creating a basis for comparison and corroboration of the initial interviews. I reduced these by adding them to the data derived from the activity sorting tasks.

Data Analysis Methods

I felt the need to balance the top-down structure of my data collection measures by using a grounded theory approach to the resulting data. I had designed my data collection strategies to explore everyday activities involving literacy within an ecocultural activity setting. My concern was the risk of failing to recognize important themes not included in the

predetermined constructs upon which the study was based. I thus systematically noted both unusual and recurring features from interviews and field notes, in the process of open coding. This process alerted me to unanticipated themes, in particular the dominance of religious study in inculcating Spanish literacy among several families, of different religious persuasions. Thus the grounded theory bottom up approach to initial data analysis guided me in my selection of families for the in-depth case studies in phase two.

However, equally necessary to the data analysis process was the matrix of activity setting variables used to identify and differentiate the complexity of features at work in an ecocultural setting. I modeled my study on the work of Gallimore and Goldenberg using an activity setting analysis of emergent literacy among young Hispanics (1993). In the present study I used activity setting variables, - participant structure, cultural literacy schema and rules, purposes and task demands, contextual constraints of place, and time, and cultural language choice – to analyze the data on literacy events according to characteristics of both academic and informal literacies.

Establishing Validity: Triangulation

This study relies on multiple types and sources of data for the purposes of validity through triangulation. Data sources provided both insider and outsider perspectives on family activities with children around literacy. The self-report of activities by both adults and children was accompanied by researcher observations recorded in field notes. Follow-up elicitation of insider child perspectives through participant photography, and video-elicited family group interviews provided participant reflection and feedback on the meaning of the data in both forms of media. Finally, multiple visits over a period of months provided an opportunity to corroborate initial observations, and to counter any effect from first-time visits.

Summary

This two-phase qualitative study of nine families, with five in-depth case studies, focused on the literacy related activities that children and families engage in during the summer months. The research design of this was guided by sociocultural theory using ethnographic techniques of data collection. Participants included low-income Spanish speaking Mexican-heritage children and families residing in a community in Southern California, with children attending the same neighborhood charter school.

Section II: Introducing the participating children and their families.

Summary of data on participants

The participating families in this study shared demographic, socioeconomic, cultural and linguistic characteristics. Buried within a large data set they would represent a homogeneous sample of: low-income, Spanish –speaking, first generation immigrants from large, hard-working families in Mexico, each participating in a Spanish-speaking extended family network. All nine families resided within the same urban neighborhood, and sent their children to the same school. Furthermore, the participating children had all demonstrated competence in English literacy at or above grade level, and they all had at least one older sibling. Viewed from the perspective of school statistics, and even school personnel, children from these families would be regarded as fitting a profile of English learner from a Spanish-speaking home, and thus likely to need extra help. Statistically the children would be considered to occupy one of two categories: academically successful, or failing, although statistical trends would predict the latter. Teachers would view their parents as either, bilingual and therefore easy to communicate with, or monolingual and therefore inconvenient to communicate with, requiring an interpreter, and likely to have difficulty understanding a teacher's directives.

Demographic data

The adult caregivers in this study were all born in Mexico, across a range of northern, central and southern states, and immigrated to the United States with the support of extended family networks already established here. Education level among the adults ranged from 4th grade through college graduate, with the majority between 6th and 9th grade. In seven of the nine families Spanish was the dominant or exclusive language spoken, although most siblings of proximal ages frequently chose to communicate with each other in English. All families declared themselves as low income, and at least one adult in each home was employed. Four mothers worked as housekeepers and two in retail. Fathers' occupations included, landscaping, tailoring, autobody restoration, and construction. Adults in eight of the nine families were in their late twenties to mid thirties, the ninth couple were considerably older. All of these families maintained some form of connection with relatives in Mexico.

Table 3. *Parents of nine participating families: Occupation, education, years in USA and level of bilingualism*

Family name	Parent occupations	Years in USA	Parent Education level	Degrees of Bilingualism
1. Fernandez				
Mother	Retail manager	20+	High School	Bilingual
Father	Lives elsewhere	Not known	Not known	Not known
2. Garcia				
Mother	Restaurant worker	10-15	High School	Receptive English
Father	Construction	10-15	High School	Spanish only
3. Herrera				
Mother	Retail manager	15-20	High School+	Bilingual
Father	Self employed	15-20	High School+	Bilingual
4. Higuera				
Mother	Homemaker	10-12	Junior High(7-9)	Spanish only
Father	Autobody repair	10-15	Junior High (7-9)	Basic English
5. Peña				
Mother	Homemaker	10-15	High School	Spanish only
Father	Construction	10-15	High School	Spanish only
6. Lopez				
Mother	Hotel housekeeper	20+	Junior High(7-9)	Spanish only
Father	Not employed	20+	Junior High(7-9)	Receptive English
7. Díaz				
Mother	Housekeeper	10-15	High School	Receptive English
Father	Lives elsewhere	Not known	Not known	Not known
8. Pacheco				
Mother	Housekeeper	10-15	Junior High(7-9)	Receptive English
Father	Construction	15-20	Junior High(7-9)	Functional English
9. Zamora				
Mother	Unemployed cook	0-5	Elementary Sch.	Spanish only
Father	Tailor (also cook)	0-5	Junior High (7-9)	Spanish only

Participating children: Eight of the nine target children were born in California, while the ninth was brought here as an infant. Each child had at least one older sibling, as well as numerous cousins with whom they spent time several times a week, most of whom had some knowledge of English. The study took place during the summer that the nine focus

children were transitioning between second and third grade, having only received school instruction in English. The average age of the nine target children was eight years, two months. Five celebrated their eighth birthday during the summer, placing them within the youngest third of their cohort.

Table 4. *Children participating in the study, (n=9)*

Child name	Position in the family	Reading level/English	Zone of dwelling
Soledad Fernandez	Second of four siblings	Proficient	Zone A
Sabrina Garcia	Third of three siblings/cousin to Elena	Basic	Zone C
Lorenzo Herrera	Second of three siblings	Basic	Zone C
Joaquin Higuera	Second of two siblings	Proficient	Zone A
Elena Peña	Second of three siblings/cousin to Sabrina	Advanced	Zone B
Juanita Lopez	Eleventh of eleven/second of two in current cohort	High Proficient	Zone C
Maritza Díaz	Second of two siblings	Advanced	Zone B
Carlos Pacheco	Third of four siblings	Basic	Zone A
Lola Zamora	Third of three siblings	High Proficient	Zone D

All nine children had proved themselves competent readers in English, scoring at or above their grade level in the California Standards Test in English Language Arts (CST), taken at the end of second grade, (see Figure 2.) in addition to tests in oral reading fluency and comprehension (DRA), writing (Houghton Mifflin) and a summative review of second grade standards provided by the textbook adoption used throughout the school (Houghton Mifflin) (see Table 2, p.70). Reading levels, basic, proficient, high proficient or advanced

(based on the CST, 2008) were distributed across ecological zones. The transition to third grade, according to current academic standards, is critical in that it requires a strong enough foundation in reading skills to advance to the stage of reading to learn, as opposed to the earlier primary stage of learning to read.

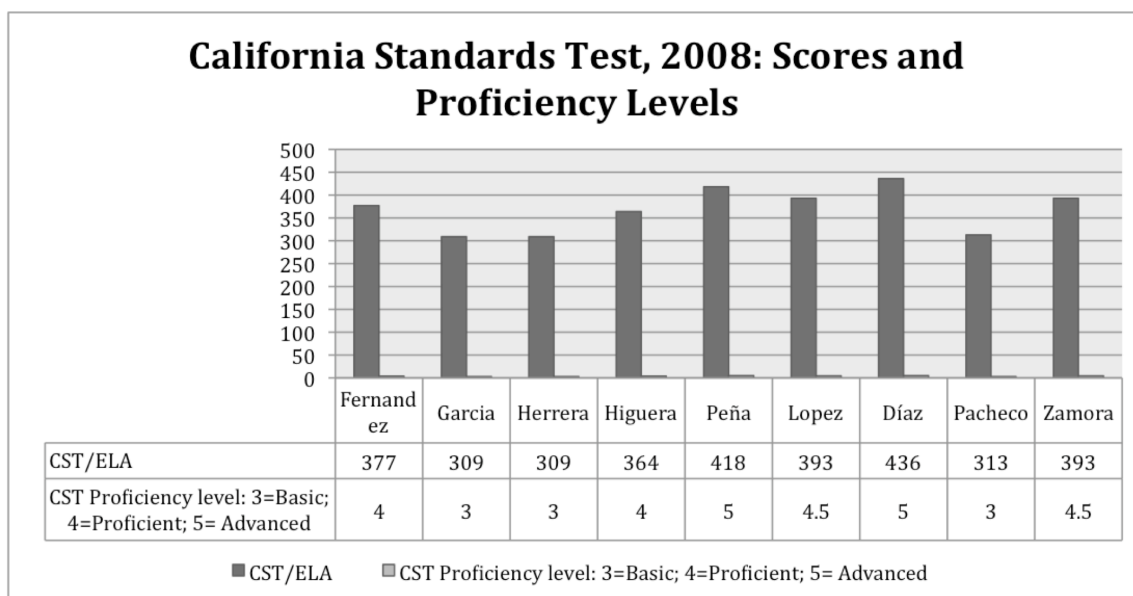


Figure 2. *Participating children's scores, 2008, California Standards Test, English Language Arts*

The children in this cohort demonstrated this foundation in reading in English, in spite of having been raised in a Spanish-speaking environment. However, according to the predictions from the data on seasonal learning losses, in the summer they were likely to lose some of the gains they had made during school, based on assumptions derived from their low socioeconomic status, as well as the dominant use of Spanish in their home environments. Researchers in early literacy also claim that this transition to third grade is critical in the overall school career of a child as a predictor of high school success and the likelihood of achieving college level (Biemiller, 2001).

Situating the children's academic literacy scores. Providing the actual scores achieved by each child, in addition to the assigned proficiency level, gives a more accurate view of the range of ability present in the study sample. During selection these scores were not available, so did not play a role in determining the study cohort. Of the twelve Hispanic students in the second grade cohort, one, who scored at the advanced level, had left the country prior to the study beginning, and two were in the process of consideration for special education based on factors that were not related to second language status. These two were the only exclusions, simply in order not to complicate the study with further, different considerations. Thus the study cohort was a representative sample of second graders from a Title I (low income) school in the larger urban region of Southern California where the study took place.

None of the nine children scored below Basic (below 300), which is statistically unusual in a classroom cohort of Hispanic English Learners in California, (cde.gov). All but one of the children were included in the annual CELDT (California English Language Development Test) program that tracks progress until a child can prove academic proficiency in English, usually after five years. Soledad was not included in this annual testing since her mother had chosen not to disclose her household as Spanish-speaking, based on her own negative experiences in US schools as a young immigrant, including discrimination in her choice of high school classes.

Summary of data collected on literacy practices cross nine families.

Baseline data for each household comprised adult and child interviews, an adult questionnaire on demographic data, parent education, and language use, as well as observations recorded in field notes immediately after each visit. Photographs created by eight of the nine children served as the basis for additional child interviews to elicit emic data on the meaning they made of literacy and other features in their environment that

were ‘important’ to them, and as a further tool of elicitation of activities when I was not present. I made phone follow-up calls between visits to capture evidence of activities, with only partial success constrained by availability of participants. All interviews followed a semi-structured protocol, with a focus on participant structure, context, domain of literacy, purpose and schema guiding the practices (See, Table 5., and Appendix 1).

Table 5. *Baseline data collected for four of nine families*

Family 1: Soledad Fernandez and mother	Family 2: Sabrina Garcia and mother	Family 3: Lorenzo Herrera and mother and father	Family 4: Joaquin Higuera and mother
Notes on: 3 Field visits 2 Follow-up phone calls	Notes on: 2 Field visits Follow-up phone calls 1 field visit to church w/family 1 field visit to park for birthday party w/family	Notes on: 2 Field visits	Notes on: 2 Field visits
Audio of 2 interviews w/TC	Audio of 2 interviews w/TC	Audio of interview w/TC	Audio of 2 interviews w/TC
Mother questionnaire	Mother questionnaire	Mother+ Father questionnaire	Mother questionnaire
Audio of interview w/M	Audio of interview w/M	Audio of interviews w/M + F (sep.)	Audio of interview w/M
20 photos by TC	6 photos by TC Writing sample	0 photos by TC (lost camera) Writing sample	20 photos by TC
CST/ELA HM end of yr. DRA CELDT	CST/ELA HM end of yr. DRA CELDT IPT (Sp.)	CST/ELA HM end of yr. DRA CELDT IPT (Sp.)	CST/ELA HM end of yr. DRA CELDT IPT (Sp.)

This baseline data was collected for all nine families, but is presented here in two groups: Four families who participated only in Phase 1; the remaining five families who participated in both Phase 1 and Phase 2, case studies. All families received at least two visits, but only two of the baseline group were available for follow-up phone calls. Three of these child participants created photographs, although one produced very few. Two volunteered a sample of writing created during my visits, while I was interviewing the

adults. One of the baseline families, the Herrera family, required separate visits to the homes of mother and father where the child participant spent equal amounts of time during the summer vacation

Based on initial analysis of the baseline data on all nine families, five cases were selected for further study, using a video-elicited, multi-vocal approach (Tobin, 1988) to elicit emic data on literacy events observed and recorded. This was supplemented by a participant diary of daily activities recorded for seven days by each of the five participating children. Additional field visits, arising from initial analysis of the baseline data, supplemented this multilayered data collection wherever possible. Indicators of cultural community activities relevant to the literacy profiles of each family, mentioned during interviews, or emerging from the photo-elicited interviews with the children, broadened the ecological scope of the study. As a result I visited the sites described in the data, along with the participating family members, to be a participant observer in practices involving literacy. These included three different church communities, Sunday School, a *quinceañera* celebration, an outdoor birthday celebration, and observation during summer school sessions that some of the participating children attended. A summary of data collected for these five cases is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. *Baseline and case study data collected for five families*

Family 5:Elena Peña and mother	Family 6:Juanita Lopez, father and mother	Family 7:Maritza Díaz and mother	Family 8:Carlos Pacheco, mother and father	Family 9: Lola Zamora, father and mother
Notes on: 3 Field visits 1 field visit to church w/family	Notes on: 5 Field visits 2 Follow-up phone calls 1 field visit to church w/family	Notes on: 4 Field visits 1 Follow-up phone calls 1 field visit to library w/family 1 field visit to Aunt's home	Notes on: 2 Field visits	Notes on: 4 Field visits 2 Follow-up phone calls 2 field visits to church and Sunday school w/family 1 field visit to quinceañera
Audio of 3 interviews w/TC	Audio of 3 interviews w/TC	Audio of 3 interviews w/TC	Audio of 3 interviews w/TC	Audio of 3 interviews w/TC
Mother Questionnaire	Mother +father questionnaire	Mother questionnaire	Mother +father questionnaire	Mother + father questionnaire
Audio of interview w/M 16 photos by TC	Audio of interview w/M+F 10 photos by TC	Audio of interview w/M 16 photos by TC	Audio of interview w/M+F 10 photos by TC	Audio of interview w/M+F 14 photos by TC
Writing sample	Writing sample	Writing sample	Writing sample	Writing sample
Video observation M/TC	Video observation M/F/TC/OS	Video observation TC	Video observation M/TC	Video observation F/TC/Sibs
Audio of interview w/M/TC over video	Audio of interview w/M/F/TC over video	Audio of interview w/M/TC over video	Audio of interview w/M/TC over video	Audio of interview w/M/F/TC/Sibs over video
Participant diary	Participant diary	Participant diary	Participant diary	Participant diary
CST/ELA HM end of yr. DRA CELDT IPT (Sp.)	CST/ELA HM end of yr. DRA CELDT IPT (Sp.)	CST/ELA HM end of yr. DRA CELDT	CST/ELA HM end of yr. DRA CELDT	CST/ELA HM end of yr. DRA CELDT IPT (Sp.)

All five of the children selected for case studies produced between 10-16 photographs, created a writing sample, a participant diary as well as participating in a video-elicited interview with other family members.

Overview of Chapters Five, Six and Seven

In the following sequence of chapters I analyze this multilayered data in response to the five research questions guiding the study. The multi-vocal data collected over a three-month period yielded a rich variety of material out of which to create a description and analysis of the summer literacy practices of the nine Spanish-speaking families, and their focus children. Using the five research questions as a framework I organized the data

description and analysis into three chapters, with the goal of examining the data from the point of view of: The overall ecology of literacy in Chapter Five ; Family literacy practices within their ecocultural niches in Chapter Six; Patterns emerging across these findings, based on both a priori variables, and the variables that emerged in the course of the study in Chapter Seven.

Chapter Five: Ecologies of Literacy I

In Chapter Five, I respond to the first research question.

1. What out-of-school funds of literacy were available to young Mexican-heritage English learners during the summer vacation?

I describe the ecocultural contexts of the study on the level of city and neighborhood, family cluster, and household funds of literacy. The remaining questions target the ways these eco-cultural contexts of home and community influenced literacy engagement among elementary-aged Mexican-heritage English learners during the summer vacation.

Chapter Six: Ecologies of Literacy II

Chapter Six addressed the second research question.

2. What are the patterns of home and community literacy practices that children and families engage in, including language choice, participation structure, frequency, and activity settings?

I first provide an overview of literacy practices across the nine families, followed by a within-case analysis of observed instances of literacy practices, in five families selected for case study. Viewing these instances, or literacy events, within the framework of sociocultural activity settings, I use the following variables for analysis: participant structure; purpose; mediating texts and tools; cultural community; salient cultural values, schema, rules and scripts operating within the strategies employed in the literacy event. Nested within the variable 'mediating texts and tools, is task demands and complexity;

nested within cultural community, and salient cultural values, I include the role of language, Spanish or English.

Chapter Seven: Ecologies of Literacy III

In Chapter Seven I take up a cross-case analysis of literacy practices among the five families and respond to the third and fourth questions.

3. How do family characteristics (parent education, level of bilingualism, family constellation, availability of siblings, availability of extended family network) influence engagement in literacy practices?
4. How does the neighborhood and community language environment influence children's literacy engagement (community resources, neighborhood commerce and advertising, church practices)?
5. How do these patterns vary by levels of children's school literacy achievement?

I examine the links within variables across cases, as well as the links between variables. Based on these, as well as variables emerging from the data, I take up the salient findings emerging from the study:

1. Emergent biliteracy among five children, in the absence of school instruction in Spanish, a) Supported by structured parental literacy support, b) Motivated by the demands of cultural community engagement in three types of churches;
2. The role of older siblings in mediating English language and literacy among the child participants of the study.

Goals of the study

My goal in reporting the findings in the following three chapters is to situate the children's summer literacy activities within the multilayered ecologies created by place, participants, texts and time. I begin, in Chapter Five, with a three-level description of the ecologies of literacy where participating families spent their summers.

CHAPTER V

Ecologies of literacy I: Ecocultural funds of literacy

...even though parents may be poor and have low levels of formal education, they can provide for their children a stable and well-structured environment. These resilient parents model for their children strong moral values, and stimulate them to develop ethnic pride, helping to promote in their children normal, advanced, or even gifted developmental levels. (Gonzalez, 2001. P. 15)

Overview of the chapter

In this chapter I take up the contextual dimensions of activity settings, what I call the ecology, to describe the literacy resources available to participants, and in which they engaged, in response to the first research question: What were the out-of-school funds of literacy available to young Mexican heritage second graders during the summer vacation?

This initial focus on literacy resources within the outer ecologies of activity settings, enables me to situate the study within important cultural-historical layers of context. In the following chapters I will use these findings to describe the variety of ways the families use access to print resources, or funds of literacy to construct the literacy practices in their daily lives.

Situating the study: Levels of ecology : Macro-; meso- and micro-

In describing the summer literacy practices of Mexican-heritage families, it is impossible to divorce intimate activity settings from the wider sociocultural and socioeconomic contexts in which they occur. Within these layered family ecologies I distinguish three levels of resources or funds of literacy: macro-, the ecocultural resources of the greater neighborhood, and beyond; meso-, the sub-neighborhoods in which each cluster of families resided, including ecocultural community networks they engaged in; and *micro-*, the immediate ecocultural niche of the household setting, both indoors and outdoors. Within each description I include demographic and socioeconomic characteristics

of the neighborhood; commercial activity; access to community resources; language(s) used; examples of environmental print and other literacy resources easily available.

Macro-ecology :Urban neighborhood in a large southern California city

Neighborhoods in the Southern California city in which the study took place evolved over generations of population growth and development. The core city was originally surrounded by a collection of separate self-sufficient neighborhoods, each with its own sociocultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic identity. As the area grew, these neighborhoods expanded to become one continuously inhabited urban agglomeration, while more affluent suburban neighborhoods were developed to the north of the major highway that intersects the entire urban region. This north-south division represents the dominant geographical indicator of socioeconomic status throughout the region, but it is most abruptly evident within the neighborhoods directly adjacent to the freeway, both north and south. To the north, up the hill ascending from the freeway, spacious, landscaped homes disappear behind abundant foliage on the broad, quiet streets of the suburban neighborhood. The only visible signage is a marquee beside the high school football field, or the occasional gas station, since grocery stores and other businesses are nestled discreetly within unobtrusive mini-shopping malls convenient with abundant parking space for the car-bound suburban dweller. Crossing the freeway to the south, one enters a dense and vibrant urban world in which many people walk, or take the bus. Small businesses line the main commercial through-streets, competing for the customer's attention with their multicolored, multilingual signs. These traditional urban neighborhoods, south of the interstate, include a wider range of economic status than in the suburbs. While there are pockets of well-kept, fairly affluent sections of single family homes, most of the sub-neighborhoods consist of a mixture of housing, including small apartment complexes, mingled with a variety of small

ethnic commercial establishments, and with a much higher density of population than is to be found in the northern suburbs.

Jefferson Heights¹, the neighborhood. Jefferson Heights is situated on a plateau overlooking the river valley that is now the path of the interstate highway, dividing the northern suburban from the southern urban neighborhoods of the greater city region. Within Jefferson Heights, two throughway boulevards, running parallel to the freeway, divide the neighborhood into a northern, central and southern section. I call these boulevards Main Street, and Jefferson Boulevard. North of Main Street lie quiet sections of well-kept single family homes adjacent to the interstate itself, while at the other extremity, far to the south of Jefferson Boulevard the mixed, denser housing exemplifies the more run-down, often gang-ridden urban neighborhoods that continue to the south of Jefferson Heights. The central section, lying between Main Street and Jefferson Boulevard is dominated by circuitous streets, containing dense mixed housing, parked cars, and constant signs of life as mothers walk their strollers to the convenient small businesses always within reach, or multiethnic teens hang out at street corners, loud music playing. 42% of the population of Jefferson Heights is foreign born, and 23% speak little or no English (citydata.com, 2009). Spanish-speaking Mexican-heritage families constitute the largest ethnicity residing in Jefferson Heights, approximately 50%, but the neighborhood is one of the most diverse in the city. While a third of the population is African-American, there is a strong Southeast Asian presence dating from the arrivals of refugees following the end of the Vietnam War. More recent waves of Moslem immigration from countries in Africa, such as Somalia have come to occupy poorer sections of Jefferson Heights, enriching the cultural tapestry of Jefferson Heights with their colorful costumes, and cultural presence.

¹ This and all other names within the study are pseudonyms, and entirely fictitious.

The population of Jefferson Heights is not only one of the most ethnically diverse in the city, it is also the youngest, with approximately 60% of the neighborhood's population 30 years old or younger. The neighborhood has a lower per capital income and education level than the city average, with 31% live below the poverty line, twice that of the city as a whole. Housing values are a fraction of the average for the city as a whole, and the dominant occupations among males and females are in service, sales, construction and production, dwarfing the tiny percentage of those in managerial and professional occupations.

Macro-Community resources as funds of literacy. Over a decade ago Jefferson Heights was burdened with high levels of crime, and local philanthropists stepped in to create a new community infrastructure within the poorest, section of the neighborhood, including an arts and recreation center, new schools, and a major suburban style shopping area, a new phenomenon in this small-business neighborhood. The impressive new recreation center, is a welcome addition to the existing community resources: public library, parks, and extension classes offered through the local high school. There are no bookstores in Jefferson Heights, but a multitude of newspapers and advertising in Spanish and Vietnamese. Every ethnicity has its places of worship, indicated by the written language on signs, including a burgeoning of small alternative denominations, many of which are located in storefronts, such as the Spanish-speaking Pentecostals. Jefferson Heights boasts every Christian denomination from traditional catholic to Jehovah's Witness, as well as a new mosque primarily for the Somali Moslem community. Derived from this greater ecology, literacy resources in Jefferson Heights appear to center on three strands of everyday life: the daily commerce along the two principal shopping streets, dazzling the eye with signage, and offering news and advertising in print form; the thriving bible-study culture around the

ethnic churches; and the schools, library, and community classes offered out of the high school, the recreation center, and ethnic outreach programs for immigrants.

Family engagement with community resources. None of the families in this study mentioned using the recreation center, even though it was located only blocks away from one cluster of participating families. Only one child mentioned using the public library in Jefferson Heights, although several families reported using the new library closer to the children's school, technically just outside the boundary of the neighborhood. Most church-going families chose to go outside of the neighborhood for their Sunday worship and bible studies, even though there were Spanish-speaking Catholic and Pentecostalist churches more conveniently available. However, the two Jehovah's Witness families used the neighborhood Freedom Hall, with home-based bible study meetings occurring around the neighborhood. Thus, out of the three strands of community literacy resources, it emerged that most families interfaced with local literacy resources primarily through the literacy involved in local commerce: daily shopping, domestic business, the print literacy of newspapers and advertising fliers, as well as all the multilingual environmental print woven into these experiences.

Meso-ecology: The four zones of the neighborhood

As I became more familiar with the sub-neighborhoods in this area, patterns of defining features emerged to use for comparison: the characteristics of housing and neighborhood quality, access to shopping and community resources, range of ethnicities and languages spoken, and levels of safety. I adapted these criteria from those used by Chall and Snow (1982) in their home literacy study of low-income households in Boston to create this snapshot of household and neighborhood ecologies.

I located the nine families in the study within small geographical clusters or *zones* (see *Figure 4*) of the greater neighborhood that also seemed to correspond to ecological levels along the north-south socioeconomic continuum. Descending from north to south, and literally down the other side of the plateau, here is the schema for identifying the four zones: *Zone A* is situated close to the freeway and is connected with a newly upscaled middle class niche of Main Street; *Zone B*, north of Main Street and a mile and a half a mile west of Zone A, represents a sub-community of the ethnic small business culture around Main Street itself, where the urban density increases; *Zone C* is a distinct multi-ethnic sub-community between Main Street and Jefferson Boulevard, but its proximity to Jefferson Boulevard to the south defines its lower-income, predominantly Spanish-speaking culture; finally *Zone D*, south of Jefferson Boulevard, occupies a transitional section dominated by run-down mixed housing, few convenient resources, and a reduced sense of safety among

its residents.

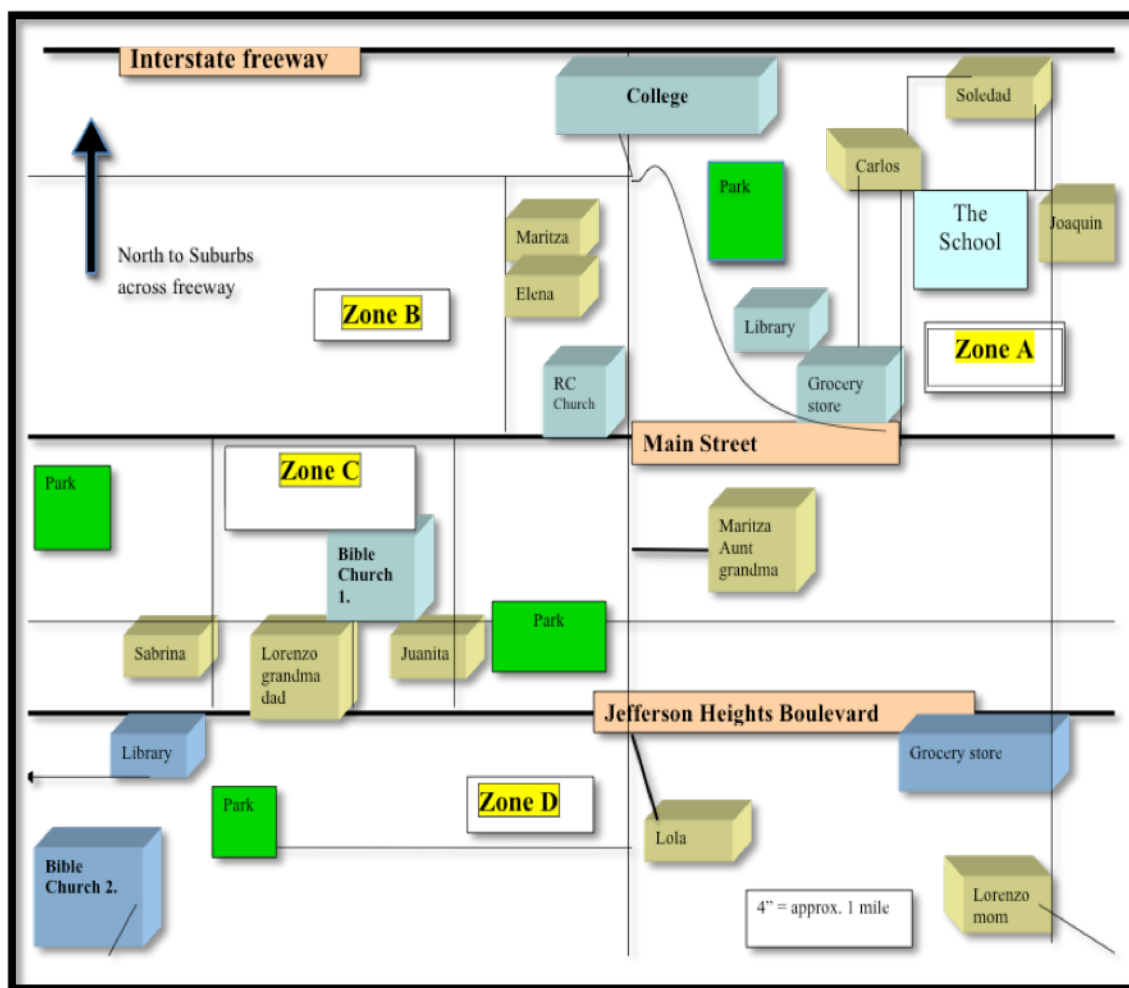


Figure 3. Four zones of Jefferson Heights urban neighborhood.

Ecologies of neighborhood literacy

Zone A

This small sub-neighborhood is quiet, rich in community resources, and conveniently located for access to other sections of the city using the adjacent interstate, and trolley service. Made up primarily of older single-family homes, there are clusters of small apartment buildings on the streets closer to Main Street. *Zone A* boasts the

convenience of walking distance to a newly built public library, just outside Jefferson Heights boundary, a large supermarket, the main post office, several parks, a large, upscale auto repair company, and a plethora of new niche cafes and restaurants. Only a few years ago the nearby section of Main Street was dominated by older, small businesses, evidence of drug dealing and prostitution. The boost in the region's housing values of the 1990s made *Zone A* a desirable location for young professionals, compared to the more inflated house prices across the freeway. This middle class clientele has influenced the upscaling of businesses in this micro-section, improvements in care of housing and landscaping, and the birth of an active Neighborhood Watch committee.

Funds of literacy in Zone A. Environmental print in *Zone A* is in both English and Spanish, with English dominating the newer upscale businesses and community resources. Community resources include the new public library, with its outreach programs, and a large, English-speaking supermarket, as well as neighborhood parks, and schools.

Zone B

One and a half a miles west of *Zone A* the culture around Main Street dramatically changes. In place of the sushi bars of *Zone A*, are taco shops, Vietnamese grocery shops, vendors of used tires, adult 'casino' bars, and offices offering quick loans at high percentage rates. *Zone B* boasts a few large church buildings, including a traditional Spanish-speaking Catholic church with school, and a large Vietnamese Protestant church, as well as several storefront Spanish-speaking Pentecostal venues. The safety of this section can be partially gauged by the frequency of gun-related incidents at the neighborhood high school, and middle school, located a block south from Main Street. But north of Main Street, where two of the families lived, the quiet streets of mixed housing is still reminiscent of the quality of life enjoyed in *Zone A*. Gated, low-income apartment buildings are nestled discreetly among

clusters of well-kept single family homes, but the new public library and large supermarket are less accessible except by car.

Funds of literacy in Zone B. Environmental print in Zone B is either in Vietnamese, English or Spanish. Grocery stores and small businesses cater to the Southeast Asian community, while several fringe businesses, such as taco shops, fast foods, loan offices, a pawn shop, and used auto sales, welcome Spanish speakers. Community resources consist of two large mainstream churches, one Spanish and English speaking, and one Vietnamese, although the high school and middle school are within walking distance, across Main Street (in Zone C) where extension classes are offered. Access to the community resources in Zone A is by car or bus, although families in the study would take advantage of these during school time when they drive to Zone A to pick up their children.

Zone C

This sub-neighborhood occupied the central swath of Jefferson Heights, between Main Street and Jefferson Boulevard and epitomizes the population density, ethnic and linguistic diversity, and majority low-income profile that is frequently identified with Jefferson Heights. To live in Zone C is to relate directly either to the businesses on Main Street or Jefferson Heights. These two major streets share the characteristics of multiple businesses and small industrial locations, dominated by languages other than English, and frequented by foot traffic. The differences appear to lie in the overall income levels reflected in the condition of housing and small businesses. While Main Street enjoys discrete ethnic sections, those that dominate, in particular the Southeast Asian community, appear to be more prosperous than those that dominate similar sections of Jefferson Boulevard. Only ten blocks south of Main Street, the culture around Jefferson Boulevard is heavily influenced by the refugee and other immigrant populations that find a starting place there. Mercado

(2001) and others have pointed to the circular migration from countries like Mexico into semi-segregated urban neighborhoods like Jefferson Heights, as factors contributing to the constant revitalization of Spanish as a community language. Densely populated areas of the shopping along Jefferson Boulevard are only Spanish-speaking, while others cater to the ever-growing Somali population. Hookah bars are springing up, as well as Halal meat vendors, while several of the best tortillerías in town can be found there.

Housing in Zone C consists of older, small, single family homes, often with multiple occupancy, and a plethora of two-story apartment complexes scattered around the winding streets. A steep gradient connects Main Street to Jefferson Boulevard, and the conditions of road repair deteriorate as the streets descend the hill. Quality of home repair varies across the zone: Newer apartment complexes spring up, right alongside seventy-year old small dwellings designed for one of the earlier waves of immigration from Mexico. Tiny homes from the 1920s and 1930s that would be considered chic in another section of the city, are allowed to show signs of decay, with yards filled with older cars and equipment. Even away from Jefferson Boulevard there are signs of life in Zone C, in contrast to the quietness of Zone B section. Along these side streets children of multiple ethnicities play in unkempt yards, or on the sidewalks, women are talking as they walk their children and teenagers hang around listening to music.

Funds of literacy in Zone C. Environmental print in Zone C is either in Spanish, or both English and Spanish. Residents can feel confident that vendors in the small groceries, and even in the new discount supermarket, will be able to communicate with them in Spanish, unlike the English-only supermarket in Zone A. Community resources in Zone C include the new recreation center, with all the amenities it provides, including an arts center with theater. There are several neighborhood parks, many small ethnic churches,

two newly built schools, and the new suburban shopping center, separated from the rest of the neighborhood by a widened road to allow for through traffic. The high school and middle school fall within Zone C, but are many blocks away from the cluster of families in Zone C that might have taken advantage of the extension classes they offer.

Zone D

South of Jefferson Boulevard the road rises again towards another plateau leaving behind the 'thick' traditional neighborhood atmosphere of Zone C. Housing in this section is of more recent construction, with sections of tract housing designed when this area was first developed as a working class suburb. The series of non-gated, two-story apartment buildings collected along one street, just one block south of Jefferson Boulevard, is now dominated by a mix of African-American and recent Mexican immigrants who are immediately evident outside on the street and around the complex. The atmosphere is noisy, and the general condition of the housing and surroundings is disheveled, and lacking repair. There were screen doors falling off, garbage lying around, toys underfoot, and paint peeling on the outside walls. One whole side of an apartment building was dedicated to a graffiti shrine to a recently deceased young man from the complex along with flowers and gifts. The apartments were situated along a service road parallel, and very close to a busy north-south throughway road, with a convenience store on the corner of street.

Funds of literacy in Zone D. In spite of the short distance down to Jefferson Boulevard, this location was problematic for accessing community resources, especially on foot, because of the hazards of traffic, the need to cross empty waste spaces, and the absence of sidewalks, since this is the section of Jefferson Boulevard devoted to cars not pedestrians. Tenants in the complexes were a mix of African-American and Mexican-heritage and apartments appeared to have multiple occupancy. There were many children

of different ages playing at each of the several visits I made to this family. One family in particular drew my attention. An African-American extended family, of at least three generations, were occupied playing checkers at an outdoor folding table, using turned up buckets for seats, on each of my visits, regardless of the day or time.

Micro-ecology: Ecologies of household literacy in the four zones

In this section I group the families by zone of dwelling to capture a picture of their immediate surroundings, before describing in more detail the lifestyle choices and family literacy resources available for children to engage with.

Table 7 summarizes the ecological data gathered for each child relating to the caregiver's language, the family constellation and specific resources for engaging with literacy. All families owned at least one television and four owned a computer (Lorenzo Herrera had access at both his mother's and father's household). Only two reported using the computer. Availability of books, especially children's books and religious books, were in evidence during the household visits, and were reported on during the interviews. One third of the families was headed by a single parent, but in all these cases there were extended family members active in assisting with childcare needs, including day to day cooking, transportation, and literacy support.

Table 7. Household ecologies: Structure, language, and funds of literacy ($n=10$)

Family name	Daytime caregiver	Languages used	# Bedrooms	# People	Two-parent	# of siblings	# Tvs	Computers	#Books	Source of books	Magazines/newspapers	Writing materials
Fernandez	Grandma	Spanish	3	5	Single-parent	3	3	1	60+	Bookstore; hand-ons	Newspapers	✓
Garcia	Teenage sister+ aunt	Spanish/English	2	5	Two-parent	2	1	0	60+	Hand-ons Bookstore; school book club	Newspapers	✓
Herrera mother	Aunt	Spanish/English	2	6	Single-parent	2	2	1	100	Bookstore; school book club	Magazines	✓
Herrera father	Grandma	Spanish	1	6	Single-parent	2	1	1	100+	Handons ; school book club	Magazines newspapers	✓
Higuera	Mother	Spanish	2	4	Two-parent	1	1	1	60+	Bookstore; school book club	Magazines newspapers catalogs	✓
Peña	Mother	Spanish	2	5	Two-parent	2	1	0	100+	Church; Bookstore;	Church newspapers	✓
Lopez	Father	Spanish	2	5	Two-parent	1	2	0	100	Bookstore; Handons Church. Thriftstore	Newspapers Magazines Catalogs	✓
Díaz	Aunt	Spanish/English	1	3	Single-parent	1	2	1	100	Library; Bookstore; Handons; school book club	Magazines	✓
Pacheco	Grandma	Spanish	2	6	Two-parent	3	1	0	80+	Bookstore; Handons; library	Newspapers Magazines	✓
Zamora	Mother	Spanish	2	5	Two-parent	2	1	0	80+	Thriftstore; Swapmeet; Church.	Church newspaper	✓

Funds of literacy categorized by domain of living. I categorize these household *funds of literacy* according to the domain of living in which they were used, (see Table 7) rather than by genre of text (Anderson & Stokes, 1982; Teale, 1986). Since literacy does not reside in the text but rather through the practices in which the text is embedded, categorizing *funds of literacy* makes sense only according to the contexts and the purposes for which they texts were used. Texts may lend themselves to multiple purposes and contexts. For example, children's books appear in the domains of schooling, school-related activities, (reading for assessment or information) parenting, and entertainment (reading for pleasure). Similarly the newspaper was used in a variety of ways, to communicate sports results, for information on planning for entertainment, or reading features of interest, to stay abreast with community affairs. The list in Table 8. is based on data gathered in Phase I from all nine families. Percentages indicate the number of families using each literacy artifact within one domain of living. For example all the nine families owned and used children's books, as well as practicing the writing of lists, but only a third wrote notes and instructions to communicate with their children. Literacy occurred predominantly in family practices involving the three domains of daily routines, entertainment, and schooling, similar to findings from previous studies of print resources in low-income households (Purcell-Gates, 1996). Newspapers, usually in Spanish, figured in almost every family as a central adult literacy artifact. I list them within the domains of communication, and of recreation, because of the variety of ways families engaged with them. Religion, though not directly involving all families, constituted an important domain involving literacy among the families who engaged in the study of the Catholic liturgy, or the Protestant bible.

Table 8. *Household Funds of literacy: Percentages of literacy artifacts used in nine households by domain of literacy*

Domains of literacy in which artifacts were used				
Daily living routines	Entertainment	School related	Religion	Interpersonal communication
Advertising flyers from local stores English and Spanish 100%	Children's books-English and Spanish 100%	Writing practice books 22%	Spanish weekly newsletter 44%	Newspaper Spanish 89%
Household: bills English 100%	Paper, pencils, crayons and markers 100%	Word lists 89%	Spanish Bible 56%	Letters to relatives 44%
Household: lists Spanish 100%	Computer/video games 56%	Workbooks from school 100%	Spanish Catechism text 11%	Notes and instructions to children 33%
Shopping: labels on products-English and Spanish 100%	Catalogues English and Spanish 22%	High school text books 44%	Spanish Bible Stories with commentary 22%	Interactive computer games 11%
Texts for occupational tasks-English and Spanish 44%	TV guide-English and Spanish 89%	Encyclopedias 11%	Spanish Sunday school workbooks 11%	Family cards 22%

The findings from this study diverge from earlier studies (Gallimore & Goldenberg, 1993) in the sheer numbers of children's books found in all nine homes (See *Table 8*). Instead of depending on material supplied by the school, all of these families had established inexpensive resources for acquiring large numbers of children's books to use in the home. I considered listing children's books within the school-related domain, but

instead, chose the domain of entertainment since the children in this study read their books for personal recreation. Given the range of ages of siblings, this seems to accord with a changing trend among Hispanic families, since the late 1990's. According to surveys conducted across very large data sets, there is a significant increase in the numbers of Hispanic families who report reading to very young children, and engaging them in rhymes, songs, and storytelling. (NCES, 2006).

Funds of literacy among families living in Zone A: Soledad Fernandez, Joaquin Higuera, Carlos Pacheco

Soledad's, Joaquin's, and Carlos's families lived within *Zone A*. All were low-income families, working in service, sales, auto repair and construction, yet they had taken advantage of the quality of life in Zone A through opportunistically locating low-rental subsidized or subdivided, duplex housing within this primarily owner occupied section. Both Soledad's and Carlos's are four children families, living half a block apart, but in very different circumstances. Joaquin's family lived half a mile away, in a small bungalow built in the backyard of a single family home.

Soledad Fernandez

Soledad lived with her two brothers, sister, and mother in a spacious, three-bedroom rental home, that her mother, a single working parent, had managed to obtain through subsidies from the city. Located in a quiet cul-de-sac, near the school, and surrounded by similar middle class housing, the size and location of the house belied the minimal means with which Señora Fernandez was supporting her family. Sparse second hand furniture made it child friendly, with plenty of space to play indoors. The kitchen was the heart of the family's activities, where Grandpa would read the daily newspaper, and the children eat an afternoon snack, at the picnic bench family table crowded into one corner.

Outdoors the closed off street was safe from traffic, while a medium-sized yard behind the house gave the lively siblings a space to work off their energy.

Household funds of literacy. Soledad's room, shared with her younger sister, contained a child's desk, shelves of books, paper and writing materials, while in a corner of the living room a computer was set up. There were books and magazines on the shelf above the large television in the living room. But Soledad occupied a very different ecocultural niche for most of the summer with her grandparents, high up in a large apartment complex, outside of Las Vegas. Access to community resources was very limited, in contrast to those easily available to her in Zone A. To replicate the children's normal literacy environment Señora Fernandez sent along children's books, writing and drawing materials, games, and puzzles, and Soledad's grandmother sustained a daily rhythm reading to the children in the afternoons, when they escaped the outside heat for air conditioning inside. Always watchful over her younger brother and sister, Soledad used her writing skills to advertise a lemonade stand, writing signs and prices, and posters. Navigating the multiple sections of the complex to post their signs, required reading of the names and signs identifying buildings that looked identical. Environmental print was all in English, consisting mainly of signage around the maze of apartments, and advertising on the highways Soledad would see whenever they drove around.

Carlos Pacheco

Half a block away from Soledad's home in Zone A, on a busier residential street, Carlos's family occupied a tiny two bedroom duplex, with very little indoor space. Carlos and his two older brothers crowded bunk style into one small bedroom, while his infant sister's crib occupied a whole section of the living room. Outdoors was the driveway connecting a garage to the sidewalk, and a favorite place for bike riding. The absence of

space and outdoor play areas, provided a challenge to contain the energies and needs of the three boys, aged eight to thirteen, as well as the constant demands of their one-year-old sister. To compensate for this crowding, and only one kitchen table serving as food preparation counter, eating place, and homework station, this family coped with the diverse needs of the different age levels, one year, to thirteen years, by taking advantage of the new public library, only five minutes' walk away, for homework, computer use and reading.

Household funds of literacy. Children's books and junior fiction, school workbooks, writing notebooks, lay in piles in the boys' bedroom, and stored beneath the bed. Carlos's bunk was his favorite place to read, and he had his 'stash' of favorite books. In the living room was a large pile of magazines, including both English and Spanish, covering sports, cars, and current events, as well as newspapers, in English and Spanish. Other reading material, including bills and correspondence, was collected in a pile on the kitchen table, used also for food preparation, and a place to study and do homework.

Joaquin Higuera

Joaquin and his brother enjoyed the spaciousness of an open plan living-room/kitchen area that made the best advantage of a small overall space. Outdoor space consisted of a grassy backyard occupied by piles of used tires, and auto parts, and the alleyway by their house door.

Household funds of literacy. Joaquin and his brother stored their book collections in their bedroom, along with notebooks, old school work books, and catalogs. Both trained every afternoon in boxing, and delighted in reading through glossy magazines and catalogs devoted to the sport. In a corner of the living room a computer was set up, and around the kitchen table were papers, correspondence, and writing materials. On a shelf near the computer were newspapers and magazines in Spanish, the language of the household.

Present was a teenage cousin, functioning as a tutor for the two children, in reading in English. They showed me the books they were reading each day, as well as the notebooks full of writing from assignments she gave them.

Families living in Zone B: Elena Peña and Maritza Díaz

Both Elena and Maritza lived in second floor apartments in a secure gated complex half a block from a Vietnamese shopping section of Main Street. Theirs is a well-kept, quiet complex, with a mixed ethnicity of tenants, including evidence of Hispanic voices and other children. The small inner courtyard with landscaped planting provided very little space to play. There was no yard or play area, and the complex opened directly on to the street. On this quiet street, there was a mix of dwellings and businesses including similar apartment complexes, single family homes, two large auto repairs and a windowless 'casino' bar on the corners with Main Street. The quality of homes increased further away from Main Street, reminiscent of Zone A. They were two blocks away from a large Spanish-speaking catholic church, grocery stores were predominantly Vietnamese, but there were a few taco shops within walking distance.

Maritza Díaz

Maritza lived in an impeccably kept, one-bedroom apartment with her single mother and sixteen-year-old sister. Within the tiny living room and adjoining kitchen, Señora Díaz had created a sense of American middle-class comfort and spaciousness, matching her own demeanor, or *habitus*. In spite of the fact that Maritza's sister had to use the couch to sleep on at night, and Señora Díaz had just finished work for the day, she received me on each visit as though we were both educated ladies of leisure passing the time drinking lemonade. Maritza's mother, who works for private individuals as a

housekeeper, relied on her brother and sister-in-law to care for Maritza and her sister during the day, so Maritza spent only evenings and weekends in her apartment, a factor that may account for the consistent sense of neatness and order.

Household funds of literacy. In Maritza's tiny living room three distinct shelving areas were dedicated to books, notebooks, workbooks, and writing and drawing materials. Dominating the room was a tall bookcase containing a complete set of encyclopedias, with a collection of cookbooks on the bottom shelf. Beside one of the couches a wide shelf was bulging with books of various descriptions. Spanish language children's storybooks, picture books and junior novels from the library, school practice books, and a collection of children's books in English occupied the upper shelves. Below were high school texts, used by Maritza's sister for summer school, as well as her collection of Japanese comic books. The third shelf, along the facing wall, also contained children's books appropriate for Maritza's age, magazines, and a lower shelf filled with notebooks, paper, writing and drawing materials. The family owned a laptop computer that only Maritza's sister was allowed to use.

Elena Peña

Elena's family, who occupied a two-bedroom apartment next door to Maritza, enjoyed a much larger living space, full of evidence of constant use by Elena, and her two sisters, aged ten and two years. Happily surrounded by her family, Señora Peña, an at-home mother, welcomed me into the dining nook adjacent to the tiny kitchen, while the three girls romped around the living room. By contrast with Maritza, Elena spent most of her days at home, occasionally going down with her sisters to play in the shady courtyard. Like Maritza's family, the Peña's would go out of the immediate neighborhood for shopping, library, recreation, such as parks, and church, and they would always use the car.

Household funds of literacy. Half a wall in the Peñas' living room was occupied by built-in shelving, filled with books and magazines. In addition the entire wall of the narrow walkway to the two bedrooms consists of shelving. The more visible shelving in the living room contained only religious texts, all in Spanish, obtained through the Jehovah's Witness church to which the family belonged. Books included versions of the bible, study books for adults, on different sections of the bible, books of advice, as well as a series of illustrate paperback books for young people, dedicated to reading and studying the meaning of each section of the bible, all written in Spanish. In front of the main shelf was a small desk, with paper, highlighters, and writing materials, used in the literacy practices associated with bible study. The shelves in the hallway were literally stuffed with children's books in both English and Spanish, as well as generations of school practice books, and examples of children's schoolwork, sent home from the school each year.

Families living in Zone C: Juanita Lopez, Sabrina Garcia, and Lorenzo Herrera

Juanita and Sabrina both lived in apartment complexes at opposite ends of Zone C, while Lorenzo spent half of his life, in the middle, in his grandparents' small house.

Juanita Lopez

Juanita's apartment complex was gated, like that occupied by Elena's and Maritza's families, but there was no landscaped courtyard, and it was far from quiet. The apartment complex was surrounded by designated parking spaces, and there were cars constantly coming and going as the barrier was raised to allow residents through. Children played in the parking lot since there was nowhere else available. Situated on the upper level at the front of the complex, Señor Lopez, the primary caregiver of the family, monitored the arrival of cars and alerted his children when necessary. The majority of tenants were Spanish-speaking, and there was a sense of community among several families, who sent their

children to the same school as Juanita and her sister, carpooling together, and helping each other in a variety of other ways. Family was always close by since Señora Lopez's married daughter lived in the same complex, with two young children and soon to be another. Out in the street a van selling fruits and vegetables was usually parked in the afternoons, while a vendor pushing an ice-cream cart rang his bell to alert potential customers. Nearby, within walking distance, were a large park with many amenities, the small ethnic businesses on Jefferson Boulevard, two new elementary schools, and the Jehovah's Witness Kingdom Hall. A mile away was the discount supermarket in the new shopping area, and beyond that the recreation center, all on Jefferson Boulevard. There was no library or Catholic church within easy access.

The Lopez family occupied an apartment approximately the same size as Maritza's, but with two bedrooms squeezed into the floor plan, where Maritza's had only one. Juanita lived with her older sister, age eleven, her mother and father, and an adult step-brother. Like Maritza's mother, Señora Lopez has created out of meager means an environment reflecting the important values in her life: traditional Mexican culture and catholic devotion. The intensely crowded nature of the apartment was transcended by the grandeur of the heavy dark wood traditional Spanish-style furniture that gave an air of solidity. Surrounded by religious pictures, in particular an enormous painting of La Virgen de Guadalupe, set up as a household shrine, the atmosphere was as if one had stepped into a traditional home in Mexico.

Household funds of literacy. Two smaller sets of shelving in the living room provided space for storing books and magazines, as well as shelving below the television. Books were primarily children's books in Spanish retelling stories from the bible, while magazines included fashion, housekeeping and gardening, obtained from the downtown hotel where

Señora Lopez worked. In the bedroom Juanita shared with her sister was a tall bookcase with desk attached, where there was a variety of children's books, mainly in English, as well as non-fiction resources about history, geography and science. On another shelf was a collection of videos on religious subjects, all in Spanish. Juanita stored her many writing and drawing materials, notebooks, paper, markers, pens and pencils, in the storage below the desk.). Juanita mentioned all of her family members as resources for literacy, either interacting with her or as models. She mentioned having "lots of books", estimated by her parents at around one hundred, which had been packed up and moved already, as well as writing down oral stories her father would share about his childhood.

Sabrina Garcia

Sabrina's two-story apartment complex had no gate to protect residents or their cars, nor even a parking lot. Set amongst older single family homes, the only amenity was a fenced grassy area where children from the complex gathered to play. An overall transient and unkempt appearance characterized the apartment building and its surroundings, with its dark unpainted exterior, and broken window-screens. Sabrina's family had moved twice during the past year, and in conversation she commented on new children moving in, who joined in their daily play. In the immediate environs there was no sidewalk, opening directly on to a busy through street, with even busier Jefferson Boulevard one block away. Sabrina and her sister, active and athletic, made full use of the grassy play area, visible for supervision from their upstairs apartment window. A group of neighbor children, predominantly Spanish-speaking, multiple ages, would invent new games and spend hours playing and evolving new scenarios. Sabrina was the only child in the study who made use of the Jefferson Heights public library, located towards the South-West corner of the neighborhood, when her aunt cared for her in the afternoons. One mile away was a small

neighborhood park the family would visit in the late afternoons when mother and father came home from work. But Sabrina's family was relatively distant from all other community resources, such as the recreation center, schools, churches, and the new shopping center.

Sabrina's family occupied a second-floor, two-bedroom apartment at the top of a flight of older wooden stairs. Sabrina and her ten-year-old sister stayed at home each morning in the care of her seventeen-year-old sister, and went with their aunt to the park and library during the afternoons. There was no pretence at formal order since the living space appeared to be in frequent use by all three sisters during the long summer days. Similar in size and layout to her cousin Elena's apartment, the surrounding neighborhood and condition of the housing of Sabrina's apartment constrained the quality of life available in the immediate ecology. From a child's point of view, Sabrina was content because she had outside space to play in, much freer than the manicured courtyard in Elena's complex. From a literacy point of view she could also take advantage of the local library just as easily as families in Zone A, even though she lived in a much poorer section. From a heritage language point of view she was surrounded by Spanish speakers, including her aunt, her playmates and neighbors, but could exercise her English with both sisters whenever she chose to.

Household funds of literacy. Sabrina's apartment bore less evidence of print materials than some of the other families. There was no dedicated shelving in the living room, although there was space below the television for storing magazines and books. Writing materials, notes, papers, newspapers and advertising fliers were strewn over the kitchen table each time I visited, but the children's book collection was kept out of sight in their bedroom. Known to be both avid readers, Sabrina and her sister read primarily in

English, but would read popular junior fiction translated into Spanish when they could obtain it, from the library, from teachers, or friends.

Lorenzo Herrera

Lorenzo stayed alternating weeks in Zone C, with his father and grandparents, in the house where his father grew up. The remainder of the time Lorenzo and his siblings lived with his mother in an area the equivalent of Zone A. His home in Zone C was set in an area of mixed housing, where there was strong evidence of African immigration alongside the traditional Mexican-heritage residents who had dominated during the era of Lorenzo's father's childhood. Across the street from the noisy construction of a new apartment complex, the tiny two-bedroomed house where Lorenzo stayed included a converted garage to accommodate the needs of the family. Almost hidden from the eye by a covering of overgrown trees, and protected by a locked gate in the fence around the yard, the house looked as though it had been there for many generations. The yard was completely filled with a collection of mechanical parts, appliances, and a table used by Lorenzo's grandmother to sell candy and sodas to children passing by each afternoon, reflecting the resourcefulness of low-income immigrants. A mixture of Spanish and African dialects could be heard around the immediate neighborhood, and, as ever, Jefferson Boulevard was one block away. Inside, two couches in the long living room served as beds for the three children, Lorenzo and his brother and sister, and a play space during the day when they were under the supervision of their father, or their Spanish-monolingual grandmother.

Household funds of literacy. When Lorenzo stayed in Zone A with his mother and aunt, he kept his books in his bedroom, along with an ample supply of notebooks, paper and writing materials. When he stayed in Zone C, he had no bedroom, so he depended on his father to store books and papers away, or to carry them with him. In his grandparents

home, one walk-in closet in the converted garage was filled with books Señor Herrera, a college graduate, had saved from his schooldays, covering all subjects. Alongside these was a large quantity of children's books, obtained from friends with children who had outgrown them. In both households Lorenzo had access to a computer that he used to write notes in real time to his distal cousins, via a fantasy computer game, *Runescape*. Papers relating to domestic business, and magazines were evident in both households.

Family living in Zone D: Lola Zamora

The Zamora family occupied a second floor apartment accessible up a rickety stairway and along a narrow fenced walkway overlooking a grassed common area. In stark contrast to the housing in all the other zones, even including Sabrina's complex, the exterior looked uncared for and grimy. As I approached the Zamora's apartment there were smells of food cooking, neighbors standing in groups talking or staring, and the ever-present sound of babies crying. Stepping behind the broken screen door lifted off the doorway of the Zamoras' apartment, I entered directly into a beautifully kept living room, with one cubicle-sized corner designated for kitchen functions. Unlike all the other dwellings I visited, there was no carpeting in the living room, but a sparkling clean terra cotta tiled floor, reminiscent of homes in Southern Mexico. Lola's apartment was smaller in size than the Lopez's, with two tiny bedrooms, one of which served as Señor Zamora's tailoring workshop during the day. Lola lived there with her older brother, aged nine, and sister, aged eleven, her mother and her father. Similar to each of the other homes, there were family photographs in frames set on special shelves, or on top of the television in the living room. Two facing couches created a comfortable, if small space for the three children, who alternated between their bedroom and the living room, during the long hot summer days. In spite of the fact that there was room to play outdoors, the Zamoras did not allow their children to join with other

children in the complex. Both parents expressed their discomfort living around what Señor Zamora described as ‘not good people’. He was concerned for his children’s safety, and would have preferred another location for his family to live in, similar to one in Zone B that they had left because of lack of finances. Like Maritza’s older sister, and Lorenzo and his siblings, Lola’s brother used one of the couches for sleeping, but there was never any evidence of this, since the apartment was kept scrupulously clean and orderly by Señora Zamora. In the kitchen area, beside a tiny table, was a stack of cans of soda and packages of candy. Señora Zamora, like Lorenzo’s grandmother, sold these items to neighbors each day, to supplement the family income, having recently lost her job cleaning in a restaurant.

Household funds of literacy. Similar to Sabrina’s family, the Zamora’s kept all evidence of books and other materials out of sight to visitors, in the two bedrooms. Shelving in each room was filled to overflowing with clothes, toys and books. It was rare to see any of the three siblings without a book or notebook in their hands. Señor Zamora explained that they had a larger collection of books than could be accommodated in the apartment, so they were stored in a nearby storage locker. Children’s books, school workbooks, bibles, and religious magazines filled the two shelves in the main bedroom the Zamora’s used as a daytime workshop and study area. Adult books consisted of paperbacks with religious themes, such as biographies.

Comparing the literacy ecologies of four zones

As reported above, the physical surroundings inside each of the nine homes were broadly similar, while the surrounding ecology varied by family according to availability of community resources, such as public libraries, churches, community centers, parks and shopping choices, play spaces, quality of housing, and level of safety. Crossing all four zones were similarities in quantity and arrangement of furniture: two couches in the living room

with a television, coffee table, and shelf of books; household amenities: tiny kitchen with nook for eating, with one or two bedrooms; as well as a sense of cleanliness and beauty in the way each family arranged their few belongings, regardless of the quality of life manifested in the immediate outside surroundings, as for example in the case of the Zamoras.

Of all the families in the study the Zamoras, because of their location in the ecology of Zone D, experienced the most restricted access to community resources. Compared with the easy access of those lucky enough to live in Zone A, the Zamoras were constrained both by the limitation of indoor space, and by the isolated location separating them from safe and easy access to resources such as a library, churches, parks, and even grocery stores. When Señor Zamora's work required him to leave the house to meet with clients and sell his tailoring, the family was completely marooned, without a vehicle to go beyond the immediate neighborhood. For this reason they depended on Señora Zamora's extended family, brother and sisters, who assisted with child care and transportation.

While the ecology of Zone A clearly offered the most advantageous access to community literacy resources, only Carlos and his brothers took advantage of their location, primarily in using the new public library. By contrast Maritza and her sister, further away in Zone B made it a habit to use the library whenever they could persuade their mother to take them there after work in the afternoons. Zone C, larger than Zones A and B, offered a rich array of literacy and cultural resources, but again, families were selective in how they engaged with them. Parks, where available, were popular with all families, not least with those in Zone C. Large new supermarkets took all families away from the small business culture of their immediate neighborhoods, but, in Zone C, provided continuity of language through personnel, and culture through the foods offered. Only Sabrina's family took

advantage of the local neighborhood library in Zone C, primarily because of its convenient location.

Summary

In this chapter I explored three important levels in the availability of literacy resources in the lives of the nine children featured in this study. This detailed picture of the ecocultural niches where the children spent the long summer days contains important strands that influenced the activity settings of the family literacy practices described in this study. In the following chapters I use these findings to describe the variety of ways the families use access to print resources, or *funds of literacy* to construct the literacy practices in their daily lives.

CHAPTER VI

Ecologies of Literacy II: Household literacies and activity settings

Literacy is best understood as a set of social practices, these are observable in events that are mediated by written texts. (Barton & Hamilton, p.13)

Ecologies and activity settings

In a small Southern California apartment, one sweltering, August afternoon, an eight-year-old girl and her father sat discussing how spelling is done in Spanish. The walls of the tiny room that served as bedroom, workroom, and study, were lined with organized shelves of books, clothes and toys. Close nearby the girl's two older siblings were spread out around the neatly made bed used as a makeshift table, reading, writing, drawing and laughing. In an adjacent room, their mother prepared the evening meal, looking in from time to time to check on their progress. Satisfied for the moment with the girl's understanding, the father returned to reading his missionary biography, until one of his children asked another question. The older siblings volunteered solutions to the youngest child's efforts at writing challenging words in Spanish, joking at how she resorted to her knowledge of English instead of pronouncing the letters 'properly' in Spanish, as they did.

The literacy events (Heath, 1983) unfolding within the ecocultural niche described here illustrate the way the overlapping dimensions of activity settings interact to construct multiple and hybrid literacies in the out of school lives of children from Spanish speaking families. These activity settings are the contexts in which "...collaborative interaction, intersubjectivity, and assisted performance occur.." (Gallimore, 1988. P.72) Activity settings incorporate the cognitive and behavioral actions – the activity- as well as the external, social and environmental dimensions – the setting. Weaving these dimensions together is the meaning participants make of the activity, directly related to the ways they engage and the strategies they use, what Rogoff calls the "integration of cognition and context" (1982).

Overview

In this chapter I summarize the scope of literacy practices that emerged across the nine case study families in the study. I then describe literacy events I observed, and video-recorded among five families, and examine them in terms of the activity setting variables that guided the analysis. This is in response to the second research question, that begins to explore the ways the ecologies of home and community influenced literacy engagement among elementary-aged Mexican-heritage English learners during the summer vacation, by asking,

Research Question 2. What were the patterns of home and community literacy practices that children and families engaged in, including **language choice, participant structure, frequency, and activity settings?**

The literacy practices reported and observed in this study ran the gamut of: Household functional literacy, across the domains of family business (bill paying, form filling), commerce (shopping, lists, labels, advertising), and entertainment, (magazines, newspapers, TV guide, video game instructions); as well as, reading for entertainment, (fiction, reading subtitles on movies,); reading and writing for communication (notes, letters, cards, newspapers, email); personal literacy (Mora, 2009)(journals); school-related literacy; and literacy for the purpose of learning material important for membership in a cultural community (church, bible study, catechism.) School-related literacy activities appeared explicitly in cases where parents felt the need to supplement their child's schooling with home tutoring (Joaquin and his brother; Carlos and his brother and mother, informally.) In some cases texts common in classrooms appeared in a different domain, as capable readers took up reading for pleasure, even though within the culture of schooling this would have counted as a school activity.

No more school for the summer: What changes in the daily routine?

Data on literacy practices for the first phase of the study consisted of parent and child reports from interviews, photo elicited interviews with target children, field note observations, and follow-up phone calls. During the school year children transitioned daily between the school ecology of academic literacy in English, and the family and community ecologies of multiple, purposeful literacies, in Spanish and English. Summer shifted the balance between these ecologies to foreground the ecocultural niches of the home, extended family, and community, reinforcing cultural and linguistic identities associated with these cultural communities, where the explicit dominance of school culture was absent. Ecological constraints heavily influenced the choices available for all nine children, in particular the limitations of parent availability, due to work schedules, as well as financial limitations to vacation options. In most cases families were able to mitigate these constraints by reliance on the resources within their extended family networks. This included solutions as radical as sending children away for a week, a month or longer to stay with relatives, either in Mexico, or in another state, as in the cases of Maritza, Carlos, and Soledad, to accommodate a working mother's schedule. It also included an extension of childcare arrangements used throughout the school year, creating continuity for children like Maritza, who was accustomed to spending most of her time at a small retirement home run by her aunt and uncle, while her mother worked. The reciprocal side of this family network reliance was also evident in the four cases where parents stayed at home with their children, Joaquin, Elena, Juanita, and Lola, and provided care for nieces and nephews whose parents were at work.

Summer school for five children

For the first four weeks of the summer vacation five of the participating children attended a partial day summer school program that was offered at their school, Sojourner Truth Academy. Sabrina Garcia, Lorenzo Herrera, Joaquin Higuera, Elena Peña, and Lola Zamora were combined with seventeen other students from different grades for practice work in English and math for three and a half hours a day, five days a week, for four weeks. Criteria for attendance, according to the school administration, was intended to be below grade level students. However, in all five cases, parents had leveraged access to the summer school as time providing additional care during the summer. A typical day consisted of completing worksheets in math, practicing cursive handwriting using a preprinted set of examples to trace, answering oral questions based on a junior novel read aloud by the teacher, and reading independently. Lola and her family were absent for five of the twenty days, Sabrina for two of them. More able students assisted struggling students, those for whom the summer school was designed, and frequently students appeared bored or frustrated. The classroom contained relatively few books, but teacher-made posters reflected evidence of learning strategies the teacher was using.

I designed my data collection process to spend time with the remaining four families while the students mentioned above were involved in a school setting. I waited to begin data collection until after the summer school session ended, just before the fourth of July. My intention was to be able to study family activities that were completely separate from the influence of schooling.

A typical summertime day in the lives of the nine participating children

Common themes across nine children: In spite of the variation across cases in personnel present during the day, there were common themes in what I describe as a

‘typical day’. As described in Chapter Six, the interior of each dwelling, regardless of location, contained similar resources, including supplies of children’s books and writing materials, as well as the presence of older siblings, and at least one television. Most children would watch early morning ‘caricaturas’ on television, usually in English. Some had to rise and breakfast early, in time to be taken to a caregiver’s home, (Maritza and Carlos), but all were involved with household chores following breakfast. Activities varied around the middle of the day, often including reading and writing, but all families, except for the Zamoras, would manage a trip to the park, beach or swimming pool on most days of the week. Evenings in the summer, as Sra. Garcia reminded me, were long, affording working parents extra time after work to spend with their children. “Como el día es larga, aprovechamos todo.” [*Since the days are long, we make the most of them.*] (Garcia adult interview). The final similarity across cases was the tradition of gathering around the television as a family in the evening, to watch the *telenovelas* together, always in Spanish. Table 9. provides a profile of the nine children’s daily activities.

Table 9. *Daily summer routines among nine participating children.*

Child's Ecocultural daily routines				
Child	Morning	Early afternoon	Late afternoon	Evening
Soledad	Indoor play w/sibs. Chores	Outside play w/neighbors Writing signs	Gm read to TC	Telenovelas TV with m.
Sabrina	Read note (M) chores,TV, read	Outside play w/neighbors TC read for pleasure	Park;cousins; baseball+picnic	Telenovelas TV with m reading
Lorenzo (f)	Indoor play/ videos w/ subtitles	Help Gm sell candy (translate)	Park/beach/pool	F read to/w TC and sibs
Lorenzo (m)	Indoor/outdoor play w dog and sibs/ writing/reading	Indoor/outdoor play w dog and sibs/beach	Reading/writing w/aunt Visit grandparents (100mi)	M read w/t TC and sibs
Joaquin	Chores, reading writing practice w/cousin	Outside play bikes in alley	Boxing class w/brother	Quiet play/tv Telenovelas TV with m
Elena	Chores, indoor play w sibs. Reading/errands	Indoor play/ bible study w/m and OS	Park; cousins; m/f baseball+picnic	Bible study 3 x wk with m
Juanita	Errands w/F Outside play w neighbors	Catechism w/F and S	Drive to pick up M from work	Quiet play, reading , TV telenovelas with m
Maritza	Childcare w/aunt +cousin Chores	Indoor play, board games, reading/Walk dogs; swimming	Home w M and OS. Draw/play	M read w/t TC Telenovelas TV with m
Carlos	Early rise – to Gm for day Play/ read	Outdoor indoor play w sibs. Care for infant sib	Home w M (and D). Indoor/outdoor play. Read w S/B (10) M	Family watch movies Telenovelas TV with m
Lola	Chores, indoor play, reading writing assignments set by F.	Errands, indoor play. Reading	F checks work for the day . TC spends extra time w F	Bible study groups 3 X wk

Activity setting variables as lenses for analysis

Building on Gallimore and Goldenberg's (1993) model, I operationalized the construct of activity settings by using each of the activity setting variables (participant structure, salient cultural values, purpose, task demands of the mediating artifacts/texts, cultural-linguistic community, and rules and schema) as a lens to examine instances of literacy practices from each of five families. Based on Gallimore and Goldenberg's findings using this approach, I expected to develop a differentiated picture of family literacy practices that would complicate assumptions of deficit within Mexican-heritage families based on low-income level and language difference. Gallimore and Goldenberg found that Mexican-heritage parents were available for, (personnel present), interested in, and capable of engaging their children in literacy activities, and that they placed high value on education (salient cultural values). However they identified a lack of congruence between the parents' schema with regard to early literacy learning and the mainstream concept of optimal emergent literacy conditions, the basis for comparison used in their study.

In this study, I avoid comparisons with mainstream literacy practices, but I use mainstream school literacy measures as one set of baseline data for within-group comparison. Given this benchmark of school achievement, I work in reverse, to discover the conditions within and across families that combined to provide support for literacy, among families whose children were not failing the system.

Observing instances of literacy practices among five case study families

Video-elicited interviews over recordings of literacy events, based on regularly occurring practices in five of the nine families, elicited emic data on the participants' purposes, schema, and cultural beliefs supporting the practices (See Table 10). All selected activities involved engagement with print, through reading, and in some cases writing. They

included the presence, and in most cases the active participation, of an adult. Three activities were conducted in Spanish, one in English, and one in both. The shortest lasted only twenty minutes, and the longest, over an hour. Siblings were present in four instances and directly involved in three. Four were recorded in the participating child's home, one observing engagement with a community resource, the public library. Table 10 provides an overview of the recorded literacy events, described through the lens of the activity setting variables.

Participant structure was consistent across all cases, with an adult, and at least one sibling, present during the literacy event, and almost all took place in the household ecocultural setting. The differences within the group of five follow a pattern beginning with language choice, leading on to choice of text, rules and scripts, and purpose for the activity. The three families who promoted religious training for their children, the Lopez, Peña and Zamora families, were supporting Spanish reading and writing as a vehicle for membership of the church cultural community. The two families who explicitly supported literacy, the Pacheco and Díaz families were concerned with their child's growth in reading at school. The church-going parents expected their children to be also reading in English on their own for success in school, since they could not help them directly, although they relied on older siblings or extended family members for support. It may not have occurred to the Zamora family, or the Peñas, and the Lopezes that facilitating reading in Spanish could also support their children's overall literacy development. It was the content and the meaning of the religious texts that motivate these parents, including two fathers, to devote themselves to their children's growth on a regular basis.

Literacy events observed ranged from the overtly school-related practice of child reading to an adult, to the community-based participation in group bible study. Least

observable was Maritza, whose activities rarely involved others, and whose consistent event was visiting the library.

Table 10. Using activity setting variable to examine children's literacy practices ($n=5$)

Activity setting variables	Maritza Díaz	Carlos Pacheco	Lola Zamora	Elena Peña	Juanita Lopez
Participant structure	Visiting the public library	Reading to mother	Reading and copying from bible	Bible study session	Catechism sessions
Language	Child, mother, (usually older sister)	Child, mother, one yr old sister	Child, siblings, father, (mother nearby)	Child, mother, with siblings nearby	Child, older sibling, father and mother,
Artifacts mediating literacy events	English and Spanish	English for reading, Spanish for retelling	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish
Purpose	Children's books	Children's book	Adult bible in Spanish; pen, pencil, eraser, pencil sharpener; notebook.	Spanish bible; Spanish bible stories; highlighter; pencil	Catechism text in Spanish
	Entertainment reading familiar stories	Reading for fluency and comprehension	Reading and copying to learn written Spanish	Learn morals from bible story; answer questions using text	Read and learn content of catechism from memory
Salient cultural values	Reading wide range of books in two languages	School based literacy	Moral education; Spanish literacy	Moral education; family bonding; community membership; Spanish literacy.	Moral education; family bonding; community membership; Spanish literacy.
Adult schema	Child builds literacy by reading freely	Accuracy, fluency, comprehension	Accuracy in reading and Spanish spelling	Comprehension analogy and dialogue.	Learn by reading and repetition.
Ecocultural setting	Public setting, community resource	Family/household setting	Family/household setting	Family/household setting	Family/household setting
Cultural community	Nuclear family+school values	Extended family network	Extended family network; bible study community	Nuclear family; extended family; bible study community	Nuclear family; extended family; church faith community
Frequency	Weekly	Daily	Daily	3-4 times a week	3 times a week

Summer literacy practices

Case study 1. Juanita Lopez and her family

Juanita was tall for her eight years, with a stately bearing, a large moon-like face with enormous brown eyes. Always surrounded by at least one parent, usually her father, and her older sister, Juanita coquettishly dominated the social situation in her quiet way, showing off her latest 'pretty dress', handed down from her sister. Juanita's mother told me she had nine other children from an earlier marriage, including one who lived in the same apartment complex with her husband and two small children, and her youngest, graduating with a law degree from a university in Mexico City. In spite of severe financial problems, including a temporary eviction from their apartment during the time of the study, both mother and father created an atmosphere of friendship, stories and laughter, during the multiple visits I made to their apartment, as well as the trip I made with them in the back of a van to attend the Catholic mass.

Juanita's literacy event: Learning the Catechism responses in Spanish

Both Juanita's parents offered to be present for the session, usually conducted by Juanita's father, while his wife was working. Juanita sat between her mother and sister on the couch, opposite her father, in his comfortable armchair. Close to the door, behind Sr. Lopez, his adult son sat quietly. Sr. Lopez held the booklet of catechism questions and responses in his hand ready, while Sra. Lopez began the session with a series of prayers. She assumed the leadership role in setting the tone, looking very formal and reverent, as in a place of worship. Juanita and her sister sat forward on the couch and recited the prayer with her. Juanita missed a few words here and there and corrected herself, but her mother did not stop the flow of the prayer, it seemed to have a life of its own. Together the whole family recited four long prayers, before beginning the question and response process

between Sr. Lopez and his two daughters involved in learning the catechism. At this point neither child had attended formal catechism classes offered by the church, so they depended on their father for this instruction.

Sr. Lopez adopted a rather stern and demanding demeanor while he was testing the girls on what they had already covered, very different from his normal joking self. He would read a question from the printed booklet and expect an accurate memorized response. He did this repeatedly, even when they answered correctly, but with slight hesitation. He expected them to correct one word answers with a complete phrase.

Spanish

Sr. Lopez: ¿Cómo creo Dios al hombre?

Juanita and her sister: Dios creo el hombre en su imagen y semejanza

Sr. Lopez: ¿Cómo se llamó el primer hombre?

Juanita and her sister: Adán.
Ooh!(self correct without prompting) El primer hombre se llamó Adán.

English

Sr. Lopez: How did God create man?

Juanita and her sister: God created man in his own image and like himself.

Sr. Lopez: What was the name of the first man?

Juanita and her sister: Adam. Ooh!
(self correct without prompting)
The first man was called Adam.

The process changed once they arrived at material the children were less sure of, and they reached out their hands for the booklet to read it themselves, repeating it under their breath, and returning it to their father for him to check their accuracy.

Sr. Lopez: ¿Cómo creó Dios a la primera mujer?

Sr. Lopez: How did God create the first woman?

Unsure, both girls reached out for the book, and sat close, heads together reading it rapidly then giving the book back to Sr. Lopez to re-test them on it:

Juanita and her sister: Dios creó la primera mujer en su imagen y semejanza y con la misma dignidad y derechos del hombre.

Juanita and her sister: God created the first woman in his own image and likeness and with the same dignity and rights as the man.

This happened more and more frequently as the session continued, to the point where Juanita and her sister were taking turns reading aloud, and helping each other memorize.

Sr. Lopez (repeating a previous question) porque Dios hizo el hombre a la mujer?

Sr. Lopez (repeating a previous question) why did God give the woman to the man?

Juanita's sister hesitated but Juanita sallied forth smiling with her response"

Juanita:...para que lo amen a el y a todos las personas

Juanita:...so that she would love him and all other people

Juanita's sister exclaimed indignantly to her father: "esa es lo que acabas a decir!" (but that's what you just said!). To Juanita's sister it made no sense to repeat the content of a question as the answer, but Juanita had grasped the pattern of how the responses were constructed and was happy to join in and play the 'game' so that she had a correct answer.

Taking back the leadership by holding the text, Sr. Lopez proceeded to ask them some of the more abstract questions, harder for the girls to memorize. Realizing this, he began to offer the book so that both girls could read the exact wording for themselves, rather than repeat after him. For instance, Juanita jumped up and went over to read with her father holding the book, at first having difficulty finding the place among the small print. She read, partly under her breath, trying to understand:

Juanita: Dios...Dios sabe todos nuestros pensamientos y nuestras acciones.

Eagerly she put the book down and asked:

Juanita: God...God knows all our thoughts and our actions.

Juanita: Daddy, vamos a hacer la otra, la de... 'no podemos ver a Dios'?

Juanita: Daddy, are we going to do the other one, the... 'we cannot see God'?

Her father offered the book and both girls read the phrase:

Juanita and her sister reading: No
podemos ver a Dios en esta vida
porque es un espíritu.

Juanita and her sister reading: We
cannot see God in this life because
he is a spirit

Juanita returned to the couch contentedly repeating this phrase over, but her father,
apparently unaware, abruptly interrupted and stridently asked another question:

Sr. Lopez Cuantos dioses hay?
Juanita's sister: Uno,
Juanita: Un solo
Juanita's sister: Un solo dios,
El padre, el hijo,...
Sr. Lopez No! Cuantos dioses hay?

Sr. Lopez: How many gods are
there?
Juanita's sister: One
Juanita: One only
Juanita's sister: Only one god,
the father, the son...
Sr. Lopez: No! How many gods are
there?

Juanita and her sister went close to their father as he showed them the sentence in the
book:

Juanita's sister: Hay un solo dios
verdadero.
Sr. Lopez: (to Juanita's sister) OK.

Sr. Lopez (to Juanita), Entonces,
fíjate bien!
Juanita smiled and said: Ya sé.

Juanita's sister: There is only
one true God.
Sr. Lopez (to Juanita's sister)
OK.
Sr. Lopez (to Juanita), Then,
focus well!
Juanita smiled and said: I
know.

Both sisters began to reply: "Hay un solo dios..." (there is only one God...)when their father
interrupted again

Sr. Lopez: Cuantas personas hay
en Dios?
Juanita read from the text: En Dios
hay tres personas distintas y un
sólo Dios verdadero

Sr. Lopez: How many persons
are there in God?
Juanita read from the text: In
God there are three different
persons and only one true
God

And so the session continued, until Sr. Lopez surprised them by firing an earlier question at them to see if they had retained what they had learned

Sr. Lopez: Cuantos dioses hay?

Sr. Lopez: How many gods are there?

Taken by surprise Juanita responded: “Tres” (“Three”) proudly, until, by the look on her father’s face she realized she had already forgotten the correct response.

In this whole family episode each member contributed a leadership role at one point or another. Juanita’s mother took the lead in opening with prayers, and her father took up the torch, by virtue of holding the only copy of the text available, and using it for didactic question and answer practice. Juanita and her sister equally took on leadership roles, when they demanded repeatedly to hold the book and read it, as they progressed to lesser-known sections.

The adult Lopez’s believed in the continuity of their own devotional beliefs through their children. During the video elicited interview, mother and father expressed how important it was for the children not only to be able to recite the responses, to know what was on the page, but to be able to live it.

Sr. Lopez Creemos en lo que es, no en el papel, pero en lo que vivimos...

Sr. Lopez We believe in what is, not in the paper, but in what we live...

It was clearly a whole family event, all had been involved so all voices were heard on the video. There was a sense of pride in the adults being able to share their knowledge of the main texts of their religious path. Their session seemed to constitute an initiation into the ‘rites’ of Catholicism, an important cultural-linguistic community socialization for the children.

The only visible text was a paperbound copy of the Catholic catechism questions and responses, shared around the participants as described above. But invisible texts were also present in the form of the lengthy liturgical prayers, such as the Credo, recreated for the

children as their parents recited them, and expected them to follow. This special genre of religious text, Christian dogma written in question and response form, is almost like taking part in a play, each with one's part. Sr. Lopez's strategy was to ask the same questions numerous times, in rapid succession, along with the follow-up phrases. But it was clear that he was also looking for the children to make meaning as they repeated the responses. In spite of his apparent strictness, there was an air of fun and competition during the session, including the obvious approval of their mother who stayed focused the entire time. Sr. Lopez was not satisfied with this response on two counts: First, it was not the correct response, she had mixed up the three persons in one god, but equally important to her father was the fact that she replied with one word instead of a complete phrase.

During the video elicited interview I asked Sr. Lopez about his insistence on complete phrases and why he felt it was so important. He responded that it was logical that when he asked a question they should phrase their response similarly to the question. Juanita's mother and father's both attested to having been taught catechism and liturgical prayers as children, in a very strict way by their parents. Sr. Lopez explained that both his mother and father attended mass every day whenever they could, and that they had 'inculcado' [inculcated] this tradition of Catholic beliefs all through his childhood. Juanita's mother added that in order to be part of the church children had to learn the prayers, so parents were responsible for making sure the children knew them.

Patterns of home and community literacy practices: Language choice, participant structure, frequency, and activity settings

Familism and language choice. Juanita inhabited a strongly familistic (Sabogal et al, 1987; Valdes, 1996) ecological niche, surrounded by adult half-brothers and sisters, from their parents' previous marriages, and permeated with a tradition of Mexican Catholic

devotion to La Virgen de Guadalupe. The Lopez family engaged primarily within a reciprocal network of family members and neighbors, meeting both structural and behavioral definitions of familism (Halgunseth, Ispa & Rudy, 2006; Valenzuela, 1999). Reliance on an extended family structure for mutual support, rarely moving out of this circle, reflects the structural definition of familism (Halgunseth et al). Language choices reflected the behavioral familistic expectations of accommodating to the needs of those present, showing *respeto* (Valdes), respect, by speaking a language understandable by all. Juanita and her sister enjoyed using English as their social language alone with each other, and with their father, since he could more or less keep up with them, at least receptively. All other adults who moved in and out of the family circle conversed only in Spanish, requiring a respectful switch by the girls, who dutifully complied. In the case of the literacy event I observed, the dominance of Spanish as the community language, and thus the language of the text, determined the choice of language for dialogue. When Sra. Lopez was at home all activities were conducted in Spanish only, creating an atmosphere of cultural-linguistic congruence. Drawing on their strengths and resources within the ecology of a Spanish-speaking household, both parents were able to provide effective guidance and instruction to their children.

Participant structure and task demands. Devotion to their children by both Sr. and Sra. Lopez implied the expectation active involvement in 'important' activities furthering their *educación* (Valdes; Halgunseth), such as the catechism class. Often Juanita and her sister took the lead in initiating a session with Sr. Lopez when their mother was at work. Once the session started, the content of the text, and the cultural expectations embedded in the practices associated with the text, determined the roles played by different agents. At Juanita's level of learning, the text was a tool of Spanish literacy, vocabulary and syntax,

facilitated by Sr. Lopez, reciprocated by the sisters' motivation to study. At the adult level, the text was simply a reference, since the prayers and dogma associated with it had become oral tradition, modeled by Sra. Lopez as she led the introductory prayers.

Frequency and activity setting. Juanita's family situation during the summer of 2008 was complex, thus rhythmic frequency of activities was difficult to track. Preceding the summer was emergency surgery for Juanita, while the family was in Mexico visiting an ailing relative. During the summer, financial woes, related to the surgery, led to eviction from their apartment, and eventual resettlement. Family members, and the church community supported the Lopez family during this crisis. As a result, their devotional faith was further strengthened, motivating Sr. Lopez to persevere with the catechism lessons, in spite of adverse circumstances. Activity settings changed, according to whether they were packing to move out, or unpacking to move back in, but the dedication to three sessions a week never wavered.

Case study 2. Elena Peña and her family

Elena was a shy petite, eight-year-old with thick wavy black hair pulled back in a pony tail. She spent her summertime days with her mother and two sisters in their second floor apartment, and the evenings at the park playing baseball with her extended family. Elena, like three of the other case study children celebrated her eighth birthday during the summer of 2008, placing her within the youngest cohort of their second-going-into-third grade class. In spite of this and her English learner status, Elena achieved the grade of Advanced in the California Standards Test for second grade English Language Arts. As described in Chapter Six, Elena's home was rich in literacy resources, as evident from the tall shelves of books that caught the eye on entering the apartment. Interviews with both Elena and her mother revealed their regular practice of working on bible chapters in

preparation for each weekly gathering at the Jehovah's Witness *Salon del Reino*. In addition to formal bible study gatherings occurring three times a week in members' homes, church attendees were expected to devote time to reading and reflecting on texts created by the church, answer the questions accompanying the text, and come prepared to contribute orally to the service the following Sunday. I requested to be present at one instance of this home preparation, and was invited to observe and video tape early one afternoon in August.

Elena's literacy practice: Reading in Spanish and talk around text

Elena's ten-year-old sister was present, but remained in the background. Elena's two-year-old sister climbed freely around the couch where Elena and her mother sat working, without much disturbance. The session began with Elena and her mother by the tall bookshelf, examining books and writing materials. Sra. Peña asked Elena to choose the study book they would use, as well as the chapter, and to choose a text marking tool, highlighter or pencil. Elena chose a highlighter, selected the book, while her mother found a second copy, took out two Spanish language bibles, and a pencil, and followed Elena to the couch. Sra. Peña later explained that she was taking a risk in allowing so much choice, since she did not know if Elena would choose a chapter that Sra. Peña was familiar with and could interpret successfully for her daughter. Elena, took the lead and showed her mother how to find the page she had selected from the illustrated book, *Aprendamos del Gran Maestro* (*Let us Learn from the Great Teacher*) written at around a fourth grade level:

Spanish

Sra. Peña: ¿En la página?... cuál es?
Capítulo veinte?
Elena: (reaching over to her mother) Yo lo puedo hacer, el quince
Sra. Peña: Capítulo quince entonces.

English

Sra. Peña: On which page?...what is it? Chapter twenty?
Elena: (reaching over to her mother) I can do it for you, fifteen.
Sra. Peña: Chapter fifteen then.

First Sra. Peña asked Elena to read aloud the first long paragraph.

Elena read at a medium pace as she built up her confidence reading in front of someone else (the researcher and the tiny video camera). Her mother paused and asked her if she understood the key word for the chapter:

Sra. Peña: Dice que... (turning to Elena) ¿Sabes que es tener prejuicios, sabes que es? (Elena shook her head) No

Sra. Peña: It says that... (turning to Elena) do you know what it means to hold a prejudice is, what it is? Elena shook her head: No.

Sra. Peña returned to the text for a way to help Elena understand:

Sra. Peña: Aquí dice que, pues... que no te guste a alguien simplemente porque parezca diferente o hable otra idioma, significa tener antipatía ...¿por ejemplo que es diferente de nosotros?

Elena: Alguien que habla un otro idioma

Sra. Peña: Sí, por hablar otro idioma no por eso es que poder tener antipatía (reads again and looks up) Quiere decir,... antipatía es a decir, que significa antipatía? Es a decir que no te gusta una persona antes de conocerlo, alguien que habla otro idioma

Sra. Peña: Here is says that, well, if you don't like someone just because they look different or speak a different language, that means to have an antipathy towards them ... for example who is different from us?

Elena: Someone who speaks a different language

Sra. Peña: Yes, speaking a different language doesn't mean that you can feel antipathy towards them (reads again and looks up) It means...antipathy is like, what does antipathy mean? It's like when you don't like someone before you've got to know them, someone who speaks a different language

Elena continued reading the five paragraphs on the page. Her mother stopped her again, and created a real life example of overcoming prejudice because of difference, a child with a disability who cannot play sports:

Señora Peña: Por ejemplo, si hay niños que le gustan el deporte, pero hay alguien que no puede hacerlo, pues van a tratar de debordarle, tiene que preguntarles: ¿Que le pasó? O ayudarle a abordarle, decirle "Está bien,"
¿Que te vas a preguntar, cómo vas a sentir ? ¿Tenemos que sentir cariño por todos, verdad?
¿Aunque sean que..?

Elena: De otra...

Señora Peña: Debearnos sentir la misma que como fueron iguales que nosotros, éste es no tener prejuicios

Señora Peña For example, if there are children who like sports, but there is one child who cannot participate, then you want to go try to help them get over it, you need to ask them: What happened to you? Or help them get over [their feelings of not being able to play] by saying to them, "It's OK." What are you going to ask yourself, how are you going to feel? We need to feel caring for everyone, isn't that true? Even if they are...

Elena: ..Different

Señora Peña: We should feel the same as we feel for people who are the same as us, that's what it is to not hold a prejudice

By this time Elena's toddler sister had begun to make noises slamming the door, with no reaction from her mother or Elena, both focused on illustrating points side by side. Elena, who had been marking sections with her highlighter independently throughout the session, took up her highlighter again as her mother pointed out a useful phrase to help her understand:

Señora Peña: Es que..no debemos tratar mal a nadie... tienes que tratar a todos igual..."

Señora Peña: It's that..we should not treat anyone badly, not do harm to anyone...you need to treat everyone the same.

In the video-elicited interview that followed, Sra. Peña commented on the importance of Elena grasping the meaning of the key words: *prejuicio*, *antipatía* and *quien es tu prójimo?* from the bible story of the Good Samaritan, because of the moral lesson of helping one's neighbor, regardless of cultural, racial or linguistic differences. She explained that these teachings were new for her as an adult, and that participation in the Jehovah's Witness community, gradually increasing her level of study, had inspired her to "be a better

wife and mother” and to take care of the household more responsibly. Sra. Peña told me that church had not played a part in her childhood, and she knew very little about bible stories until encountering the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Several times she commented on the use of parables or illustrations from real life in the Gospels, as though marveling at this strategy for learning moral lessons. Like someone who celebrates a new understanding themselves, Elena’s mother was eager to share this concept, by providing illustrations for her children.

Elena took initiative in choosing the chapter they would study, confident when her mother needed her help to find the chosen page, and in using her highlighter to highlight without any prompting. Sra. Peña took the lead for most of the session, plying Elena with questions, and sharing illustrations to guide her understanding, while maintaining a dialogic approach throughout, to guide Elena through her zone of proximal development to grasp the concepts of *prejuicio* and *antipatía*.

The purpose of this, and other study sessions was to prepare church members for the Sunday church assembly. At the big Sunday gathering a cordless microphone was passed around the congregation, for members to respond to questions derived from the week’s text. Over two hundred people were present at the Sunday session I attended, when I witnessed shy, quiet Elena boldly taking hold of the microphone and speak her studied response clearly for all to hear.

The Spanish language text, *Aprendamos del Gran Maestro*, was written at a level beyond Elena’s grade expectations, between a third and fourth grade level in Spanish, with frequent illustrations, but densely arranged text. The premise of *Aprendamos*, similar to publications designed for Sunday School instruction in other Evangelical church communities, was to engage the child with an initial question containing the key concept for the chapter, bridge it to possible scenarios in a child’s life, and proceed to retell a New

Testament parable that illustrated that same concept. In addition, both Elena and her mother used the adult version of the Spanish *Reina Valera* bible, although Sra. Peña took the lead in guiding Elena through this complex text.

I asked Sra. Peña about her strategies with Elena in eliciting comprehension of the passage. She explained that it was important for Elena to know the teachings, and she believed she would understand better if she gave examples from Elena's own life as an illustration. All the analogies she used were taken from conversations with Elena about incidents with her friends at school. Señora Peña's approach with Elena differed from that used by Juanita's father, and Lola's father. Elena's mother paid little attention to correcting accuracy as her daughter read the text, but focused on her understanding of the key concepts that featured in the interpretation of the bible story they were sharing. She used questioning not to reinforce memorizing, but to elicit connections with life experiences whereby Elena could grasp the meaning of the key words: *prejuicio*, *antipatía* and *¿quién es tu prójimo?*

Patterns of home and community literacy practices: Language choice, participant structure, frequency, and activity settings

Language choice. For Elena, as for Juanita, home was a very different cultural ecology from the English-speaking world of school, and most of the city around them. Since neither of her parents spoke English, Elena and her siblings communicated in Spanish at home. Occasionally I would hear Elena comment in English with her older sister, but the overall integrity of their home life revolved around their closeness as a Spanish-speaking family. Sra. Peña had little to do with her neighbors, but was frequently in the company of one or other of five adult sisters who had also come to California from Central Mexico. Like Juanita, Elena had no access to her grandparents, still in Mexico, but played almost

exclusively with cousins close to her age. Like Juanita, Elena's social and ecological sphere was structurally familistic, yet it lacked the traditional Mexican *habitus* that permeated Juanita's household. Elena's mother, in spite of her lack of English, manifested a more assimilated middle class lifestyle, apparently derived from her experiences in the Jehovah's Witness community, where an Anglo middle class lifestyle was modeled while maintaining Spanish as the core community language. A pioneer within her family engaging in this non-traditional religious group, Sra. Peña had managed to bridge her bible activities with her familistic network, by involving adult sisters to join in.

Participant structure. As a stay-home mother, Sra. Peña was the dominant presence in Elena's daily life during the summer. She seemed relaxed around relative chaos among the three siblings, and continued several conversations with me, on different visits, all the while tending to the constant demands of Elena's toddler sister. Things became more formal when she sat down with Elena for a bible study session, structured, as in Juanita's setting, around the texts they used. Unlike Juanita's situation, Elena had more choices, text, chapter, and tool for making notes in the text. Elena's mother shared the initiative with her daughter at the beginning of the session, but took the lead in eliciting meaning on key terms. There was no fixed response, as with Juanita and the catechism. Instead, it seemed as though Sra. Peña was striving to learn alongside her daughter in a dialogic manner. Unlike Juanita's sessions, Elena worked individually with her mother, even though her older sister was present, and familiar with the material. Logistically her father could not participate, due to work schedules, so it was less of a whole family experience than in the case of Juanita.

Frequency and activity settings. Sra. Peña had the advantage of time with her children, and was thus able to create a rhythmic schedule of bible study with them. These were organized the demands of the church community for weekly preparation of question

responses, supported by home-based study groups, led by senior members of the church. Elena participated in three to five sessions a week, formally and informally, both in her own home and in the homes of church members. As in the Lopez family, there was complete cultural-linguistic congruence across activities in Elena's family, promoting cross-generational bonding through the familistic value of *respeto* [respect], based on the authority of religious text, mediated by mother as expert other

Case study 3. Maritza Díaz and her family

Maritza was a tall, confident child, with medium length black hair, cut in the latest style, and dark inquisitive eyes that penetrated through her trendy eyeglasses. She was usually ready with either a question or a laugh, and seemed capable of occupying herself for long periods, although she adored company. As noted in Chapter Six, Maritza spent most of her days in the care of her aunt and uncle, who ran a small nursing home for seniors.

Literacy event 1: Recounting a favorite book

When I visited Maritza at the nursing home one afternoon, she was ensconced on the richly carpeted floor of the small dayroom, alternating between playing solo '*Monopolio*' and reading a junior graphic novel, and surrounded by three elderly comfortably asleep in their chairs. Her twelve-year old cousin, who was normally available, was away on vacation, and her sister was busy attending extra summer classes. Maritza's Spanish-speaking grandmother had come from Tijuana to take over while her aunt and uncle were away, but she was busily occupied caring for residents.

I sat down with Maritza who eagerly began to describe the contents of the book she was reading. Maritza preferred to converse in English when she and I were talking alone, but switched to Spanish when her grandmother sat down with us, and her mother arrived, the conversation switched to Spanish. Maritza enjoyed playing the role of 'expert' in

initiating me into the humorous plot of the book, one that I had never read. Maritza made sure I understood important details, by locating pages with graphic and textual examples of the points she was making. The strategies of retelling the book in an analytic way, demonstrating sections to illustrate her points, and interpreting the plot, were similar to those used in her school literacy program, that Maritza appeared to have internalized.

Literacy event 2: The weekly visit to the public library

Thursday afternoon was the time Sra. Díaz would take her two daughters to the library during the summer vacation. On the occasion I observed, Maritza's sixteen year-old sister, Yolanda, was not present, still occupied in summer classes. The large, light-filled, newly-built library offered an inviting junior section, complete with low tables, computers, a variety of low shelves, and a corner stage area for storytelling events. I arrived first and was sitting at a low table close to the Spanish language section, located in a central position. Sra. Díaz sat down with me, and Maritza began to wander around the library. After conversing with Sra. Díaz for a few minutes, I asked her to behave as she normally would when she brought Maritza to the library. Sra. Díaz became interested in looking at books in the Spanish book section, so I decided to follow Maritza around to observe her patterns of interacting with the print materials there. As soon as I approached she wanted to instruct me in what she was doing, in English, similar to Literacy event 1. The video camera I used was unobtrusive, no larger than a cell phone. As soon as her mother sat down, Maritza went directly to a section of books far across the room, separate from other groups of shelves. She checked through the tall books on the top shelf several times, until finally she pulled one down, took it over to a large wooden rocking chair, where she sat and began to read. When I interviewed her later about this sequence over the video she responded:

Burrows-Goodwill: You made a beeline for that shelf, tell me more about that.

Maritza: Because I like the Dr Seuss books so much, that I always just go quickly to them, I just run to the kids area, and I just run to them, and then first I check if anyone is in the rocking chair

Burrows-Goodwill: Tell me about the rocking chair

Maritza: if it's not available I just go to the table..when you're rocking it.. it.. then it gives you like a memory or something, .. it's just like making you feel, I don't know just like a baby when your mom was rocking in a rocking chair, ..but you're sitting in it all like grown-up it's like if my mom's reading to me and she's caring about me.. and I'm just next to her, and my mom's next to me.

I wanted to understand Maritza's strategies in selecting books so I asked her:

Burrows-Goodwill: What are you looking at on those books?

Maritza: First I am looking at the names, to see if I can find it. But some names are really long..so sometimes if they are really long I just read half, so sometimes I just read half, so I just read a book and I say yes, no, yes, and no.

I wondered if Maritza could articulate her reasons for seeking out the Dr Seuss books:

Burrows-Goodwill: Tell me more about the Dr Seuss books, what about them appeals to you

Maritza: I don't know, the funny things, the rhyming, the different animals, just the words, how they are, how he made them, so funny, (laughs)

Burrows-Goodwill: What is your favorite one that you were looking for?

Maritza: The Grinch

But we didn't find it that day.

Burrows-Goodwill: What is it about the Grinch that you really like?

Maritza: When then he turns good and he starts singing when he turns good ..with the little girl..and the heart gets bigger, bigger, bigger, bigger!

Finally, I was curious to hear how she explained the manner in which she had shared the books with I as I followed her around:

Burrows-Goodwill: Can you talk about how you are sharing the book with me (refers to section of video where she shows PI the book)

Maritza: Because, when you (teacher) do it to us, you do it normal, you do it like that so we can see it better, not just..so I decided that I should let you see it

Burrows-Goodwill comments on how Maritza uses voice during reading (on video)

Maritza: How I changed my voice! (refers to video) I do that a lot. I've heard it when you were reading it to us, and how you changed your voice for the noise of the bird (laughs).

Maritza was clearly choosing books she enjoyed to read and re-read, and even though she adopted school-like practices with the interviewer, the enjoyment she took from the content of the books indicated her practice of reading for pleasure. The text of both books were written beyond second grade level, but Maritza was familiar with 'Horton' being read aloud in the classroom, and the graphical genre of '*Captain Underpants*' facilitated making sense of the text.

Genre is important: Connections with older sister's literacy practices

In describing the characteristics of the book Maritza made connections to her sister's love of comics as a genre.

Maritza: *Captain Underpants* books, they are like little comics, because they have like that little circle on top with the words, and they're black and white. Most comics are black and white.

Burrows-Goodwill: Tell me more about comics [video elicited interview, with Yolanda present]

Maritza: Well the comics, I don't actually read them, Yolanda reads them, and I watch.

Maritza's two literacy events. In the absence of others interacting with

Maritza over the text, I functioned as an elicitation device on her meaning making as she engaged with the text. Other adults were present, but clearly not available. So engagement with literacy depended entirely on Maritza's own initiative. In the visit to the library, even though Sra. Díaz was present and available, she did not take much initiative with regard to Maritza's activities in selecting and reading books. From time to time Maritza would return to the table where her mother was sitting looking at books and show her a title, or part of a book, or ask a question. For most of the visit Maritza planned her own activities, and seemed to regard her mother's role as providing the library card to enable her to 'rent' a book.

When her sister Yolanda viewed the video, she complained that Maritza had been allowed simply to go over the Dr. Seuss section, suggesting that if she had been present she

would have expected her to explore other areas less familiar and more challenging academically. Thus, although absent from the observed library visit, Yolanda's influence as the principal mediator of Maritza's library experiences was nevertheless present by the way Maritza flouted her sister's strictness and simply did whatever she wanted.

It was clear that education was of major importance to this tiny family. Sra. Díaz spoke frequently about Yolanda's prospects, asking I for advice on high school and college. Yolanda appeared to be more aware of Maritza's academic capabilities than her mother. She volunteered that Maritza was extremely intelligent, [quote] 'even more than I was at her age', a valid comparison since Yolanda carried a high GPA in high school so far. Sra. Díaz simply commented that Maritza was *floja* (lazy) when it came to reading, that she didn't see her reading much at home, yet she seemed to achieve 'pretty good' scores at school. Yolanda, who spent much more time with Maritza, explained that indeed Maritza did read books whenever they went to the library, which had been more frequent during the week they both spent with their father in another county.

Maritza belonged to a large extended family on her mother's side, with additional relatives on her divorced father's side. Sra. Díaz's eleven sisters and brothers lived on both sides of the border, and were easily capable of assembling for important family events. One such event took place during the study, a special mass, held in Tijuana, to commemorate the death of her grandfather a few years earlier. For Maritza this not only provided one of the rare occasions she attended church, but, more salient in her eyes, the opportunity to socialize with her numerous cousins. Sra. Díaz remarked how relaxed they all were, playing outdoors in the neighborhood, without the kind of vigilance and associated tension that surrounds children's play in urban America. Interactions with family across the border were strictly in Spanish, while some of her relatives in California spoke English. Maritza was

remarkable in her completely bilingual abilities. While all the children in the study were able to read, write and converse in English, and used oral Spanish at home all or part of the time, Maritza's command of both languages was equally fluent and articulate, a facility that made it easy for her to feel at home throughout the range of family situations.

Maritza's implicit purpose in using the library was to expose herself to a wider array of books than those available at home. This became clear during my interview with Yolanda and Sra. Díaz. Even though her family owned over sixty children's books, many of them were for younger children, that she had outgrown, or else that she had read numerous times. Comparing the information supplied by Sra. Díaz, that Maritza didn't read as much as she would have wished, calling her 'floja' or lazy, and that provided by Yolanda, that Maritza read widely in the library, though rarely finished a book, and frequently did not bring home library books because she could not be relied upon to keep track of them and return them in a timely way. Yolanda's purpose in taking her sister to the library was partly convenience, since she enjoyed using the library, and was frequently charged with supervising her sister. But it was clear from the emphasis Yolanda gave to the value of learning, and the need to persevere, that she was also motivated by the desire to see her sister succeed. Sra. Díaz's purpose in encouraging them both to use the library was to take advantage of this community resource for educational purposes, since she explained that children should read a lot.

In addition to the books themselves, an important tool in encouraging reading was the rocking chair. Based on Maritza's interview, it connected her to positive memories of having books read to her when she was small. It was so significant to her that it was the first thing she checked on entering, even before diving into the Dr Seuss shelves. Since Sra. Díaz played such a background role in Maritza's time in the library, I relied on Maritza's

commentary to infer the strategies she used to carry out the search for and evaluation of books. As described above, during the literacy practice Maritza was playing to her audience, me, in making explicit what she was doing and why. She based almost all of her book strategies on approaches practiced in school, but the event with the rocking chair introduced an element revealing a deep-seated love of books based on positive memories as a very young child with her mother. It seemed that Maritza was attempting to connect both parts of herself, - the older, competent reader, and the young child feeling nurtured – by re-enacting the scene where she played both roles. I would suggest that Maritza displayed a sophisticated level of metacognition in her reflections, contradicting the childish indulgence in the content matter of 'Diaper Baby'.

While Yolanda was not present during the videotaped library visit, it seems important to include her schema with regard to literacy, since she was principally responsible for supporting Maritza's habit of visiting the library. When Yolanda spoke about Maritza she expressed strictly held expectations, almost as if she were taking on the parental with regard to her education. It was she during school time, that supervised Maritza's homework, and she who would remind Maritza to read during the summer. Sra. Díaz reminded her also, but did not seem to have the same effect as Yolanda. Both Yolanda and her mother seemed to subscribe to the belief that children should read a lot, in order to practice 'their reading'. In fact, behind the scenes, Sra. Díaz continued to play a nurturing role with regard to reading, though not to the extent she had done when Maritza was smaller. Maritza proudly brought forth a beautifully illustrated, fat leather bound collection of fairy tales in Spanish, that her mother had bought her as an infant. It was from this that she would read to her daughter, and this to which Maritza connected when she chose to read for pleasure.

Patterns of home and community literacy practices: Language choice, participant structure, frequency, and activity settings

Maritza inhabited a more bilingual home ecology than the two families just described. Her mother could understand basic English, and produce very basic information in English, but she preferred to use Spanish with her family in the evenings. However, Sra. Díaz was frequently at work, so Maritza's capable teenage sister performed parental functions in her place, guiding Maritza primarily in English. Complicating the linguistic situation were Maritza's changing summer child-care arrangements. With her father she spoke Spanish, with her aunt, she spoke English and Spanish, and with her grandmother and relatives in Mexico, she had no choice but to speak Spanish. The linguistic differences in these shifting activity settings seemed to heighten Maritza's awareness of her bilingualism. Whereas Elena, and Juanita, moved between Spanish and English within the cozy niche of home and extended family, always in the presence of a sister and mother or father, Maritza, at times, had to negotiate linguistic changes without the support of her immediate family (Zentella, 1997). Her sister took classes over the summer, so Maritza was cared for alone at the senior facility. When her aunt, "like my step-mom, I spend so much time with her" (interview) left town for vacation, Maritza independently occupied herself on the periphery of the senior facility, alternating between Spanish and English according to the personnel present. Maritza's skill and consciousness of bilingualism made her a resource for translation, (Orellana, 2003) so that she often adopted a protective stance towards her mother in some English-only situations (Harrison, Wilson, Chan & Buriel, 1990), especially when her sister was not present. Maritza read, wrote and drew pictures, wherever she happened to be, but there was no rhythmic frequency. Her weekly visit to the library provided the only reliable periodicity, a literacy practice she embraced wholeheartedly.

Participants in her literacy activity settings seemed to occupy a peripheral role. There was no dialogic inquiry, didactic teaching, even supervision of her literacy. Maritza's irregular pattern of literacy practices was molded by her own motivation to enjoy herself with a good, usually funny, story.

Case study 4. Carlos Pacheco and his family

Eight, almost nine-year-old Carlos Pacheco was the 'baby' of the family until his sister was born a year ago, and had experienced difficulty coping with school. For the past year, in second grade he had felt more secure and settled down to developing his reading skills. Sra. Pacheco referred to Carlos's school history several times during the interview, always concluding with the 'happy ending' that now Carlos knows how to read. Carlos, a tall, active child, with thick black hair, and pondering eyes, spent a month of the summer away from home, with his great-grandparents on the outskirts of Puerto Vallarta. He was with his ten-year-old brother, and many cousins, aunts and uncles on his father's side. Prior to this visit, Carlos had been reticent to speak Spanish, even though his mother, and grandmother, his primary caregivers, spoke very little English. Both mother and father reported encouraging the use of Spanish by Carlos, including switching the language of movies on television to Spanish, and expressed pride in the improvements in his spoken Spanish, since his month-long immersion in Mexico. Carlos believed that his English reading skills should logically transfer, so he had been attempting to read in Spanish. The dominant language in the Pacheco's household was Spanish, although, like some of the other households, peer communication amongst siblings occurred mainly in English.

Carlos having recently mastered reading at his grade level, would daily bring out books to read in front of his parents, "mostrar que realmente ahora sabe leer" [to show that now he really knows how to read], said his mother (interview). Carlos loved also to write,

"about the things that he is doing" and to draw, every day. *Sale de su cuarto, se siente, muy cómodo, con las almohadas aquí, y lee, y lee* [He just comes out, gets comfortable on the sofa cushions, and reads, and reads](interview with mother). Carlos used the public library with his older brothers several times a week, taking advantage of easy access on foot from his home. According to his mother, Carlos took care of his books, *todos los libritos que llevó de la escuela, y los libros que su maestra le dio, el queda con todos, el nunca tira los libros* [all the little books he got from school, and the books his teacher gave him, he keeps them all, he never throws them away.] (Adult interview, August, 2009).

Carlos's literacy event: Daily reading practice

Based on both adult and child interviews, observations, Carlos's diary and his photo elicited interview, it emerged that the most consistent engagement with print was his daily reading session with his mother, usually about twenty minutes, in the late afternoon. In addition to this he would read to his baby sister to help calm her and help her sleep (remembering that her crib was in the center of the living room). In the evenings Carlos's mother would read stories to him in Spanish. Even though Carlos knew me quite well, and was sitting comfortably on the couch with his mother, it emerged later, (interview) that he had felt extremely nervous about being observed. He did not show it outwardly, but his mother could sense it. He chose one his easiest books, one he had read many times before, to demonstrate his reading.

Carlos sat opposite his mother on the couch and read the storybook, that contained some challenging words, pictures, and repetitive phrases. He never lost his focus throughout the entire book, even though his sister was climbing around him, and tugging at her mother during the reading. Soon after he began, little Maria started to make cooing sounds, perhaps she recognized the sound of the words. Once he had finished reading the book in English,

he closed it and looked at his mother. She smiled and then asked him to tell her about the book. Carlos re-opened the book and started to tell the story in his own words, in Spanish. Carlos did not tell the story page by page, as many children do, but summarized the entire story in a few words, then went on to elaborate with some details. Clearly for Carlos the content of the book was what mattered to him. His mother asked him several simple questions to elicit his perspective on the book.

When I returned with the video, Carlos was able to articulate his nervousness during the observation. When I asked how he felt sitting there, he simply responded *Como un niño que no sabía cómo leer* [Like a boy who didn't know how to read], but that after the experience, and especially watching himself on the video, he expressed more confidence in his abilities. Carlos loved stories, read frequently and put an enormous effort into his reading, and writing. Carlos, his mother and baby sister were present during the reading session. Carlos took the lead in reading to his mother, facing her on the couch, and facing away from the video camera. His mother sat smiling attentively, as she listened to him, and his baby sister came close and remained quiet except for some approving cooing sounds. Carlos's mother engaged him in questions to encourage him to retell the story and give his opinions. Sra. Pacheco was energetically proactive in supporting Carlos in his literacy development. She expressed a strong belief in education, citing how she had supported some of her younger sisters to complete high school. Carlos's cultural community was the very active world of his older brothers and cousins, working with his dad, being close to his mother whenever he could, and caring responsibly and playfully with his baby sister. He attended church while in Puerto Vallarta, along with other family traditions. But his family in US does not attend church. The main focus of this family is creating a good life, coping with the challenges of adolescence, and ensuring, as Sra Pacheco said, "*pa' que sepan que hay*

alguien que le va a escuchar" [so that they know there is someone who will listen to them] (video elicited interview, Adult, August, 2008).

Carlos's motivation to read was based on the content of storybooks. He challenged himself with more difficult books when reading alone, because the stories were more interesting. For the videotaped session he resorted to a much simpler book, because of his insecurity reading publicly. He would read these simpler, repetitive books to calm his younger sister, and would rely on help from his two older brothers for 'hard words' in his junior mysteries.

Carlos's family supported him by encouraging him to read, but not pressuring him, in view of his late mastery of reading skills. Mother gave explicit support, by reading to him, in Spanish, and having him read to her, in English. However the focus is primarily on fluency rather than comprehension. When he does engage in retelling stories he has read, to his mother, he has to translate into Spanish. During the video-taped literacy event, after reading a short book to his mother, he retold the story, entirely in his own words, in Spanish. It was clear that his overall comprehension transcended the word for word, page by page approach. Carlos was interested in conveying the main gist of the story, in a way similar to an adult or a much more experienced reader.

Patterns of home and community literacy practices: Language choice, participant structure, frequency, and activity settings

The linguistic ecology in Carlos's household changed according to the personnel present. Alone with his mother, Carlos communicated in Spanish, but with his father and brothers, he would talk in English. Cared for by his Spanish-speaking grandma, he and his brothers would alternate between Spanish with her, and English among themselves. The summer of the study represented a turning point in Carlos's linguistic repertoire. Carlos

overcame his resistance to speaking Spanish, as a result of four weeks of Spanish immersion with great-grandparents and cousins in Mexico. Language was now a real choice for Carlos, who had previously managed to communicate with his Spanish-speaking mother using his receptive Spanish and her receptive English. Both parents affirmed their desire to maintain Spanish by consistently using it in the home.

Carlos's literacy practices seemed to combine aspects of Maritza's self-selective approach, with the structure of Elena and Juanita. Carlos loved stories, so frequently read and reread favorite books he had mastered. His mother, anxious about school failure, also supervised daily reading on a reliable schedule. His activity setting was within the comfortable ecology of family surrounding him, while he escaped into his private world through reading. Carlos strove to please his mother through reading, sought mentorship from his older brothers, but relished the satisfaction of reading an exciting story by himself.

Case study 5. Lola Zamora and her family

Lola was a tall, dreamy child with rich dark hair pulled neatly back with a tie. Retacent to speak, and very quiet spoken, she was never far from her older sister and brother, who frequently tried to speak on her behalf. The consistently high academic records of all three children appeared to contradict not only the complete absence of spoken English in their environment, but their mother's limited education, (fourth grade). It was their father's enthusiasm for learning that seemed to compensate for these limitations.

Background to literacy event

Sr. Zamora was self-employed at the time of the study, and his wife recently laid off from work. With mother available during the day, Lola and her brother and sister did not need child-care elsewhere. Sr. Zamora assumed responsibility at the end of his work day. Lola's father was energetic, motivated and organized, in spite of the space limitations in

their apartment. He strictly adhered to his daily work schedule, behind the closed bedroom door, where his sewing machine would whizz along, although occasionally Lola would penetrate into his work space and observe, something he encouraged, since he claimed his own learning style had been through observing and practicing on his own.

Recognizing the pivotal role Lola's father played in family literacy practices, I had requested to observe a session where he would be present, after his workday was over. Normally the children would complete their reading and writing assignments during the day and their father would check over their work with them individually in the late afternoon. The instance I observed combined both the children's daytime activities, and the supervisory, and instructional dimension in one session, and lasted twenty-five minutes.

The setting was the adult Zamoras' bedroom, used as a multifunction room, where Lola and her brother and sister gathered kneeling on the carpeted floor around the neatly made bed. Using the bed alternately as a table, or couch, they waited while Sr. Zamora reached into a shelf and brought out their notebooks, and some pencils. They each had a book ready: Lola, a small print, leather-bound bible in Spanish; Lola's sister, another bible; Lola's brother, a junior fiction novel. In this observed event the entire family was present, and only Lola's mother was not directly involved. Lola, the youngest, received the most attention from both her father and her brother and sister, acting as 'experts' in her emergent abilities in writing in Spanish. Only occasionally did Sr. Zamora step in to directly instruct or correct Lola's work, otherwise she engaged with her task independently. It was Lola who selected the bible passage to study.

Sr. Zamora expected his children to be as disciplined as he was in completing the 'homework' *tarea* assignments he set them daily, consisting of sections of reading, followed by commentary in writing. Most of the reading involved reading the bible, although they all

read junior fiction as well, especially Lola's brother. Almost all of the reading was in Spanish, and most of the writing. Lola was still mastering writing in Spanish, so needed the help of both siblings and her father. Her mother, who had left school at fourth grade in order to work, did not participate in the literacy practices. Her role was to ensure that the children stayed on task during the day, so that her husband could check their work in the evenings. All three siblings appeared to feel pride in the structure the family imposed on them and the progress they were making being kept indoors for long periods, because of their parents' reluctance to have them socialize with the neighboring children.

Literacy event: Group reading and writing session with focus on chapter of the bible

Sr. Zamora watched while his children took out their notebooks, books, and pencils.

Then he requested, one at a time, to show him the work they had done that day

Spanish

Sr. Zamora: Lo primero que pasa es buscar los cuadernos, los lápices, con que van escribir, con que van a borrar y todo esto, que eso, ..que si no tenían todo listo.. pues andan buscando... también el libro de que van a escribiro que van a hacer, o sea, [Lola's brother] llevó el libro que le dió, y pues que quizó escribir, a lo larga siempre usamos la biblia o cualquier libro que ellos les gustan.

English

Sr. Zamora: The first thing that happens is to look for the notebooks, the pencils that they will write with, that they will erase with and all that, that,..if they don't have everything ready they will just go on looking..also the book that they will write about or that they will do something with,or..Lola's brother took out the book you gave him, and so he wanted to write about that, .. most of the time, we use the bible, or whatever book they like to use.

While Sr. Zamora checked the work Lola's older siblings had done earlier that day, Lola turned to a new chapter in the bible, and began reading it quietly under her breath, and then copying it phrase by phrase into her notebook. I asked her who had chosen the chapter and why:

Burrows-Goodwill: Fue tú que escogiste la biblia, o tu papá?

Lola: Yo

Burrows-Goodwill: Y la parte en que estabas leyendo, quien escogió esta parte?

Lola: Yo

Burrows-Goodwill: Cómo decidiste?

Lola: Porque empezamos en principio desde el capítulo en que escogí, de San Mateo

Sr. Zamora: Por qué?

Burrows-Goodwill: Fue algo que estabas aprendiendo en tus clases de iglesia?

Lola: No. Estamos estudiando diferente,... sólo que me gusta San Mateo ..y también lo de Ruth. Me gustan las historias.

Burrows-Goodwill: Was it you who chose to read the bible or your dad?

Lola: It was me.

Burrows-Goodwill: And the part that you were reading, who chose that part?

Lola: Me

Burrows-Goodwill: How did you decide which one to choose?

Lola: Because we start at the beginning, from the chapter that I chose, Saint Matthew.

Sr. Zamora: Why?

Burrows-Goodwill: Was it something that you were learning about in your Sunday school class.

Lola: No, we are studying something different...it was just that I like Saint Matthew...and I like the book of Ruth as well. I like the stories.

Seeing that Lola was engrossed in her task, Sr. Zamora pulled out a paperback biography of a missionary in Africa. He sat opposite his children, reading, always aware of what the children were doing, and ready to advise or correct. I asked him later about his practice of reading while the children were working

Sr. Zamora: Sí... este libro me gusta mucho, es uno de mis favoritos, este... ya lo he leído, es no más que lo repaso, o lo vuelvo a leer.

Burrows-Goodwill: Mientras que ellos estudian, Ud. Está leyendo, hablame más sobre esto, por favor.

Sr. Zamora: Bueno, hay veces cuando ellos estan trabajando, así yo estoy trabajando, haciendo la costura, haciendo las cosas que yo hago, pero...por lo regular, estoy leyendo..a veces nada más ..está ella [Lola] aquí conmigo y ellos dos [sister and brother] están en su cuarto, cada vez se ponen dos o tres horas para estudiar.

Sr. Zamora: Yes...I like this book a lot, it's one of my favorites, this one..., I already read the book, I was only going back to it,to read it again.

Burrows-Goodwill: While the Children were studying, you were reading, can you please tell me more about this?

Sr. Zamora: OK, there are times When they are working, when I am also working, making clothes, doing the things that I do... so this...there are times...that I read or times when I am working with them, but, usually, I am reading... Sometimes it's just her (Lola) here with me, and the other two[sister and brother] are in their room, each time like that theyput in two or three hours to study.

Lola was experiencing problems with some of the letters (I wondered if it was partly due to the print being so small), and she began crossing words out. Sr. Zamora took a closer look at Lola's work so far, and showed her the errors she had made in spelling. When he used the Spanish words for letters of the alphabet, Lola did not understand them all, especially the 'atchay' (H). This began a joking conversation that involved both siblings in wanting to explain to Lola that of course she had missed out the 'atchay' at the beginning of a word, that of course does not sound in Spanish. Sr. Zamora's advice to Lola for these problems was: "*Fíjate el libro muy bien, con los acentos*" [Look carefully at the book and notice the accents.

Lola's father, and consequently his older children also, appeared to be concerned primarily with these elements: The discipline of practice through completion of tasks he set

his children, *“Les llamo uno a uno para hacer la tarea.”* [I call them one by one to do their work] (Zamora adult interview, August, 2008). Sr. Zamora believed in the power of practice, and manifested a strong work ethic. He explained that he structured daily assignments during the summer because he was afraid they would forget their learning, *“Más que no... que no se olvide,”* [So that they don’t forget](Zamora adult interview), and because of the family value of the children’s moral and spiritual development.

It emerged early in the interviews and visits, that a focal point of this family’s life was their membership in a small Spanish-speaking, community church, led by Sra. Zamora’s brother, as the lay pastor. The tight-knit group of thirty to forty members, many of whom were extended family, faithfully attended a variety of themed bible study groups on three weeknight evenings. Members were assigned ‘homework’ during the week to read and reflect on specific chapters that would be discussed the following Sunday. Sunday worship included classes for adults and children, followed by family worship, lasting, in all, almost four hours. At Sunday School each child used a church workbook, similar in focus from the one used by Elena, with a retelling of the day’s bible story, and questions, but the children did not bring these books home. Both Lola’s father and mother attributed a lot of importance to the weekly preparation, but it fell to Sr. Zamora to oversee the children’s progress.

Sr. Zamora and his wife held strongly by the teachings of the Pentecostalist church, and regarded practice in reading and writing as tools to serve the purpose of advancing the children’s spiritual and moral development. This was no traditional observance learned in childhood, since neither parent had come from an observant catholic family. Further, Sra. Zamora expressed strong negativity towards the Catholic church because of childhood experiences in southern Mexico. Sra. Zamora, and her brother Fernando, the lay pastor of

the little church, explained to me on separate occasions, that they had not grown up “*bién*” [well], that “*malas cosas*” [bad things] had happened, and that Fernando’s motivation in devoting himself to evangelizing was to set himself, his family, and his sisters and brothers “*en el buen camino*” [on the right path] to change their ways, and do better in life.

Patterns of home and community literacy practices: Language choice, participant structure, frequency, and activity settings

For the Zamoras there were few occasions for choice in language use, since neither parent spoke English, and they were such a closely-bonded family. The almost total dominance of Spanish in the household was occasionally punctuated by a word or phrase in English from one of the children, a clue to their use of English as a siblings’ private language. Lola was never alone, always with older siblings and either mother or father, who actively promoted her continued learning. When Sr. Zamora was not available during the day, Lola relied most on her older sister, rather than her mother, who withdrew herself from anything related to literacy. Lola’s father directed literacy sessions involving his children, though in a less didactic way than Sr. Lopez. Correctness, rather than exploration, was his criterion, reflecting a traditional experience of education. But, at the same time, he allowed his children independent time to work, expecting them to motivate themselves, not relying on his direct instruction, except for corrections. The Zamora children followed a reliable daily schedule of reading and writing practice, imposed by their parents, always within the activity setting of their tiny upstairs apartment.

Literacy practices through the lenses of the activity setting variables: Recognizing patterns across the five cases

Participant structure- agents and roles

I use the term participant structure to include personnel present, the agents' roles in the activity in relation to the focus child, and the division of labor evident within the event observed. In all five cases the one or more parents were present with the participating child, as well as siblings. Roles varied across cases, from the dominance of child initiative in the case of Maritza, with very little involvement by the parent, to examples of balanced levels of initiative in the cases of Elena and her mother, Juanita and her father and sister, Lola and her father and siblings. In the case of Carlos the regular evening activity took place at the initiative of his mother, but, with the rhythm of regularity, it appeared to be his own choice. By contrast to traditional bedtime story reading activities, in which the parent's engagement dominates, all of these activities involved the full engagement of the children in both reading, writing and talking about the texts.

Language. Spanish alone was used in three of the five events, and English alone in one, and both English and Spanish in the fifth. Language choice did not arise in this literacy practice, since the cultural community providing print materials, was explicitly supporting Spanish maintenance, and the development of moral values, within a Spanish-speaking ecology.

Mediating texts and tools: Domains of literacy. Adult participants preferred texts Spanish. Where children took the initiative, they used texts in English, except in the case of Elena. Genres and task demands of the texts varied by domain of literacy, and complexity of language. Children preferred familiar junior literature in English for their own

entertainment, or school-like practice. Children engaged with religious texts in Spanish at a more complex level of vocabulary, always interacting with an adult in the activity.

Purpose/object - outcome. Purposes varied across activities, including reading and writing practice, engagement with community literacy resources, and moral and religious education.

Salient cultural values. Across all five cases both observation and video elicited interviews revealed a strong belief by adults in the value of education, the importance of reading itself, transcending the question of language difference, the value of practice, and the role literacy plays in socializing children to membership in cultural-linguistic communities that help frame the family's world-view. The main differences arose in the choice of language, the purposes, and the strategies used in the activities.

Rules, Schema and strategies. Implicit rules dictated the specific scripts parents used in their interaction with children using literacy. Influenced by several years of teacher advice on the importance of reading comprehension, some parents used the strategy of questioning to check for understanding. This questioning took a variety of forms, and levels of complexity, as will become clear in the descriptions below. Adult participants demonstrated contrasting schema with regard to supporting their children's learning. The first difference was between direct involvement, and informal support. Styles of direct involvement also varied, according to the implicit strategies derived from the parent's own educational background, or new influences from current community, or institutional involvement.

Cultural-linguistic communities. In all five cases the dominant cultural-linguistic community to which each family belonged, was their complex extended family network. Families relied on each other for childcare, social activities, and practical help. In most cases

this reliance created a virtually exclusive network, with few activities outside the family circle. It was through these networks that all of these families maintained Spanish as their dominant language of communication, and supported each other in practical ways. (In two cases I was present at complete family gatherings, and in all cases I was introduced to relatives at one point or another in the study).

Extending community beyond the family: Church membership. For one family, the Zamoras, their extended family network coincided with membership in a small community Pentecostalist church. In two other families, the Peña's and the Garcia's, church membership was gradually extending through the family network, as Elena's mother convinced her sisters of the value in her life of studying the bible in the Jehovah's Witness community. The third church-going family, the Lopez's, attended a traditional Mexican-style Catholic church, in the old *barrio* where they had once lived. In spite of the half hour drive across town, they maintained their membership, because, as Sra. Lopez told me on the way their in their van, that they had not found another church that felt quite so familiar to them as this one.

Salient cultural values: Heritage language and education

Adults in all nine families maintained an explicit emphasis on the use of spoken Spanish in the home, and some provided texts in Spanish for their children to read. Most adults favored encouraging reading before school entry, but few suggested it was necessary to learn English before kindergarten. Parents in each of these families expressed a strong belief in education, including the hope that their children would go to college. Several described positive experiences in their own schooling in Mexico, including those who had not been able to go to high school because of economic constraints. In two cases fathers, each with a ninth-grade education, described achieving high grades, in spite of the need to work while in school to support their family. Both of these parents also provided structured

literacy support, in Spanish, throughout the summer, and their children scored proficient or advanced on the 2008 CST in language arts.

Summary

These cases illustrate the variety of literacy practices regularly occurring in the families and communities of five demographically, linguistically, and socioeconomically similar families. The activity setting analysis reveals a wide range of both genres and levels of texts, as well as language of the text. Perhaps most surprising was the discovery of young schoolchildren mastering basic literacy in Spanish without any academic instruction. The intense closeness, or familism displayed among these families attests to the essential role of language in socializing the important values across generations. In the next chapter I discuss the factors contributing to these literacy practices in answering the remaining research questions, through a cross case analysis of all five cases.

CHAPTER VII

Ecologies of Literacy III

Analyzing the roles of family and community in literacy practices

Literacy practices are culturally constructed...based on an historical situation...embedded in the family memories of these practices. (Barton & Hamilton, 1998, p.13)

Organization of the chapter

In this chapter I take up the findings from chapters five and six to respond to the remaining research questions:

- 3: How do family characteristics: parent education, level of bilingualism, family constellation, availability of siblings, and extended family network, influence children's engagement in literacy practices?
- 4: How does the neighborhood and community language environment: Community resources, neighborhood commerce and advertising, church practices, influence children's literacy engagement?
- 5: How do these patterns vary by levels of children's school literacy achievement?

I present the analysis of family and community influences on children's literacy engagement in three sections, utilizing different but related frameworks in each, with the goal of uncovering embedded patterns and cross-relationships between the variables. Section I is devoted to unpacking the specific family and community variables listed in the research questions, across all nine cases, based on data from Phase I. Section II extends the work begun in Chapter Six using activity setting variables to analyze the five cases, using data from Phases I & II. Introducing a cross-case analysis I use the activity setting framework to compare variables across all five cases, and to explore the dynamic interrelationship between variables, both within and across cases. There is an important overlap between Sections I and II, as themes emerging from Section I led into a deeper analysis using the activity setting framework, and provided insights into the way emerging

patterns intersect with predicted categories. Section III analyzes the data further using two variables emerging from the data, alongside baseline features of the study. Out of this three-fold analysis I outline the major findings of the study, for discussion in the final chapter.

Section I: Unpacking the research question variables across nine cases

Family characteristics

3: How do family characteristics: **Parent education, level of bilingualism, family constellation, availability of siblings, and extended family network**, influence engagement in literacy practices?

Demographic profile: Variety within an apparently homogeneous sample

Data collected from this small descriptive study complicates the assumed homogeneity of the general profile by highlighting important differences across the nine families participating. Systematic analysis of the variables included as family characteristics revealed clusters of variability within common demographic, socioeconomic, cultural and linguistic characteristics that describe their overall demographic profiles. I first explore the variables of adult bilingualism, and parent education, in relation to children's levels of literacy in English. Next within the variable of family constellation, I explore the roles of siblings in bridging literacy engagement in English. Finally I briefly discuss the role of the extended family network.

The roles of adult bilingualism, and parent education in children's literacy engagement

Bilingualism. Children in this study moved between repertoires of literacy engagement involving both Spanish and English, in school and within homes and neighborhoods dominated by spoken Spanish. The deficit claim that a parent's inability to speak English contributes to the achievement gap appears to be complicated by the findings of this study. For the purposes of comparing levels of adult bilingualism more accurately than a simple binary, I explored possible solutions to convey gradations of ability to

communicate in English among the adults in the study. I adapted Hornberger's construct (1990) of a continuum of biliteracy, using a scale of five (see Figure 5) since it would be inaccurate to assign fluent and emergent bilinguals to the same category.

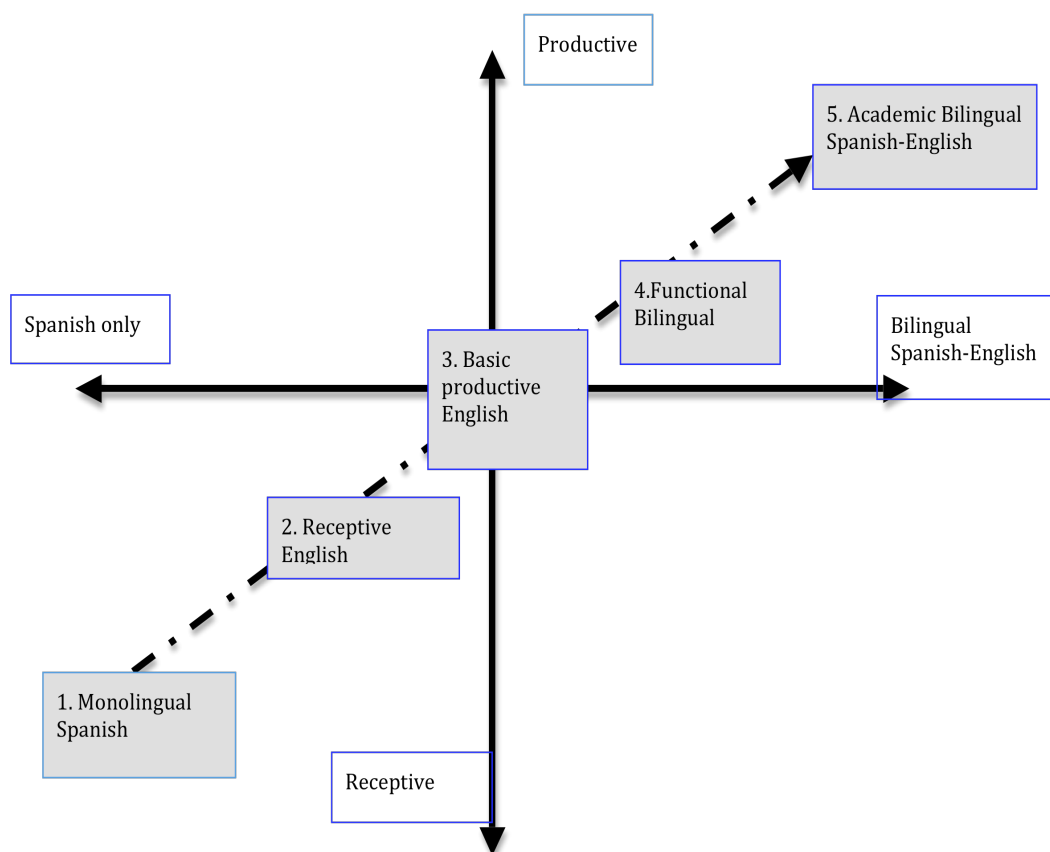


Figure 4. *Continuum of bilingualism (adapted from Hornberger, 1988).*

I use this two-axis construct to convey the progression in language acquisition that includes the receptive phase of understanding, before venturing into the production of speaking a second language. It emerged from interviews and observation that several of the non-English-speaking parents were able to understand some English, and that they navigated interactions with their children's school-based English speaking world through this understanding of basic spoken English, yet always relying on Spanish to express themselves in return. One example is Carlos, who had been reluctant to speak Spanish with

his Spanish-speaking mother, before his Mexican ‘immersion’ trip the summer of the study. It appeared that his mother relied, not only on her two other children who were bilingual to broker for her, but that she had become familiar with common English phrases heard around her, and was in the process of building on this receptive phase to venture to speak basic English when needed.

I compared the findings of adult bilingual levels across all nine cases with the participating child’s most recent language arts academic score using the California Standards Test five point scale (CST, 2008), as referenced in Chapter III, Section II.

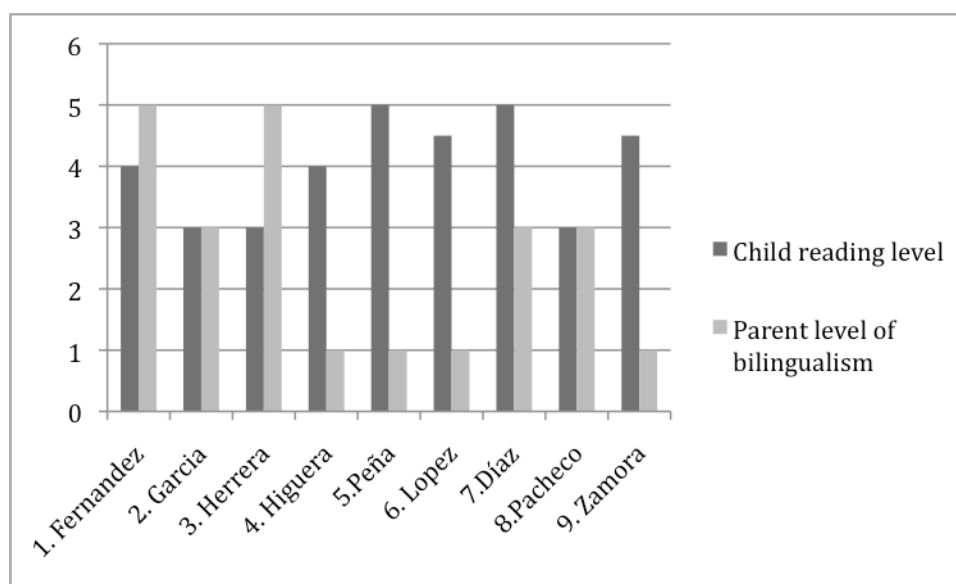


Figure 5. *Parent level of bilingualism and child’s English reading level*

In two cases, Sabrina Garcia, and Carlos Pacheco, there is a close relation between the mother’s level of bilingualism and the child’s achievement level, both of whom scored academically at Basic on the CST English Language Arts assessment. But in four cases, Joaquin Higuera, Elena Peña, Juanita Lopez, and Lola Zamora, there is no correspondence, instead a dramatic difference, and in all four of these cases the children scored at Proficient or Advanced on the CST. For Lorenzo Herrera there is an inverse relationship between his parents’ high levels of bilingualism and his own academic level in English. Lorenzo scored at

Basic, while both his parents completed high school, and attended college in California. Soledad Hernandez's mother also completed high school, with some college units in California, but Soledad's own level is higher than Lorenzo's and thus closer to that of her mother (father not available). High achieving Maritza Díaz's academic level diverges from her mother's limited English ability, though not as dramatically as in the cases of Joaquin Higuera, Elena Peña, Juanita Lopez, and Lola Zamora.

It is commonly assumed by educators, that a parent's inability to speak English constitutes an obstacle to a child's literacy success in school. For the past ten years I have monitored the minority subgroup statistical averages issued by the state, and school district annually, reporting overall low achievement by children from Spanish-speaking homes, and compared these findings with range of actual scores I had access to as an educator. Annually, numerous instances of Hispanic students achieving at or above grade level suggested to me the danger of relying on averages, since buried within these averages are a consistent quota of higher scoring children. At the local level, it intrigued me to observe who the higher achieving children were, who their parents were, and how they fit the profile of assumed deficit, particularly with regard to language difference. If indeed these parents not only fit the profile of assumed deficit with regard to school success, due to their low income and non-English-speaking status, why was it that generations of siblings from these same families achieved higher scores on English-speaking assessments? My advantage, trained as a bilingual teacher lay in direct communication with Spanish-speaking parents. Anecdotal data from conversations suggested that other factors may be at work.

Parent education levels. My next comparison of family characteristics explores parent education levels aligned with their children's academic literacy scores, in Figure 6.

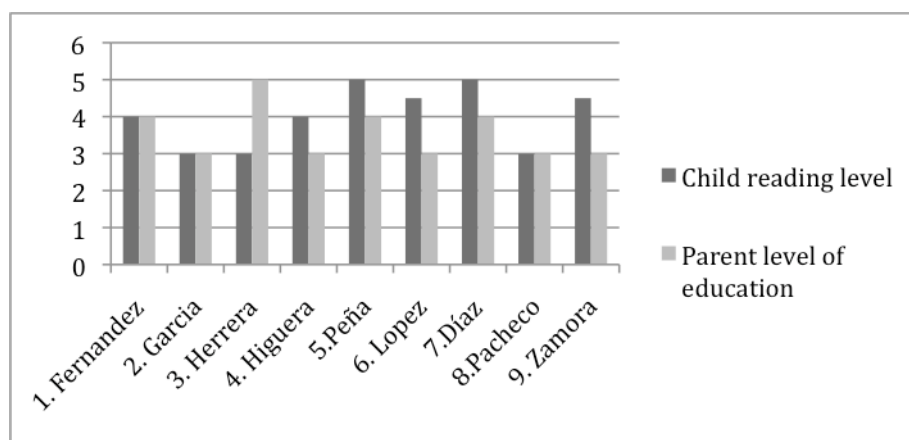


Figure 6. Parent level of education with child reading level in English

Note. Parent levels of education 1-5 correspond to: 1- Elementary(4th grade); 2-Sixth grade; 3-Junior high (Seventh –ninth); 4-High school (completed); 5-College (attended).

Figure 6 reveals similar correspondences within the Garcia family and Pacheco family cases, between parent level of education and child's reading level, now joined by Soledad Fernandez, whose mother's bilingualism also almost matched the child's reading level. While these three constitute a composite pattern relating bilingualism to parent education, the remaining cases offer a more complicated picture. The four families, the Higuera, Peña, Lopez, and Zamora, that showed significant divergence between child reading level and parent ability to speak English, now narrow the gap when the variable is parent level of education, especially in the cases of Joaquin Higuera, Elena Peña, and Maritza Díaz. Level three on the parent education scale refers to attendance at or completion of junior high school (*secundaria*) in Mexico, the equivalent of grades seven through nine in California; level four is completion of high school; and level five attendance at or completion of higher education in college. In case of Lorenzo Herrera, a negative gap emerges between the child's achievement and the education level of the parent, since both mother and father had attended college, and were fully bilingual, and he was reading only at a basic level. In the cases of Juanita Lopez, and Lola Zamora, the gap is lessened but remains. In another

section I consider these two cases in detail, in search for a new pattern, that incorporates the role of father in supporting literacy.

Family constellation: The role of older siblings

Family constellation frequently plays a role in a child's learning trajectory, usually in terms of position within the family. Thus older siblings carry the weight of responsibility for achievement in the eyes of the parents, and have only the adults, and age-mate peers to use as role models. Middle and younger siblings have the advantage of their older siblings' experiences to draw from, but may, in some cases lose some of their parents' attention, when some parenting tasks are delegated to older brothers and sisters. The positive levels of school literacy achievement by all children in this study, in spite of a lack of support in English at home by their parents, seemed to indicate an additional element in the home experience that compensated for the language difference, modeling and support by their older siblings. The field of family influences among second language learners is educating practitioners to look beyond the traditional parent-child dyad as the universal model of home support of learning. Gregory and Williams (2001) challenge the commonly held assumption by school personnel that family support of literacy and schooling consists only of parent involvement, with their study of Gujarati and Bangladeshi second language learners in London, where siblings provided mentorship in learning English. It would be inaccurate in the present study to ignore the role of siblings in the participating children's successes in English literacy, since siblings were present at all of the home visits, as well as the community field visits, and the researcher related to them as well as the parents during interviews. In some cases siblings wanted to speak on behalf of the participating child, (for example, Joaquin, who was slow to speak in response to questions), or (for example, Juanita's sister, who effectively included herself in the study, so close was she to everything

her sister did), or in the case of Maritza Díaz whose older sister collaborated with her mother, especially at the parent interview, at which Maritza was not present. All of the siblings, with the exception of Joaquin's brother, were themselves high achievers academically, and consequently served, not only as brokers of English, but as role models for school success.

Gender and age differences among older siblings

Since eight out of nine of the participating children had same gender siblings, it is difficult to estimate the role of gender in the overall effectiveness of sibling support. Anecdotally same gender siblings, both boys and girls, shared many interests. In addition, siblings of same or opposite gender, within three years of age difference collaborated in age appropriate activities.

Table 11. *Gender and age differences of older siblings*

	Older sibling Same gender	Older sibling Opposite gender
Sibling 1-3 years older	Sabrina* , Lorenzo, <u>Joaquin</u> , <u>Elena</u> *, <u>Juanita</u> *, Carlos, <u>Lola</u> *	<u>Lola</u> *
Sibling more than three years older	<u>Maritza</u>	<u>Soledad</u>

Note: Underline indicates Proficient or Advanced on CST assessment.

Bold indicates Spanish-only household

*indicates involvement in church cultural community

Siblings provide early informal mentorship in English, and bridge the cultures of home and school. The implications of age and gender of siblings lie in the area of bridging the

participating child's transition to English, early school experience (*Williams & Gregory, 2001*).). All of the groups of close-age siblings were constantly together, usually sharing a bedroom, and providing an outlet for continuing dialog in English when the participating child was away from school. All but one of the close-age siblings were also high achieving academically, providing a cultural role model of school success right in the Spanish-speaking household. One parent expressed the expectation of sibling mentorship explicitly during an interview. Sr. Herrera, in describing Lorenzo's early exposure to literacy, explained that he and Lorenzo's mother had deliberately focused on educating their first child, Lorenzo's older brother, in the alphabet and early literacy with the assumption that he would then function as a mentor and model for the children who came after. Although other parents did not state this concept so explicitly, it was evident from the data, especially from observations, that each of the participating children, with the exception of Soledad, benefitted daily from engagement with their older sibling(s) as more expert others.

Confirming Williams and Gregory's findings, target children benefitted from the older sibling's efforts in learning English and persevering at school assignments in a way that bridged the household ecology, and the child's experience in school. In the cases where there were both same and opposite gender siblings, differences arose, for example between the modeling of Lola's sister and brother, both within the three-year age difference, and in spite of the intensely familistic values by which the family lived. Sr. Zamora commented that Lola's brother would feel alone at times, when Lola and her sister would occupy themselves with 'girl things', like dolls and fashions, and that he would allow his to play video games in this special case, something he normally did not condone. In Lorenzo's case, his opposite gender sibling was a younger sister, with such a strong independent personality that she negotiated her older brothers' activities by attempting to involve them in hers. Soledad's

situation strays from the overall pattern with respect not only to age and gender difference, but also in reversal of the older-younger role during the time of the study: 1. Her older sibling was not only of the opposite gender, and fourteen years old, out of the three-year range, but unavailable during the summer of the study since he remained at home, when the family left for the summer, preparing to enter high school. 2. In the absence of her older brother, Soledad came to fill the role of older sibling herself, with regard to her younger brother and sister, a role she took very seriously. A different variant emerged with Maritza's same gender, 16 year old sister who functioned in many ways as a surrogate parent in her advocacy of academic support for Maritza. She was a more explicit mentor than the more informal, collegial mentorship of closer aged siblings, but she fulfilled the same functions of reinforcing both the culture of English, and the academic expectations of schooling.

Child bilingualism in Spanish-speaking households

Language brokering in literacy practices. Language brokering, both cases of children explaining English to Spanish-speaking parents, as well as of parents explaining new concepts in Spanish to their English literate children, also entered into the child's process of navigating print in the adult world. For example Juanita, in her eagerness to help her mother with forms and papers she brought from work, translated from English, or explained the doctor's words for her father at the emergency room when her stepbrother experienced a seizure. In reverse, Sabrina, already mentioned, always glued to her mother's side when she was not at work, would stretch her Spanish reading skills with complex words in magazines and newspapers, and dialog with her mother over them. Her mother fostered this interest by encouraging Sabrina to write down words she did not understand, or words she knew in English but not in Spanish, creating lists during the day that they reviewed when she came home from work.

Peer vs Household language choices. In the families where close age siblings also functioned as peers it was common to find the children choosing to converse in English. They almost always showed deference to their parents' presence by switching to Spanish, although there were a few instances where it was clear the child wished to prompt the parent to understand more English, as with Joaquin and Juanita. When left to themselves, children would choose television shows in English, but when accompanied by adults, would again defer to the adult's needs. This continuance of bilingualism was in some cases the only opportunity the child would have of practicing English, living as they did within Spanish-speaking neighborhoods, and socializing with Spanish-speaking extended family networks. It is important to note that all of the children, including those who ventured to read and write in Spanish, also continued reading books at their grade level in English.

Summarizing the role of family characteristics

The absence of fluency in English among most of these Mexican-heritage parents did not stand in the way of their effective support of literacy at home, as evidenced by their children's test scores in English literacy. Motivation by the parents, including two very involved fathers, to inculcate work habits, including imposing structure and schema similar to schooling appears to have more relevance in the overall achievement of some of the children. Parents who encouraged literacy in Spanish, for the purpose of socializing their children into valued cultural-religious beliefs, simultaneously transmitted the importance of Spanish as a cultural asset, bonding the generations, as well as their authority as experts, evoking respect from their children. Finally, the role of older siblings as mentors in English, and in the culture of schooling, was essential in this complex picture of out-of-school literacy, and emergent biliteracy.

Neighborhood and community language environment

I close Section I with a brief analysis of the influence of the immediate language environment in surrounding neighborhoods, asking the question:

4. How does the neighborhood and community language environment: Community resources, neighborhood commerce and advertising, church practices, influence children's literacy engagement?

Community resources as funds of literacy

Chapter Six describes the languages and forms of literacy resources available as *funds of literacy* both in the immediate ecological *zone*, and in the greater neighborhood. For a variety of reasons, only those families living in Zone A took direct advantage of the resources easily accessible on foot, while those living in other zones chose to go elsewhere to shop, go to church, use the library or go to the park for recreation. Thus, the families that lived in Zones B, C and D elected to carry out these household and family routines in community and institutional settings where they felt familiar with the surroundings, where Spanish was spoken, and where they felt safe. As a result, children were exposed, for the most part, with oral Spanish, and with both English and Spanish in the environmental print around them.

There emerged a pattern of engagement with community resources among six of the nine children, either in the forms of the family's church community, or using the local public library, or both. This group included all five families included in the case study, for whom engagement with community literacy resources played an important role in the overall profile of literacy practices.

Cultural communities as a domain of literacy engagement: Literacy required for church membership

Beyond the realm of household literacy activities, including entertainment, and communication, and school-related activities, there emerged practices involving literacy

derived from engagement in cultural communities beyond the immediate family, specifically through church and bible study. Within this small sample no less than three distinct denominations of Christian faith were represented, directly involving four of the nine families: traditional Catholic; evangelical Pentecostal; and Jehovah's Witness, all of which were practiced in Spanish. I suggest here that the complexity of literacy tasks required for membership in these three different, congregations, each with their own texts and expectations, functioned as a bridge between the functional level of literacy in households, and the accumulating complexity of vocabulary and comprehension the children experienced in school, a topic I develop in Chapter Eight.

Parents as agents of the cultural communities. Parents who supported their children building knowledge in these faiths, required them to read religious texts on a regular basis, providing a structure to ensure that they followed through. Since the texts were in Spanish, parents became the experts in mediating meanings of complex vocabulary, as well as the deeper concepts and life lessons necessary to engage as a member of the congregation. In all cases the church expected children to attend the adult service, and in only one case was a Sunday School class offered in addition. Consequently considerable instruction outside of Sunday services was needed for the children to be able to participate in the adult or family services. Participation ranged from memorizing long prayers, commenting on bible verses, to responding publicly to study questions prepared during the week before.

Older siblings, extended family members and community resources: Using the public library. The data revealed three families in which the participating child used the library on a regular basis, and in none of these cases was the caregiving parent directly involved. In the case of Carlos, the library lay within easy walking distance and his oldest brother was old enough to be entrusted to take Carlos along, thus freeing their mother to take care of

their infant sister. Maritza, whom I observed in the library with her mother, in fact was accustomed to visiting the library with her older sister, leaving her mother's role simply to provide transportation. So, once again, the role of older siblings mediating mainstream cultural resources mitigates any deficit that might exist for non-English speaking parents. The third case, that of Sabrina, involved, not an older sibling, but an extended family member, her aunt, who sought out the library as a location where Sabrina and her sister could function as literacy mentors to her preschool-aged child, as well as providing a constructive venue for child care responsibilities.

Summary of Section I: Family characteristics and community and neighborhood language environment

Family engagement with institutional community resources played a central role in the literacy practices of six of the nine children in this study. Interaction with the resources of church communities was mediated by adults, in Spanish, and with public libraries by siblings, in English. These two trends appear to diverge along cultural-linguistic lines, towards a traditional Mexican, Spanish-speaking habitus, in the case of the churches, and towards a more assimilated Anglo, middle-class habitus, in the case of the libraries. One of the church going families, the Peñas, appears to straddle this line, by adopting a middle-class, assimilative lifestyle, while adhering to Spanish linguistically.

While most families adopted a Spanish-only practice within the family, English was likely to appear in the local world of commerce and advertising, creating a hybrid (Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, & Tejeda, 1999) ecology, that parents and children each experienced differently, according to their language expertise. The motivation of parents, and the bridging role of siblings emerge as common themes across the study.

Section II

Mobilizing the multidirectionality of activity setting variables: Cross-case analysis

Chapter Seven explored the role of activity setting variables in each of the five case studies, I now move to operationalize the dynamic that this construct, the activity setting triangle, offers. Using the central mediation triangle (Vygotsky) of agent – mediational artifact-purpose as the core of my analysis, I link the sociocultural features: participant structure, schema, rules and scripts, and cultural-linguistic communities, to the description of literacy activities, in different combinations, to reveal both the simultaneous layers of reciprocal influence, and the changing dynamic within the activity. I begin by considering the mediational artifacts in relation to the object or purpose of the activity, in the mind of the agents involved.

Mediation by print literacy

Mediation of our intentional actions by tools and signs, according to Vygotsky, is uniquely human, since the knowledge embodied in these tools and signs facilitates activities that could not be performed directly, without mediation, or at least less expertly. Language and cognition latent in text embody a level of abstraction removed from the immediacy of a conversation mediated by oral language. Printed text requires the ability to make meaning without other visual cues available in face-to-face encounters, using what Vygotsky called internalized or ‘inner’ speech. Children in the process of developing this capacity to engage with the abstractions of print can grapple with levels of complexity beyond those they could navigate unassisted, both in content and vocabulary, when provided support by a more expert other. The children in this study had mastered the basic process of reading, or learning to read, and were already navigating the literate world around them, primarily in English. In their transition to third grade they were moving towards the phase of reading to

learn, that requires the capacity of inner speech, and found themselves, in their engagement with text, at different points along a continuum between novice and expert, depending on the task demands or cognitive complexity of the texts with which they engage.

During this transitional phase, or apprenticeship, in engaging with literacy, the child –novice can benefit from the interaction of others talking about the text with the purpose of making meaning. The roles expert others played in the literacy practices I observed, were influential in determining the frequency and complexity of literacy practices children engaged in, through the internalized values, schema and purposes they embodied. I created a new figure of the activity setting (see Figure 8), to help me navigate the relationships between variables, in an attempt to access the values and schema at work in the five instances of literacy practices observed.

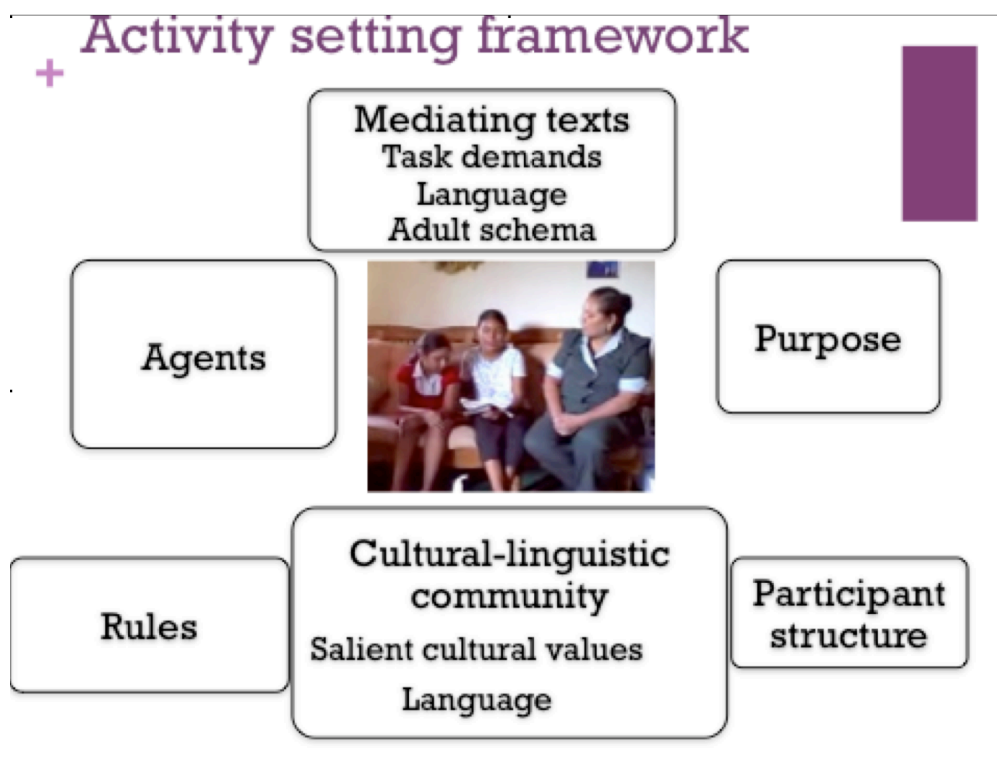


Figure 7. Activity setting variables at work in the study

Agent-artifact-purpose

In considering the relation between agent, or subject, and purpose, or object, mediated by text and tools, I begin with the assumption that the primary agent is a child interacting with print. In each of the five cases both the texts, and the purposes for engaging with the text were different, even though all cases involved reading print. I want to explore those differences first by looking at the texts themselves, in terms of the two features, task demands and language use, that I consider included with mediation by text.

Texts and language: Congruence of language and context. In two of the five cases the mediating texts were written in English, regardless of the dominant language of the child's household ecology. The remaining three were written in Spanish, a written language none of the children had learned in school, but congruent with their household language ecology. The cases of those children who read in Spanish, represents the phenomenon of emergent biliteracy, (Hornberger, 2002; Mercado, 2001), since they had all demonstrated competence as readers in English. In the case of Carlos who read in English to his Spanish-speaking mother, he exercised his bilingual abilities in rendering the story in Spanish when she asked him questions. The significance of language in considering the text must be nested within the overall ecology of the activity setting. It would have made no sense, ecologically, for Juanita to respond to the catechism questions in English, even if she had a copy of the text in English, since it was part of the Lopez family habitus that they worshiped within the sociocultural context of a traditional Mexican Spanish-speaking Catholic church community. The same would apply to the cases of Elena and Lola, whose family values were strongly invested in membership in a Spanish-speaking church cultural community. Thus, the language of the text in the cases of Lola, Juanita, and Elena, congruently fit the context within which they were acting. The others, using an English text, would have fit congruently

in an English speaking school classroom, or a predominantly English-speaking neighborhood library. This leads on to considering the purpose of the literacy practice in relation to the texts themselves.

Texts, task demands and purpose. I used the academic reading level expected at the end of second grade as a benchmark for considering the complexity and task demands required to engage with the texts the children used. These levels were available to me only in English (Houghton Mifflin), but I examined samples of current grade two, three and four, school materials provided by the Mexican government, to estimate the levels of the Spanish-language texts included.

In the two cases where children were reading in English, the task demands varied. The two texts used by Maritza, described in Chapter Seven, were written at a fifth, and third grade level. The task demands of reading beyond her grade level were mitigated by pictorial elements within the texts themselves, and her familiarity from prior hearing of the text read aloud. Furthermore, Maritza's advanced CST/ELA score at the end of second grade certainly equipped her to engage with texts beyond her grade level. Nevertheless it appeared that Maritza was choosing familiar texts for the purpose of enjoyment as opposed to academic challenge. Carlos followed a similar pattern, by choosing an easier text written at a mid-second grade level, that he was very familiar with. Like Maritza, Carlos did explore texts beyond his grade level, such as junior detective chapter books, written at a third grade level, but was not comfortable reading them publicly.

The remaining three cases engaged with texts in Spanish under more closely supervised circumstances, and for specific purposes derived from the requirements of membership in each respective church community. While both Maritza and Carlos had shared books of their own choice within a wide range, two of the remaining children

exercised the element of choice, but within very narrow constraints. Elena chose which of a series of junior bible study books to work with in the session with her mother. As indicated in Chapter Seven, this text was beautifully illustrated, between pages dense with text, and was written at between a third and fourth grade level, according to a comparison with Mexican school texts of those levels. For Elena this constituted a task demand on a completely different level from those of either Maritza or Carlos, by reason of the requirements of reading in Spanish, a language in which she had not been formally instructed. It is impossible to separate the complexity of the text and the language used from both the purpose of the activity and the cultural community in which the activity belongs ecologically, and I will return to this question later. Nevertheless, the fact that Elena was a novice Spanish reader, by contrast with her grade level mastery of reading in English, implied the necessity of mentorship by a more expert other to guide her within her zone of proximal development. Elena approached the complexity of reading above her grade level in Spanish, supported by the confidence of her mother's direct engagement in the activity in both a didactic and dialogic manner. It was apparent from observing the session that it was a regular practice, since both mother and daughter appeared so much at ease with the texts and the tools they used to make meaning, pencils and highlighters.

Both Juanita and Lola also engaged with religious texts written in Spanish: the Catholic catechism responses, and the protestant bible. Since both texts were written for general audiences, it would be difficult to estimate the grade level demands. This is complicated further by the formulaic syntax employed in the catechism, and the use of complex and abstract language for spiritual terms in both bible and catechism. As in the case of Elena, engagement with these texts, in Spanish, implied the need for engagement, on

some level, by a more expert other, to scaffold the children's experiences negotiating the texts.

Task demands and language used. Two parallel themes emerge from considering the task demands of the texts children worked with, directly related to the choice of language used. As just mentioned, the use of Spanish combined with the specialized vocabulary and syntax used in spiritual texts, implied the need for a more expert other to mediate the literacy practice. By contrast the two children reading in English could function more or less independently, choosing when and who to ask for assistance when needed. The role that Carlos's mother played was to create a routine of practice, and to encourage him to pay attention to the content of what he read. He needed no help in pronouncing words, and, if he had, would most likely have asked his brothers to help him, rather than his mother. Maritza's sister played a similar role in motivating her to read more, at the behest of her mother.

Purpose and motive: Reading to learn. Parents who spent the most time working with their children did so in order to support a purpose for which literacy ability was a vehicle, not an end in itself. Four out of nine students were engaged in reading and writing in Spanish related to bible study, and liturgical expectations from three different church denominations. In all four homes parents were actively involve in structuring this literacy activity for the purpose of building capacity for their children to engage fully as members of the church cultural communities. I visited the three church gatherings (all in Spanish) accompanying the families, and witnessed the complex level of Spanish reading and writing required for participation.

Linking mediating texts with cultural communities, salient cultural values, and purpose

It would be impossible to understand the choices of texts and materials, along with the perceived purpose, without taking into account both the language of the text, and the wider cultural linguistic community within which the activity was situated. As Anderson and Stokes observed twenty-five years ago, reporting on a study with similar goals to the present one, the sources of print that families engage in originate in institutional settings at the socio-political, macro-level, and carry with them the institution's implicit cultural values. From the perspective of the families engaged with cultural communities organized around religion the print sources they engaged in embodied not only the specific teachings of their denomination, but the very sense of community and belonging that they derived from engaging in bible study or liturgical work preparing for a child's first communion. Nevertheless, in the case of the church-going families, the texts themselves linked families to the community. By socializing their children to engage with these texts, they were preparing them for full membership of the community, as well as bonding them within the family network through their mutual adherence to the teachings. For the parents in the study engaged with religious texts, the primary purpose was the moral and spiritual development of their children. In the process, literacy was necessary as a tool, including literacy in Spanish, and any coaching in developing Spanish literacy, as in the case of Lola, was in the service of her spiritual growth.

The families of Maritza and Carlos did not attend church, although both children had attended church in the company of their grandparents, each during a sojourn in Mexico. Instead, the institutional influence of community literacy resources for both children took the form of using the local public library, accompanied by older siblings. In both cases the older siblings adopted the mentorship role that parents fulfilled in the other three cases, but

in a more informal way, and in English. For these children the library was a gateway to the wider world and a new level of freedom, while encouraging literacy by providing a rich array of resources, both print and electronic.

Linking participant structure with cultural values, schema and scripts

Scripts and schema for literacy events. Literacy strategies used in three of the families, from two different bible-based church denominations, resembled school comprehension instruction, reading the text and answering questions. The fourth case, traditional Catholic, involved reading followed by rote memorization of the catechism responses. These activities harnessed community resources through the various churches, in the form of literacy materials, structure of instruction, and support by church personnel. In non-church-going families rhythms of more conventional literacy activities, such as bedtime story reading, were also established, conducted by both adults and older siblings. While all parents interviewed reported actively supporting their children's literacy, four of the nine provided structured literacy support on a daily basis throughout the summer, three in Spanish, and one in English, using a teenage cousin as a tutor.

Section III: Introducing variables emerging from the data

Using emergent variables to cluster household literacy practices

In addition to the factors enumerated in the research question, two other variables emerged from the data, specifically: The form of literacy support provided, including level of structure, and strategies used by the parent, and the time availability of the parent as caregiver. Here I compare these with variables already considered: Parent levels of education and bilingualism. I also incorporate variables constant to the study: Dominant home language, and child's academic level in English literacy. Following are three sets of comparisons to explore further patterns emerging from the data 1. Structured vs informal

literacy support, compared with parent education level. 2. Availability of home-based parent vs care elsewhere by another family member, compared with parent education level. 3. Availability of a home-based parent vs care elsewhere by another family member, analyzed alongside Structured vs informal literacy literacy support. In addition to the constant variables of home language and child's academic level, I introduced the emergent variable of family participation in organized religious activities requiring literacy, based on findings from the data. (See tables 12, 13, and 14).

1. Comparing parent level of education with chosen form of home literacy support

All of the children of parents who had not attended high school received both structured and informal literacy support during the summer. On the other hand, of those children whose parents attended high school, or even college, only two out of five received structured support. Of those receiving only informal support, only one was high achieving. The question of high school must also include location of schooling.

All those children from homes where adults spoke only Spanish received some level of both structured and informal literacy support during the summer, and all those from bilingual homes received only informal support. Among the high school (or higher) parent attendees three had completed high school in Mexico before immigration. The two parents who had been brought to the United States as children had completed their high school, including some college, education in California. It was the children of these two families who received only informal literacy support, and experienced a bilingual home environment.

Table 12. *Comparing form of literacy support with parent level of education*

	Structured and informal literacy support	Informal literacy support
Parent education: Junior high or elementary school	<u>Joaquin,</u> <u>Juanita*,</u> <u>Carlos,</u> <u>Lola*</u>	
Parent education: High school +	<u>Elena,*</u> <u>Sabrina*</u>	<u>Soledad,</u> <u>Lorenzo,</u> <u>Maritza</u>

Note: Underline indicates proficient or advanced on CST ELA (2008)

Bold font indicates Spanish-speaking household

*indicates family engaged in church literacy activities

I defined structured literacy support partly by evidence of direct involvement by a parent, extended family member, or member of a cultural community, in literacy practices. Structured, in this study, also implied regularity supervised by an adult. In the cases of three church-going families described in Chapter Six, with the addition of Sabrina Garcia, whose profile was similar to Elena's, children experienced direct engagement by adults, in specific literacy practices. Carlos and Joaquin, whose families were not involved in church communities still experienced direct involvement: Carlos by daily reading with his mother, Joaquin by daily tutoring by his teenage cousin. Soledad, Lorenzo and Maritza all experienced encouragement by the adults in their lives, as well as a lot of choice in their activities. In the case of both Soledad and Lorenzo, the adult perspective was, as Lorenzo's father expressed it, since it was the summertime "I don't want to pressure them into reading. I let them choose if they want to." (Interview, July, 2008). In the case of Maritza, it was largely due to the absence of her older sister, who normally functioned as her tutor and

mentor, since she herself was motivated to take extra classes to advance her academic status.

5. Comparing parent availability with parent level of education

A pattern begins to emerge with these comparisons with higher achieving children concentrated among Spanish-dominant households, and parents with a lower level of education. This comparison adds to the clustering the possible importance of having a parent as daytime caregiver on the basis of the number of higher achieving children were in this situation.

Table 13. Comparing parent availability with parent level of education

	Home-based parent as caregiver	Extended family member as caregiver
Parent education: Junior High or elementary school	<u>Joaquin</u> , <u>Juanita*</u> , <u>Lola*</u>	<u>Maritza</u> , Carlos
Parent education: High school +	<u>Elena*</u>	<u>Soledad</u> , Sabrina* , Lorenzo

Notes: Underline indicates proficient or advanced on CST ELA (2008

Bold font indicates Spanish-speaking household

*indicates family engaged in church literacy activities

The availability of a home-based parent was partly due to circumstances, since both Juanita's father and Lola's mother would have preferred to be working, if that had been possible. Only Joaquin's and Elena's mother stayed at home by choice. All of those children with a home-based parent available lived in a Spanish-speaking household, where the children provided the only bilingualism. Only one of the parents who had completed high school chose to stay at home with their children. The third comparison needed, then, was to

compare parent availability with the level of structure provided in literacy support, see Table 14.

6. *Themes arising from combining the emergent variables*

Finally, comparing the two emergent variables of parent availability during the day with structure of literacy support, a combined picture emerges of Spanish-speaking parents staying at home and providing a regular structure of literacy support.

Table 14. *Parent availability compared with level of structure in literacy support*

	Home-based parent as caregiver	Extended family member as caregiver
Structured and informal literacy support	<u>Joquin</u> <u>Juanita*</u> <u>Lola*</u> <u>Elena*</u>	Carlos Sabrina*
Informal literacy support		<u>Maritza</u> <u>Soledad</u> Lorenzo

Notes: Underline indicates proficient or advanced on CST ELA (2008)

Bold font indicates Spanish-speaking household

*indicates family engaged in church literacy activities

In the cases of Carlos and Sabrina their parents chose also to provide a level of predictable structure to their literacy activities, but during the late afternoon, when they returned from work. Lorenzo did in fact spend part of his summer with his father available during the day, but it was difficult to estimate how much of the time he also relied on extended family members to take care of him and his siblings. When Lorenzo was with his mother, she relied on her younger sister, their aunt to supervise their activities.

The relevance of emergent variables

The importance of these two emerging variables, parent availability and structure of literacy support, arose from coding multiple sources of data during Phase I of the study. At first it did not appear relevant that some parents remained at home, since families were able to depend on capable extended family members to take their place as caregivers during the day. Soledad's grandmother insisted on reading to her every night, Lorenzo's young aunt strongly encouraged literacy practice when she was in charge, and Maritza's older sister would have had a more structured influence had she been available. Nevertheless the convergence of these variables with the baseline variables operating within the study: Parent education level, parent level of bilingualism, and child's academic reading level in English, caused me to look more carefully at the role played by a home-based parent in these families, and the role their absence may have played in those who were cared for elsewhere.

Summary of the combined findings in Sections I, II and III

Emerging biliteracy through cultural-linguistic community involvement: Church and bible study activities

Out of this relatively homogeneous group of families emerged a distinguishing finding. In the absence of any school literacy instruction in Spanish it came as a surprise to find students reading and writing in Spanish through the support of home and community activities. Five of the families were involved in instructing their children to read, and write in Spanish, most using a variety of religious texts, supported by frequent bible study gatherings. The convergence of biliteracy and complexity of literacy activities was motivated by parents' belief in the importance of religious instruction.

Summary

Examining literacy in the context of Spanish speaking homes and communities reveals a rich and subversive activity binding some Hispanic families and sub-communities together by out-of-school support of reading and writing in Spanish as a purposeful cultural activity, not for the purpose of reading, as in school-based learning. In fact it coincides with the shift in school literacy task demands between second and third grades, from learning to read, to reading to learn content knowledge. Families worked within the eco-cultural constraints of their own social, linguistic and economic capital to provide support for their children's development. The way families viewed these constraints helped determine the choices they made in how to interact with their children around literacy, including the need to supplement school literacy with literacy in Spanish for the purposes of engaging in meaningful community activities as a family. The availability of parents as caregivers during the long summer days emerged as a possible influence on literacy engagement, combined with the adult schema regarding structured practice. The academic achievement by the children in the study may be related to their out-of-school engagement with Spanish literacy, the parent level of education, parents' schema with regard to strategies for supporting literacy, the level of structure provided, and the mentorship by older siblings. The community support provided to each of these families, through the church and extended family networks, appears to be filling a gap created by the end of bilingual instruction in California, the institutional support of biliteracy in schools. Engagement in cultural-linguistic communities that incorporate literacy for membership supports a form of emergent biliteracy, that functions to sustain heritage language maintenance, and creates a cross-generational bond based on respect and continuing socialization through reading and writing in Spanish.

CHAPTER VIII

Discussion of findings and implications for practice

Spanish, in its infinite varieties, is a vital presence in the lives of Hispanic youth. ...language is a powerful marker of identity...which explains the resilience of Spanish among Hispanic youth even when it is not the official language of instruction. (Mercado,2001.p.172)

In Section I of this chapter I begin with a summary of the major findings from the study. I interpret these findings within the context of existing research. I illustrate the use of eco-cultural activity settings to describe literacy as a social process by graphically capturing the three planes of ecology (Rogoff) from one of the case studies. In Section II I elaborate on the major findings and discuss how they complicate assumptions of deficit commonly held in regard to low-income Spanish-speaking immigrant families. In Section III I revisit Barton's propositions for an integrated theory of literacy in the light of this study's findings, and I propose an integrative ecological model of literacy practices that includes emergent biliteracy (Reyes & Azuara, 2008) as a step towards a paradigm of literacy that reflects the spectrum of minority children's literacy practices. I conclude with recommendations for further research, and for application in educational policy and practice.

Major findings from the study

The findings emerging from this descriptive study have implications for exploring a new integrative paradigm of literacy, building on the multidisciplinary work of recent generations of research in contextual approaches to literacy. The principal findings in this study complicate assumptions of deficit commonly held in regard to low-income Spanish-speaking immigrant families and their children's literacy in the following ways.

1.The abundance of household and community funds of literacy described here contests the assumption that Spanish-speaking households lack books. 2.Language difference was not an obstacle to home support of literacy, or academic achievement by

target children. 3. Parent level of education and attitude toward education influenced family practices, for example, parents' learning schema and work ethic influenced the way they structured the out-of-school support of literacy. 4. School-like practices pervaded household and community ecologies of literacy, derived both from adult schema, and children's learned strategies. 5. Cultural community practices that required knowledge of Spanish literacy influenced the development of biliteracy among target children, thus filling the gap left by schools in abandoning reading instruction in Spanish. 6. The cognitive complexity of literacy activities was related to the purpose for which it was used: Church related activities involved greater rigor of vocabulary and comprehension than reading for pleasure. 7. The atypical role of Hispanic fathers in literacy support appeared to be legitimized by the religious purposes of the activities. 8. Older siblings provided early informal mentorship in English, and bridged the cultures of home and school for target children.

Situating the findings within the context of existing research

The multilayered nature of the findings listed above reflects the ecocultural, activity setting framework used to analyze out-of-school literacy practices among the nine Spanish-speaking families participating in this study. Several of these findings confirm predictions based on studies of Hispanic families and literacy cited earlier in this dissertation. I anticipated variety in availability and type of literacy resources available in the home (Anderson, Teale & Estrada, 1980; Rodriguez-Brown, 1999; Mercado, 2005; Perry, 2008). I was aware that the level of literacy achievement by the most successful target students could be related to community factors, such as church attendance, especially in the case of evangelical churches (Anderson, et al; Ek, 2008), where children are encouraged to read more and early. I anticipated that older siblings might also take the role of 'more expert other' in literacy in English, in cases where the parents did not read English at all. Finally, I

anticipated a combination of parental exhortation to work hard at school (Delgado-Gaitan, 1994), with student motivation as influential dimensions of the human ecology supporting literacy. Based on the literature on children from Spanish-speaking families, I was not prepared for the degree to which language, the use of Spanish in literacy activities, would play such a dominant role in some family practices. This omission I attribute primarily to the fact that most research was carried out within bilingual classrooms where Spanish literacy instruction was delivered. I had not anticipated broaching the phenomenon of emergent biliteracy (Reyes & Azuara, 2008) among children from Spanish-speaking families, since the literature on English learners focuses on attainment in English, while the literature on family literacy assumes the need to remediate linguistic and cultural deficit by providing classes in literacy strategies for linguistic minority parents. Finally, I had not anticipated broaching the gender issue within the family, following the findings of studies highlighting the role of the mother in early literacy support (Chall & Snow, 1982; Rodriguez-Brown, 1999; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). Nevertheless the insistence of two fathers in the study taking on literacy support in the home has echoes in more recent research (Gadsden & Ray, 2003; Ortiz, 2004).

Relevance of earlier research and the influence of policy changes

I chose studies by Claude Goldenberg and Ronald Gallimore (1993) and Anderson, Teale and Estrada (1980), as research models for this dissertation based on similarities of population studied and methodological approach, using a sociocultural activity settings framework. Conditions for schooling in 2008 were different from those prevailing in California over a decade ago in two important ways. First, the elimination of bilingual education in 1998 has had several ramifications for immigrant, Spanish-speaking families. Kindergarteners, who cannot communicate with their teachers until they can understand

basic English, are expected to learn the process of reading in this new language, one that is not supported at home. Home-school communication is restricted since parents require interpreters to communicate with teachers and administrators, thus parent attendance at school events is limited. When Goldenberg and Gallimore explored home literacy among Spanish-speaking families of kindergarteners and first graders, bilingual teachers could explain the Spanish-language 'little books' teacher sent home to help bridge home-school learning. Second, the passing of No Child Left Behind established new grade-level requirements, enforced by testing, such as explicit reading instruction in kindergarten. NCLB and Proposition 227 allow new linguistic minority immigrants one year of language adjustment before being tested in English only. Under these new conditions the kinds of support Goldenberg introduced for first grade parents would now be appropriate at the kindergarten level, where the tradition of practical play has become rare.

While I acknowledge the emergence of a range of newer studies of children from Spanish-speaking families (Arzubiaga, Monzo & Rueda, 2002), few have attempted to examine home literacy congruent with the family cultural-linguistic habitus. Examining literacy practices situated within the cultural-linguistic community where they occur offers an important perspective overlooked by normative approaches looking to compare home and school literacy approaches. English-only and NCLB have influenced other changes through massive reforms in curriculum and pedagogy, often enforced through state sanctions for underperforming schools. Teachers now explicitly instruct metacognitive reading strategies that a generation ago were just considered 'good reading' skills. Attempts to reform public pre-school instruction through Headstart have influenced early reading practices among Hispanic families, where they have availed themselves of the services. Evidence of an increase in efforts by Hispanic families to engage preschoolers in preliteracy

activities, including reading stories, rhymes and singing songs, suggests that the newer generations of families may be engaging with literacy support earlier than those that preceded them. (Hernandez, 2006; NCES, 2006; Perry, 2008).

The role of the activity settings framework in eliciting the study's findings: Applying Rogoff's construct of the three planes of ecology within activity settings

Inspired by Rogoff's example, I captured one instance of an activity setting graphically, using photographs to represent the three ecological planes. In the following sequence the focus is a child's engagement with text in the dynamic context of home and family. The three frames allow us to examine each stage separately for a moment, and build on the sociocultural complexity that each subsequent frame introduces.

According to Rogoff (1995) the three planes of a culturally situated activity, personal, interpersonal, and community, embody the essential ecological and cultural influences present within the activity setting. On the personal plane occurs individual cognition, emotion, behavior, values, and beliefs. The social, or interpersonal plane introduces communication and dialogue, performance of roles that may include scaffolded assistance within the zone of proximal development, cooperation, or even conflict. The community or institutional plane incorporates the shared cultural history implicit within the activity setting, through languages, rules, values, beliefs, and identities. The sequence here is taken from one of the activity settings I observed during the study. Had I not chosen to work within a sociocultural framework, I would have remained with the first frame, observing the child engaging with the text. I would have missed the essential socially embedded nature of the activity, the meaning making by the child through interacting with peers and more expert others.



Figure 8. Personal Plane: Child reading text

On the personal plane the child examines a text, using her finger to help her focus. Behind her is a comfortable chair with pillow, a lamp on a low table, and a bookcase, suggesting the location is her living room. In this first frame, the child appears to be alone, engrossed in deciphering a word in the text.



Figure 9 (a). Interpersonal plane : Child and sibling reading text together.

In this version of the interpersonal plane we see the child together with her older sister, engaging with the same text as before, of which there is only one copy. Now we see

the couch more clearly, confirming the inference that the setting is the family living room. We are not yet aware of anyone else's presence. By contrast, if the visual clues implied that the setting was a classroom we could have assumed the presence of at least one adult, the teacher. There is a sense of reciprocity between the two children, as they hold the text, side by side collaborating.



Figure 9 (b). Interpersonal plane. Father guides child in reading text.

In this version of the interpersonal plane the ZPD shifts. Father emerges as the more expert other as father and child examine the text together. The child's position suggests that father plays the role of expert other while he shares holding the text with his daughter. This reflects the dual authority of the religious text, 'the Word' and the authority of the father, as role model. Here father is working with text in Spanish, congruent with his literacy repertoire and cultural community, preparing his children for the catechism.



Figure 11. Cultural-community plane: Father engages both siblings with the text.

Zooming out, to the plane of cultural-linguistic community, within the ecocultural niche of the household, we see the human and physical context for the literacy activity. The larger context of cultural community reveals father holding the text ('the word'). Father assists the older sister to check for a line or phrase, while the target child looks on, nested closely within this participant cluster. A larger contextual view would reveal that mother is seated on the couch, where the activity began, when she was leading introductory prayers. Gradually, through the authority of the text, the locus has moved to the father is who is using the text for instruction.

Summarizing the three planes

Figure 12 schematically summarizes the graphic images in the previous section, representing the simultaneity of all influences, and their reciprocity. Even when the child was engaging with the text alone, the overarching cultural purpose of the church teachings as emblem of membership in the community, embodied by both her parents, provided the semiotic context. The interpersonal plane supported her personal engagement as she moved between individual and assisted practice.

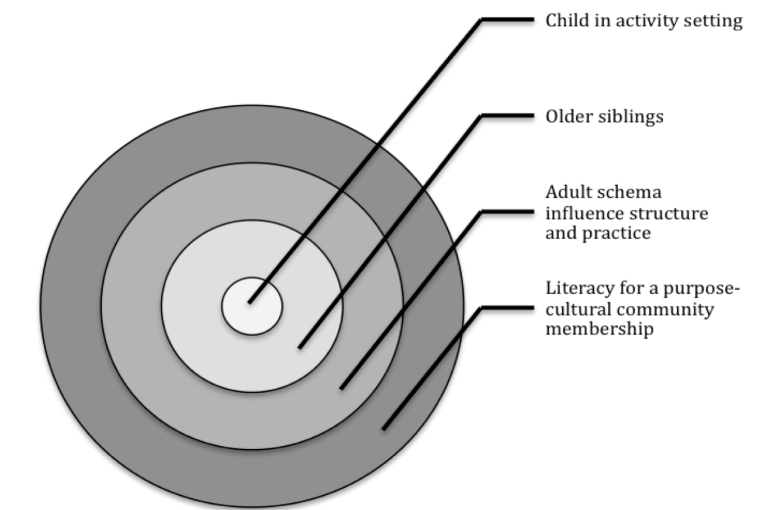


Figure 12. *Layers of ecological influence on activity setting*

The three planes interacting within the activity setting

For this child engaging with the catechism text involved her whole family supporting her in reading in Spanish for a highly respected purpose. She certainly engaged in other literacy activities on her own, such as reading children's books and writing lists and stories, frequently in English. But, working together with her father and sister three times a week over the complex vocabulary of the formal catechism responses represented a vital element of her cultural socialization. Given the depth of her parents' devotion to the catholic faith, the weekly experience of the mass in church, and the religious images surrounding Juanita in her home, learning the steps to becoming a member of this religious cultural community carried enormous weight in her development (Baquedano-Lopez, 1997; Farr, 2000). Reading and reciting in Spanish was regarded by the family as a necessary vehicle to accomplish the task of learning the catechism. Not once did I hear either of her parents express pride or surprise that she and her sister were capable of reading in Spanish, it was simply expected. In spite of the fact that both Juanita and her older sister were high

achievers within the English-only curriculum at school, and almost completely fluent in English, the fact that they needed to demonstrate this ability to read in Spanish in order to belong to their family's cultural community also helped to bind them more closely with family's Spanish-speaking culture.

While many second and third generation children begin to lose respect for parents who do not learn English, sometimes avoiding speaking Spanish themselves, in the cases of Juanita and her sister, as well as Lola and her siblings, Elena and Sabrina and their families, the way Spanish literacy was modeled as a requirement for membership in a community that the family held in high regard, helped to maintain familistic bonds of mutual respect, while sustaining the heritage language. Harrison and Buriel's (1990) work on the psychological effects of language brokering on young Mexican-heritage children and youth, found a similar 'by-product'. Even where parents were beginning to be able to understand English, they would still rely on their children for translation help as a way to reinforce the linguistic dimension of their family culture.

SECTION II

How the findings complicate assumptions of deficit commonly held in regard to low-income Spanish-speaking immigrant families

Complicating assumptions of deficit of literacy resources

Without exception, each of the nine households contained a rich supply of children's books, in English, in addition to multiple household print resources, especially newspapers and magazines, in both English and Spanish. This finding, represents a change from findings in family studies of low-income populations conducted in the 1980s and 1990s. Purcell-Gates, studying low-income families, found a wide range of functional household print, in the form of entertainment guides, newspaper coupons for shopping, but fewer

books(1996). Gallimore and Goldenberg visiting the homes of Spanish-speaking families found very few children's books, outside of those sent home from the school for homework purposes (1992). While the existence of books alone does not guarantee literacy, it has been used by researchers as a benchmark of literate capacity (Constantino, 1998; Krashen, 2002). The significance for this dissertation in considering print resources as *funds of literacy* requires evidence of active engagement with the texts as sources of literacy and cognitive support, in the sense Velez-Ibañez and Greenberg (1992) suggested that community funds of knowledge, operate as a reciprocal network. The catalyst required in activating funds of literacy, as described in this study, is the role of a more expert other to motivate and structure engagement with literacy, and at times, mentor engagement with more challenging texts.

Contesting language difference as a deficit factor

The data presented here contests the assumption that language difference in Spanish-speaking homes corresponds to low academic scores by the children. Findings of a negative gap between child achievement level and parent ability to speak English in seven of the nine cases negates this deficit claim. Contrary to popular assumptions that language difference is the primary factor hindering Spanish-speaking families in supporting children's literacy development, children in this study achieved at or above grade level in conditions where siblings were the only practitioners of English.

Although Spanish-speaking parents of second graders in non-bilingual classrooms could not assist directly with English texts from school, these same parents and other family members still actively promoted literacy engagement with their children. According to Barton and Street (1998) literacy is culturally situated, and frequently purpose driven as opposed to literacy practiced for its own sake. Families engaged in community activities

that required literacy in Spanish for full membership promoted Spanish literacy with their children, even when it was not formally instructed in school. Versions of this support of emergent biliteracy emerged in both child and adult interviews, as well as videotaped observations of parents and children engaged in reading and discussing the bible, and bible stories. The relevance of these findings to the overall literacy performance of the participating children is the fact that meaning-making (semiosis), regardless of language, was occurring through the printed word, with the support of adults, usually parents. While almost all of these children first learned to read in English, in kindergarten, parents had been able to capitalize on the elements of emergent literacy accumulated in Spanish since infancy, combined with knowledge of the reading process in English, to encourage the informal development of literacy in Spanish, backed by the powerful motivation of family expectations.

Lack of English literacy among the adults in Mexican-heritage families is frequently assumed by monolingual English school personnel to be a major obstacle to student achievement. The target children in this study who were high achieving (Advanced and Proficient, CST, 2008) in monolingual English classrooms complicate the warrant for these assumptions. Literacy practices in Spanish, combined with strong encouragement for disciplined study by the adults in a child's family, appear to function as an equivalent to the support provided by the Anglo middle class culture of home literacy that these families are assumed to be lacking, when combined with sibling mentorship in English. To support this claim I refer to studies on biliteracy (Kenner, 2000; Pease-Alvarez, 2003; Reyes & Azuara, 2008) that suggest that reading, and the cognitive skills involved in comprehension, transfer successfully between languages. Furthermore the body of work in family literacy point to the emotional climate in the home as a major factor in the effectiveness of

children's engagement in literacy outside of school (Chall & Snow, 1982; Hart & Risley, 1995). The close knit, extended family network through which each child was socialized, constituted an important dimension to the literacy practices each engaged in.

Cultural factors influencing literacy engagement and support

While parent ability to speak and read English was not closely related to the children's literacy development, mother's and father's levels of education did show a closer correspondence with child academic level, regardless of language. Parents in this study who ended their education before entering high school manifested strong motivation to support their children's overall education. I suggest that their own experiences of school how may have influenced these mothers and fathers in the ways they organized home support. Parents who did complete high school in Mexico supported their children in a variety of ways, including structure similar to that created by less educated parents. By contrast, parents who completed high school in California clearly adopted a more 'hands-off' approach to out-of-school literacy, encouraging purposeful uses of writing, but allowing children to choose whether or not to read.

Parent education and enactment of literacy schema

The clustering of data on family characteristics suggests that parents' level and location of education may have influenced their schema in choosing strategies to support their children in learning. This claim is not so much based on the level of knowledge attained, but rather on the learning style prevailing during the parent's final stage of education. Parents who ended their school career at junior high school would have internalized a more structured and didactic schema than those who completed high school in California, where there were more expectations for independent learning. The strong parallels across the data suggest that parents who chose a structured and didactic approach

in supporting their children's learning, combined with a strong work ethic, a belief in the power of practice, based their support strategies on the task oriented structure of their own education, primarily in Mexico.

Emerging from this study is the continued importance for mid-elementary aged children of direct parental involvement with children's out of school activities, especially those that involve literacy for a common purpose. At the transitional juncture in literacy development, between learning to read and reading to learn, normally between second and third grades, it seems that support by more expert others is vital in facilitating children's advancement through their zone of proximal development, by stretching their abilities within a structured framework. The parents in this study who were directly involved also established a structured routine within which to frame the activities, that may be connected to the maintenance of a more traditional habitus, compared with families who had begun to adopt an acculturated habitus in their style of living. There is not enough evidence here to warrant a claim, but the patterns of family literacy support, structure and practice or informal support, do appear to cluster around choice of lifestyle, traditional or acculturated, and language, Spanish, or English and Spanish. Without the framework of activity settings it would have been difficult to elicit this understanding, based as it was on the intersection of participant structure, cultural-linguistic communities and schema, rules and scripts.

Schema do not remain static throughout a person's lifetime, but, influenced by other cultural settings, can evolve and change. Sra. Peña's approach to working with Elena represents a hybrid phenomenon within the range of parent schema. Hers is a case of direct involvement using a dialogic approach. She contradicts the pattern not only because she did complete high school, in Mexico, but that her collaborative style of working with Elena is one she learned as an adult within the cultural community of the church she has adopted.

The third claim to hybridity is Sra. Peña's lack of bilingualism, in contrast to the other high school educated parents. Along with bilingualism in the households where it existed, the researcher noted the adoption of Anglo middle class style of living, including an informal approach to supporting child literacy, what I call a middle class habitus. In the case of Sra. Peña, she embraces aspects of this middle class life style, promoted by her association with upwardly mobile members of her church community, but nevertheless remaining nested within a Spanish-speaking culture.

Integrating school-related literacy with the ecologies of family and community literacy.

Within the arsenal of out-of-school strategies employed by adults, some of the children, as well as the church community practices, school-like approaches to literacy engagement emerged repeatedly, derived from the parents' own history of schooling, or their children's internalization of school strategies, or from the new adult socialization by church institutions to dialogic strategies for comprehension. Thus, while school-related materials were absent from literacy practices, except in the case of Joaquin with his tutoring sessions, the element of school-like literacy practices permeated the overall household and community literacy activities children engaged in.

Into the ongoing ecology of adult, 'real-life' household literacy, the children weave an important strand of school-related literacy activities, usually in the form of homework. During the school year the distinction between the two domains is made explicit through the genre of print materials sent from school for specific purposes and activities. Once this structured intervention by the institution of school is removed, as in extended vacations, the texts and assignments may disappear but evidence of the practices cultivated in the classroom do not vanish entirely. Parent schema with regard to literacy and learning, their own experiences in schooling, as well as the level to which children have internalized

strategies and practices related to reading, all determine the extent to which school-related literacy practices influence the overall household literacy ecology.

The additive influence of language difference: Literacy in Spanish

Given the focus on structured and explicit support for literacy and moral development by a core of the high-scoring children, the question of language necessarily enters as a vital component, since these same parents did not read and write in English. Consequently the phenomenon of emergent biliteracy emerges as an important finding, where children, in order to participate in a meaningful way with their didactic parents, needed to be able to read and write in Spanish.

One of the most surprising, and encouraging findings arising from this study is the fact that five of the nine children were engaged in reading and writing in Spanish, four of them within the framework of their respective religious cultural communities. Thus, there was contextualized meaning in being able to read, unlike the contrived context of reading in school. Children involved with the three churches I attended saw that everyone present, of all ages, participated in rigorous text analysis during bible study, and the Sunday lesson. For them, mastering the ability to participate carried with it the power of belonging and feeling recognized within their own cultural –linguistic community. For the parents, it appeared that they simply expected their children to be able to read in Spanish, and leveraged support from members of the church communities to assist them in the process. From the point of view of a child's overall literacy profile, this emergent biliteracy opens up new cognitive avenues, since the brain activity involved in extending bilingualism to engaging with the abstraction of text, requires faculties not otherwise awakened in a monolingual child. The tragedy is that the monolingual school they all attended were blind to their extended literacy repertoires, since it remained invisible to the English-only staff.

Filling the gap left by schools in abandoning literacy in Spanish

In the absence of institutional support in Spanish literacy by the school, parents relied on the community institutional support of their respective churches, not only as the source of the printed texts used of engagement, but for instruction and continuing guidance in interpreting the texts as part of the church community.

Children capable of reading continue to encounter vocabulary in books that may not be used around them in normal conversation, thus introducing them to both a word and a concept. Typically, with the accelerated reading demands of school curricula at the elementary grades, bilingual children develop a new domain of concepts for which they only have words in English. Functional Spanish literacy in the household, albeit with its own specialized vocabulary, nevertheless may not be congruent with the arsenal of new concepts the child is building up within the world of school. I began to explore this with some of the children and their parents, noticing the number of times a child reverted, within a single sentence, to use of a term in English, because she/he did not know the word in Spanish.

How can this be bridged? The apparent obstacle is the fact that monolingual Spanish-speaking parents may have no way to ascertain the nature of new concepts the child is encountering, (unless teachers have sent home translated material to keep parents up to speed), and the child has no language with which to communicate it to the parents, lacking the concept in Spanish words. Teachers can be forgiven for assuming that the problem is that parents lack the educational background to support sophisticated learning, because of an acute lack of awareness of the processes at work. I can attest to the fallaciousness of this assumption, based on numerous follow-up conversations with parents, who responded warmly to my interest in the value of literacy in Spanish, as well as

the interface between English and Spanish their children embodied in their literacy profiles. As a non-native speaker, I invited corrections and subtle revisions when conversing within the families. Mothers and fathers were eager to impart their keen knowledge of the subtleties of word meanings, phrases and idioms in Spanish, as well as their concern to bridge this conceptual gap for their children, as their education progressed.

Biliteracy is not just reading labels: Complex reading requirements through Bible study

As mentioned in Chapter VI, those families engaged in Spanish literacy through church practices exposed their children to text and talk around text that involved complex vocabulary and comprehension. Unlike peers who spoke but never read Spanish, these children were engaged in a parallel process of concept development in two languages. It appeared that, while the target children were mastering new concepts through vocabulary introduced in school in English, they were continuing this concept development through new vocabulary, introduced in context through bible texts, and elaborated verbally within study groups and Sunday classes. For these children this represents the cultural capital of emergent Spanish literacy, an additive dimension to their overall literacy profile, valued by their family networks and cultural communities who provided a variety of daily life experiences, expectations, and opportunities for them to develop further. By contrast, monolingual schooling viewed this biliteracy as subtractive to their English-only development, consequently denying any leveraging of the bilingual child's cultural capital in emergent Spanish literacy.

Gender roles in literacy support: The authority of the father and the 'word'

Relevant to the overall profile of home literacy support is the fact that two of the most engaged parents providing structured literacy support were fathers, since it is more typical during the primary years, for fathers to defer to their wives to take on this role. Here

I wish to address the cases of Lola and Juanita whose fathers were the dominant agents of literacy in their homes. Currently there is a burgeoning interest in the role of Hispanic fathers in the literacy development of young children (Gadsden & Ray, 2003; Ortiz, 2004) traditionally deferring to their wives to fulfill this role. It appears that the climate is slowly changing, and there are classes available to acculturate Hispanic fathers to the value of taking up such a role. Within this study it would appear that the question of basic literacy support did not occur, since the activities fathers mentored involved socializing the children to strongly held families values regarding morality and spirituality.

It is through the lens of the multilingual ecocultural framework that this dynamic of father-led literacy support became apparent. Through child interviews and informal conversations with both Juanita and Lola, clues emerged as to activities that both children highly respected because of the strict discipline required by their fathers' leadership. While Lola's father encouraged her to understand bible stories through reading then copying them in her own handwriting, Juanita's father was concerned with reading for understanding and verbally memorizing the dogma of the church's teachings.

Supporting literacy in English. If not the parents, then who?

Complementing the above findings on parent characteristics is the vital bridging role of older siblings in mentoring participating children in English and the ways of schooling. The role of siblings as language brokers and mentors in minority language families is an area in need of further study. The work of Gregory and Williams (2001) in naming the functions that older siblings perform for their younger brothers and sisters, as bridges between the cultural-linguistic ecology of home and community, and the mainstream ecology of schooling, is opening the way to further exploration in this important area. Without this element, it would be difficult to explain the high academic scores of children from Spanish-

only families, although a study of older siblings and their socialization to English and schooling would be a welcome addition.

Generalizability of a small sample

I suggest that the findings here reported represent a microcosm of Hispanic families around the border regions of Southern California, as illustrated by the variety emerging within a demographically consistent group. They were not unique to one second grade classroom. Families in the study originated in four different regions of Mexico, having completed different levels of schooling. All demonstrated support of literacy and learning, using different strategies, based on the historical development of the adults' schema with regard to the 'rules' of learning. All nine were nested within an extensive family network. Echoing Moll's and Mercado's findings, these families all had access to, and engaged in a range of funds of literacy, especially those congruent with the adults' linguistic and cultural repertoires. Selection was based only on Spanish as the home language, and the convenience of access through their enrollment in this particular classroom. The descriptive nature of this study precludes drawing conclusions from which to generalize. Thus, the only generalizable implications appear to be the potential for uncovering similar literacy assets, or funds of literacy within groups of families in other settings.

Section III

Implications for practice and research

Implications for research

The goal of this study was to explore the reality of a child's summer away from school among nine demographically similar families, to 'see what was there' with no pretense of comparison with the ecology and expectations of schooling. The importance of reversing the literacy research lens from school to household is to view these literacy

practices on their own merit, without an implicit agenda of seeking ways to acculturate family practices to school ways of working. In this study I claim that literacy is a comprehensive phenomenon, and is not limited to schooling, although it is heavily influenced by schooling across generations. While New Literacy Studies researchers have contributed enormously to righting the balance between studies of school and out of school literacies, I believe the future lies with a balanced integrated approach that acknowledges the contribution home literacy practices are already making, unacknowledged when it concerns non-English speaking, low income families. This approach would also consider the role school literacy strategies influence the ecologies of household literacy.

An integrative theory of literacy and biliteracy

Literacy practices are patterned by social institutions and power relationships, and some literacies become more dominant, visible, and influential than others. (Barton & Hamilton, 1998, p.7)

Here I return to Barton's proposals about an ecology of literacy framework. History places literacy among the elite, as a tool of power, until the rise of industrialism, accompanied by the rise of Protestantism, and access by the masses to printed text. In our democratic society access to education, and by definition, literacy is a legal requirement for everyone. The literacy implied here is literacy through schooling, in the form of schooled reading and writing practices, with no reference to the multiple literacies embedded in the daily life of cultural communities. Schooled literacy is the most visible *fund of literacy* or cultural capital and dominates conventional avenues for upward occupational mobility. Implied in Barton's proposal, however, is that there are *other (literacies)* that may not be as visible, dominant or influential within the mainstream, but that nevertheless hold currency as cultural capital within the congruence of cultural-linguistic communities where they hold value, with implications of additive influence beyond, through their children.

The findings here suggest a need for a new literacy paradigm that comprehends the child's literacy development in its totality by 'seeing what is there'. We need to expand our notion of literacy beyond the redundant dichotomy of academic vs informal literacy, and take account of the continuity of the cognitive processes involved in literacy engagement beyond the perceived barriers of multilingualism and income difference. Echoing Hull and Schultz (2002), Barton (1994), and Purcell-Gates (2004) the task now is to build on the theoretical advances over the past thirty years in developing the paradigm of literacy as a social process, and to work towards a model that can include the complementarity and overlap between contexts of learning (p.3). Dewey (1899/1998) pointed towards successful pedagogies that would emphasize the relationship between schooling and daily life. "From the standpoint of the child, the great waste in the school come from his inability to utilize the experiences he gets outside of the school in any complete and free way within the school itself; while, on the other hand, he is unable to apply in daily life what he is learning at school." (pp. 76-78).

Theorizing literacy across the ecologies of school, family and community

Given the literacy as a social process framework guiding this study, it seems essential to acknowledge the ubiquitous influence of school-like practices far beyond the school walls. Hull and Schultz (2001, 2002), as well as Purcell-Gates (2004), have begun the call for an inclusive perspective that transcends the theoretical division between formal and informal literacy. School-like practices pervaded many of the literacy activities observed during the study, either through the child's internalization of school strategies for reading, or the parent's reproduction of school strategies learned as a young person.

I inferred the literacy practices described here from instances of literacy events that I observed, and that were reported to me by more than one participant. It was clear that the

approach to literacy differed by family, based on the configuration of participants, the role of the child in determining the activity, the literacy resources or *funds of literacy* available, and the set of beliefs or schema held by the participants involved, especially the more expert others, usually, but not always, adults. While most of the literacy events observed were conducted in Spanish, all of the participating children were bilingual, and competent readers in English. This given of bilingualism, even when it was not manifested during the research data collection, carried with it the institutional influence of schooled literacy, through strategies learned explicitly in the classroom. In the case of Maritza, this was immediately apparent, and she alluded explicitly to her use of teacher-like strategies during the interview. In other cases, schooled literacy strategies entered through the initiative of the dominant 'expert other', embodying the particular instructional approach most familiar from the agent's own experiences in classrooms. For instance, those parents actively involved in structuring learning activities at home during the summer vacation, imbued the practices with the habitus of their own experiences of highly structured didactic learning experiences in middle schools in Mexico.

In this study were many examples of either child or adult, and sometimes both, incorporating school-like practices into their literacy activities. These ranged from Maritza imitating the teacher strategies of showing and describing the contents of a book, to Elena's mother using analogy and questions to elicit deeper comprehension of inferred meanings. Adult schema with regard to child literacy practices were frequently based on a strong work ethic framed in an imposed structure, combined with a didactic approach to learning reminiscent of the mother or father's own memories of schooling in Mexico. By contrast, the two children whose parents grew up partly in the USA, and who attended college, used a more relaxed approach with little or no structure, with regard to literacy activities outside

of school. In these cases it was left up to the children to engage with literacy, or not, and the dominant modality was in writing, as in the case of Lorenzo, recording daily events.

Through these observations the lines between home and school literacies become blurred.

The fact that both children and adults used aspects of school literacy interactively in real-life situations, and for specific purposes, renders obsolete the notion that literacy exists statically on the page, or nicely contained within the head as a discrete set of skills.

If school literacy cannot be contained within the walls of the classroom, no more do out-of-school literacies, exist as separate 'species', not to be allowed to contaminate the purity of school literacy. It became clear to me, as I worked through the analysis, that all the practices I observed among the nine families contributed in some way to the children's experience of literacy in school. The cultural-linguistic activities may have been invisible to the teacher, but they were always present within the child's literacy identity as a reader, writer and thinker. The reciprocal influences of school, home, and community literacy practices operate interactively for the child, although she/he may not make an explicit connection between the two, since cooking, for example, may require literacy, but does not appear to constitute literacy in the same way as reading a book does. In a few cases parents had explicitly encouraged children to apply their reading skills in practical areas of life, but most had left it up to the children to apply them on their own.

Building on existing theory

In this study I drew from multiple theoretical frameworks, based on a review of the literature, in an effort to access the complexity of overlapping influences present in an ecocultural setting. Application of these theories revealed the benefits of relying on two core analytic lenses, the ecology of literacy (Barton, 2007) accessed through an activity setting framework (Cole and Engestrom, 1993). Barton's ecology of literacy framework

points the way towards an integrated theory of literacy that includes the diversity of areas of literacy activity and separate fields of scholarship that serve them, psychology, sociology, anthropology, linguistics and history. Barton's stated aim is to "be able to say similar things when talking about literacy in relation to areas such as adults, children, history and different cultures, and when evaluating what parents, politicians and newspaper editors say about the topic." (pp.33-34). Victoria Purcell-Gates (2004) attempts to unify this approach by creating a broad definition of print literacy as a criterion to be applied in the diverse fields addressed by Barton. The notion of integrating the study of multiple literacies (Street, 1984) poses a philosophical challenge to the hegemonic view of literacy, narrowly defined by the academy, and based on schooling. However, studies of out-of-school practices, especially amongst minority populations, reveal an urgent need to re-evaluate our assumptions, and ask the question, when we study only schooled literacy, what is it that we are evaluating, and what is it that we are failing to see?

My concern in this emergent debate is the significant absence of studies that explicitly include multilingualism among children within the spectrum of ecologies of literacy. Barton's work provides us with working criteria for developing a field within which scholars with a variety of subjects can work and communicate. However, his important work in the U.K., as well as Brian Street's current work in Africa, focuses on literacy programs for adults. Purcell-Gates has initiated an ambitious multi-case approach, based on her emergent theory of print literacy, that includes both adults and children, with some attention to other languages, but not specifically to bilingual literacy. Iliana Reyes in Arizona (2008) has begun work similar to that in my study, among preschool bilingual Mexican-heritage children, while Kenner (2006) has done similar work in the U.K. with Gujarati families encouraging biliteracy through home and community.

Based on the findings in this dissertation, I propose an integrative model (Garcia Coll, 1996) that not only theorizes literacy across all settings, but that embraces community supported emergent biliteracy. Reyes and Azuara (2008), and others in the UK (Kenner, 2000) have begun to explore the dynamics of emergent biliteracy through family and community influence, outside of school, yet indirectly drawing on the resources of school learning. I propose we explore a new paradigm, that conceives of the multiple worlds of literacy a child engages in, through the prism of the child as mediator and transforming agent. In my opinion we need a new paradigm to explicitly address, not only the principles espoused by Barton, but to create a framework that integrates the multiple elements of literacy present in literacy practice across ecologies. Using an activity setting framework, this integrative ecology of literacy would seek to access literacy as practice in diverse settings, as well as identifying the multiple literacies present in every literacy event.

The child embodies the assets of all cultural communities as a bridge between the worlds of school and family cultural community that the child engages with (Figure 13). Once this is recognize we will not persist in claiming the results of reading tests as evidence solely of the work of educators, when the phenomenon of the child's literacy development relies as much on her cultural-linguistic funds of literacy (Haneda, 2006) outside school as within.

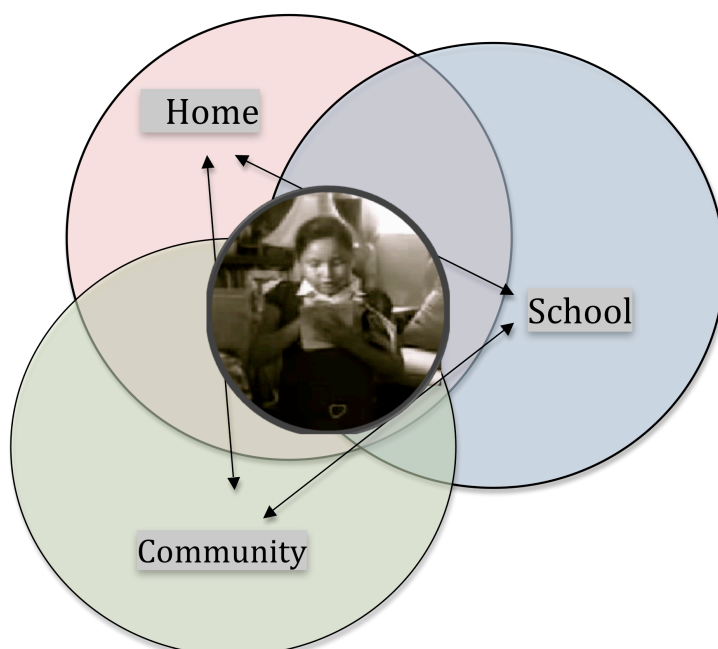


Figure 13. Integrative model of literacy

While we can call the child's position a 'third space' (Gutierrez et al, 1999) I prefer the concept 'syncretic literacy' (Duranti & Ochs, 1996) with its evocation of continual transformation into something entirely new. Enormous re-education would be required, similar to Moll's (2005) work with teachers in Arizona, and Mercado's (2005) work with teachers in New York City, eliciting the funds of knowledge in households, through ethnography. The issue of literacy research is fraught with tensions related to cultural, social, linguistic, ethnic and class dimensions. Until now, the focus on school literacy as the default notion for literacy itself has provided an apparently neutral zone, standardized by common assumptions and measurements, with no explicit attention given to the specific social, linguistic, and cultural membership it embodies. An integrative ecology of literacy would reveal that school literacy can only exist because of interwoven support that is embedded in the daily lives of children from diverse social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The popular media blames parents for school failure, but the academy offers us little to counter these claims, aside from evaluations based on the criteria of school

literacy. Rapid changes in the zone of popular culture reveal a burgeoning of new literacies based on technology, that require school personnel to address, if the schools are not going to be *left behind*. Advocacy is also needed for the multiple literacies, including multilingual literacies, so that schools can embrace the real demographic change that is changing the face of public schools in America.

Recommendations for educational practice

The findings of this research have potential implications for the manner in which teachers in urban, culturally diverse settings view and build upon the literacy resources Mexican-heritage students bring to the classroom.

Strategies for current teachers and administrators

Urban public schools serving linguistic minority populations face several challenges in adequately serving children from Spanish-speaking homes. Schools are evaluated under NCLB, according to standardized test results in English only for all students who have lived in the USA for twelve months or more, regardless of their level of literacy and content knowledge in another language, and disregarding the actual time required to achieve academic proficiency in a second language. Under ideal circumstances classroom education is supported by family activities that encourage literacy, and this is communicated between home and school through conversations, meetings, and school events attended by parents and teachers. Patterns of direct school involvement by immigrant families show sparse attendance and direct involvement where the language difference inhibits easy communication, and economic constraints restrict time available for extra events. This distancing of families from school activities through linguistic and socioeconomic exacerbates the school's institutional isolation from the lives and sociocultural realities of the children they serve. It requires enormous efforts on the part of all school staff to bridge

this isolation by creating situations/ conditions that build trust among linguistic minority families and encourage alternative forms of participation, or opportunities to share their existing practices as valid educational resources and supports. Teachers can reach out to individual parents, but this will be of limited effect without the active support of school leadership.

Living in parallel worlds

The families in this study manifested support of their children's literacy in practices that were completely separate from school activities. Like Mexican-heritage families across California, the families showed great respect for their children's teachers, reliably attended parent-teacher conferences, even when there was no translator available, and supported their children completing all assignments sent home from school. But, low income and occupational status as well as language difference constrained their attendance at other school events, or serving as volunteers in the classroom. Teachers, unaware of important dimensions supporting literacy in the child's life, within extended family and community, primarily due to language difference, expressed disappointment at the perceived lack of support through non-attendance by parents in the child's education, and a breakdown in communication. Thus, the actual cultural capital of the bilingual child's literacy remains unrecognized and unharnessed.

Harnessing community resources: Learning from church practices

The findings from this study of substantial literacy support outside of school provided through bible study groups in Spanish suggest the need for schools to explore these vital *funds of literacy* to gain a greater understanding of the strategies, task demands, and participant structure employed by families within the community. During the study I visited the three different denominational church services or meetings attended by

participating families. In conversation with church leaders after each service I recognized the potential for other teachers, like myself, gaining insights into how our students are applying literacy in purposeful ways outside of school. I would recommend inviting some of these church education leaders to meet with teachers and administrators to demonstrate their approaches and enter into a constructive dialogue over mutual support of minority children. I speak here only of Hispanic, Spanish-speaking congregations, but the same can be applied to low SES African American families and their church fellowships, as well as immigrants from Africa working with refugee organizations, as well as Moslem organizations teaching children outside of school. Church-based practices formed the core of literacy engagement in four of the nine families in this study. The range of church denominations represented in the data matches the shift within the Mexican-heritage community away from primary allegiance to the catholic church. Currently approximately 25% of the Mexican immigrant population who attend church, are active members in alternative denominations. Research investigating the reasons for this have found a degree of alienation from large established denominations, that would also include the major protestant churches. Rejecting the impersonal, hierarchical approach of the catholic church, these families have sought out smaller, more participatory contexts where they feel recognized, where they can express themselves through worship and discussion, and which emphasize study and discussion of biblical texts. It would appear that this renewal of Luther's reformation tenets thus have direct influence on the literacy development of the children of church-going families who insist on regular study.

Recommendations for teacher training programs courses

Current teacher education programs are seeking to adapt their preparation of new generations of teachers to the demographic diversity of today's public school classrooms,

not only in California, Texas and Arizona, but in other states where there has been a flood of immigration from Mexico and Central America. The two major obstacles to success in these endeavors are the scarcity of Spanish-speaking teacher candidates, as well as the statistical dominance of 70% white teachers across the country. Currently a Hispanic student will rarely be in a classroom with a teacher who can speak easily with the student's family, and who can demonstrate informed appreciation for the child's sociocultural background. I would suggest, however, that this is not entirely a lost cause. Efforts are beginning to be made across the country to prepare teacher candidates to meet their students in a more culturally informed manner. In teacher education centers where the voice of minority students has begun to be heard, such as the University of Oregon in Eugene, a deliberate linkage is being established with community groups that support linguistic minorities in areas beyond education. Luis Moll's work at the University of Arizona is an example of engaging practicing teachers as ethnographers to uncover the *funds of knowledge* available among the most 'disadvantaged' families.

These cases have one thing in common: that teachers and future teachers move beyond the bounded ecocultural niche of schooling, and make meaning by direct experience of their students' family and neighborhood cultural-linguistic reality. This is confirmed by participant descriptions evaluating Moll's work in Arizona, and Carmen Mercado's similar work in New York. Teachers and teacher-candidates in both studies recorded dramatic changes in their perceptions of the capacities of Spanish-speaking, low SES families to enrich and support their children's education. The present study, *Making the Margins Visible*, confirms Moll's and Mercado's findings. I came to a new level of awareness and appreciation for the ardent efforts by mothers, fathers, older sisters and brothers, grandparents and aunts, to support each child in their learning, in spite of numerous

conversations, in Spanish, with members of the nine families during the school year prior to gathering the data,

On the basis of this, I would propose a framework for teacher education institutes to incorporate service learning within the community, whether in the form of family ethnography, as in Tucson, engagement with migrant organizations, as in Eugene, or a community based Fifth Dimension/Clase Mágica tutoring class. As in the case of Moll's work, participants required support in reflecting on their experiences in the field, and making sense of them as their deficit perspectives came to be eroded.

Recommendations for policy: No more double standards. Valuing biliteracy across social class.

The persistence of Spanish literacy outside of schooling adds a dimension to the whole question of bilingualism. The resilience of Spanish in Southern California cities relies on cycles of new immigration for its survival, since most families begin to lose their Spanish by the second or third generation. Without a theory of literacy that includes out of school biliteracy practices within its scope, awareness of these activities will continue to remain at the margin, invisible, caught between related fields of study that do not allow for their inclusion. Middle class communities are actively embracing dual immersion Spanish programs, with an eye to increased professional opportunities for their children, yet bilingualism among Mexican heritage students is seen as an albatross around their necks. We need to harness the shift in research perspectives that has already begun in the work on Hispanic cultural capital (Osterling, 2001) and funds of knowledge, to find ways to influence policy. As teachers and researchers we need to find a theoretical niche for identifying practices that persist within cultural-linguistic communities in spite of current monolingual policy, so that we can leverage their cognitive benefits within the education system. The

obstacles are daunting. How do we dismantle the prejudices around older forms of bilingual education and find valid ways to foster biliteracy where it has begun to take root?

Dangers of complacency among policy makers

The danger of interpreting these findings as supportive of English-only instruction needs to be addressed, since the fact is, the children in this study were high achieving in a monolingual system. In this descriptive study there can be no causal conclusions, thus I make no pretense that the fact that children were engaging in biliteracy influenced their academic outcomes. However, the fact that literacy was supported in the home, literacy that took place actively in Spanish stands as an important factor in the overall literacy profile.

Problems and complications

Early academic success can usually be considered an indicator of long-term achievement but in the case of Hispanic students this trajectory may be complicated as the children transition to the challenges of middle and high school. These are demands that parents with limited education would be unable to actively support, but the network of community funds of literacy might well address. Will the early training of the Lopez, Zamora and Peña families to adhere to a structured work ethic persist through the tumultuous changes of adolescence. Will the familistic bonds, reinforced through community practices requiring Spanish literacy, prevail against the competing distractions of popular culture to sustain respect for the value of membership in the network of family culture? It remains to be seen how these children will fare.

Conclusion

This dissertation contributes to the accumulating knowledge on the relevance of out-of-school bilingual activities among Mexican-heritage families to the overall literacy development of young Spanish-speaking English learners in monolingual classrooms, and applications in research, educational practice, and policy.

The findings from this study begin to uncover the complexity of supportive literacy practices among Hispanic families otherwise ignored both by educators and policymakers. Knowing that Spanish-speaking families actively, and successfully, support cognitive activities that require what educators call 'higher order thinking skills', comprehension and advanced vocabulary, we cannot disregard this dimension of a child's literacy profile. Too long we have relied on class-based assumptions that there is one way to support children's reading and thinking, and that is in English through bedtime stories and reading for pleasure. Now we need to expand our conceptual horizons to embrace other paths that may lie beyond our own cultural repertoires. As an English-speaking, middle class educated adult I experienced myself as the learner in the several cultural linguistic communities I engaged in during the data collection. My ability to speak Spanish and my willingness to set aside all preconceptions, to be open to see the phenomena around me, opened doors to 'seeing' learning practices embedded in the daily routines of extremely low-income, monolingual Spanish family groups.

I returned to my classroom in September fully aware of what my Hispanic students had been engaged in for the long summer, with deep respect for the efforts their families devoted to supporting them, against all the odds of multiple jobs, juggling child-care, limited resources. How could I as educator take full credit for these children's academic performance when my work is only the tip of the iceberg? Without the structured support provided by Sr. Zamora, Sr. Pacheco, and Sra. Lopez, would their children have scored so high on the CST tests? Without the daily tutoring for Joaquin, would he have succeeded?

Epilogue

At the core of this study is the way children made meaning using text - semiosis (Heath) during their summertime away from school. I end with a few snapshots to illustrate

the diversity of their engagement with print:

Lorenzo made meaning of his complex summer arrangements by constantly writing things down.

Soledad organized her siblings and playmates by making signs for a project, such as the lemonade stand.

Elena made sense of the bible story by using a highlighter to remind her of sections she was interested in.

Carlos made sense of the need to practice reading by using it as a tool to calm his fussy baby sister. This made him feel less of a failure in his early reading.

Sabrina made meaning by communicating with her mother through her daily notes, and through attempting to understand the adult world by reading newspapers and magazines and asking for help with words and concepts.

Joaquin made meaning by reading the glossy catalog of boxing supplies that represented his pride in his daily commitment to the sport.

Lorenzo made meaning by writing messages to his distal cousin via his computer fantasy game.

Maritza made meaning by writing words to songs she likes, and reading colorful cookbooks that inspired her to try cooking like her grandma.

Lola made meaning by trying to grasp the letters that make up familiar Spanish words in the formal language of the bible, and copying them down for herself.

...for Maritza the act of reading in the rocking chair reminded her of being

close to her mother, echoing the middle class practice of reading to young children.

In all of these families there was always someone around, someone to be close to, like Maritza, with her aunt, 'she is like my step mom, I love her', she spent so much time around her.

Questions to ponder

Do we realize the significance of the change from bilingual to monolingual education for Hispanic children?

What is the impact for the Mexican-heritage child of the complete separation linguistically between home and school?

This study is dedicated to opening the door on these important questions.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE

Adult Background Questionnaire

1. Where did you grow up?

(Name of place) _____

Was it: a small town___ in the countryside___ a big city ___

2. Where did you go to school? _____

How many years did you attend?_____

3. Which languages do you normally speak? (check all that apply)

I speak with:	In Spanish, English, or Both (check all that apply)		
	✓	✓	✓
My husband/wife in:	Spanish ☐	English ☐	Both ☐
My children in:	Spanish	English	Both
My mother/father in:	Spanish	English	Both
My sisters/brothers in:	Spanish	English	Both
My other relatives in:	Spanish	English	Both
My friends in:	Spanish	English	Both
My co-workers in:	Spanish	English	Both
My boss(es) in:	Spanish	English	Both
People at the store in:	Spanish	English	Both
People in the neighborhood in:	Spanish	English	Both
People at church in:	Spanish	English	Both
People at my child's school in:	Spanish	English	Both
Other people in:	Spanish	English	Both

4. Can you please tell me about your household?

Who lives in household: relation to child? <i>Example.:Maria M.: Mother</i>	Age Child/Teen/Adult	Working?	What work do they do?
	Child/Teen/Adult	Yes/No	
	Child/Teen/Adult	Yes/No	
	Child/Teen/Adult	Yes/No	
	Child/Teen/Adult	Yes/No	

Once again, thank you for completing this questionnaire.

APPENDIX TWO
Child Interview Question Guide

Thank you for meeting with me today.

I am interested in learning about the everyday activities that you do at home and what languages you use when you are doing them. It will help me if you answer these questions.

I. I CHILD ACTIVITIES

1. Yesterday, what did you do in the morning? /afternoon/evening?

a. Can you tell me more about...

- i. What were you doing just before...?
- ii. Who was there? What were they doing?
- iii. Where were you?
- iv. What happened next?

[Instructions to Interviewer: Read prompt to participant. Instruct in how to use Sorting Board (see below); Do practice item, for example "How often do you play games? Every day, sometimes, never?" Give cards to child participant. Encourage child to talk as she/he makes choices with cards.]

4. These picture cards show things that children sometimes do at home. Can you help me sort them into piles. Do you do any of these things when you are at home from school? Can you show me how often you do them? [use picture cards and sorting process into four piles]

	Activities	EVERY DAY	SOMETIMES	NEVER	LANGUAGE
1.	Make projects or cook things				
2.	Play games outside				
3.	Read books				
4	Help my parents				
5	Write things down				
6	Find things using reading				
7	Draw pictures				
8	Help with brothers or sisters				
9	Watch T.V				
10	Go to the library				

11	Ride a bike				
12	Read magazines				
13	Go to church/Sunday school				
14	Play on the computer				
15	Read the Bible				
16	Read labels on food items				
17	Play with brothers or sisters				
18	Go to the movies				
19	Talk with brother or sister				
20	Visit relatives				
21	Talk with mom or dad				
22	Have stories read to you				
23	Go to the beach				
24	Read to someone				
25	Go to the zoo				
26	Do errands at the store				
27	Write stories				

[Instructions to interviewer: Using the 'Every day' and 'Every week' piles, identify selected literacy activities and follow up with the prompts below]

2. You mentioned you like to do x (see responses). Who do you do this with? Can you talk to me some more about doing x?*[Repeat #2 several times for literacy-related activities selected as every day, or every week]*
3. Who reads books with you at home? (Check all that apply)
Mother____Father____Sister____Brother____Grandma/pa____Aunt____
Uncle____Cousin____Neighbor____Other____
4. Tell me more about when _____reads books with you. *[who is reading? Who selects the book? What kinds of books preferred? If you are reading, how do they help you read?]*
5. Which languages do you speak usually at home? With whom?_____
Which language(s) do you speak out in the neighborhood?

At home I speak: Spanish/English/Both With mom_____With dad_____ With siblings_____With cousins_____ With grandma/pa____With aunt/uncle_____ With friends/children__ neighbors/adults	In the neighborhood I speak Spanish/English/Both With _____At the store____ With_____With_____
---	---

6. *[Instructions to interviewer: Use cards in same way as for #1 with Sorting Board.]*
 Here are some more cards. Can you help me sort them? They show some way(s) you might see people use reading and writing around you in your everyday life?

Activities	Every day	Sometimes	Never	Language
Reading to you				
Reading books or magazines				
Filling out forms/ Paying bills				
Writing lists				
Reading instructions				
Writing letters or cards				
Reading the newspaper				
Having you read to them				
Helping you with homework				
Reading grown-up books				
Writing with you				
Reading the TV guide				
Other_____				

7. *[For most frequent activities follow up with prompt].* You mentioned you like to do x (see responses). Can you talk to me some more about doing x? *[Repeat for most frequent activities]*
8. Thank you for helping me understand what kinds of things you do during the summer. Is there anything else I might have forgotten?

APPENDIX THREE
Family member Adult Interview Response Form

Thank you for meeting with me today.

I am interested in learning about the everyday activities that parents and children do at home and what languages are used during these activities. It will help me if you answer these questions.

I. CHILD ACTIVITIES

First could you describe a your child's activities on a typical day.

1. Yesterday, what did she/he did in the morning?/afternoon?/evening?
2. *[Instructions to Interviewer: Read prompt to participant. Instruct in how to use Sorting Board (see below); Do practice item, for example "How often does TC play games? Every day, sometimes, never?". Encourage participant to talk as she/he makes choices with cards.]*

These cards show things that children sometimes do at home. Can you sort them into piles to show me if your child does any of these things at home. How often does she/he do them?

Activities	EVERY DAY	SOMETIMES	NEVER	LANGUAGE
Make things				
Play games				
Read books				
Do chores				
Write things down				
Find things using reading				
Draw pictures				
Help with siblings				
Watching T.V				
Go to the library				
Ride a bike				
Read magazines				
Go to church/Sunday school				
Play on the computer				
Playing outside games				

Read labels on food items				
Play with siblings				
Go to the movies				
Visit relatives				
Talk with mom or dad				
Have stories read to you				
Go to the beach				
Read to someone				
Go to the zoo				
Do errands at the store				
Write stories				

Instructions to interviewer: Using the 'Every day' and 'Every week' piles, identify selected literacy activities and follow up with the prompts below for the next series of questions]

2. You mentioned TC likes to x (see above responses). Can you talk to me some more about this?

- a. Who is usually there? How are they/you involved?
(Directive/Supervisory/Collaborative/Peripheral)
- b. Who initiates the activity?
- c. What is the purpose? Intentional or Routine/functional literacy?
- d. How long does it usually last?

[Repeat several times with different activities from 'Every day' or 'Every week' list relating to literacy

3. *[if no reading is mentioned]* Sometimes children look at books or magazines during the vacation. Can you tell me about anything like this that TC likes to do? *[Use same prompts as above for Q. #2]*

When was the last time (child) did x. Can you tell me about it?

4. *[if no writing is mentioned]* Sometimes children do things with pencil and paper. Can you tell me about anything like this that TC likes to do? Use same prompts as above 10-12.

When was the last time TC did x. Can you tell me about it?

5. Further literacy Question prompts (choose from list those not covered so far)

Does TC look at books, magazines, newspapers (print materials) at home? Does TC like books? What kinds of books are the favorites? When does he like to look at/read

books? Alone or with someone? Who?

Does he like to be read to? By whom? When?

Does he like to read aloud to others? Who? When?

Where do the books that he reads come from?

Can you tell us how you, /other person went about teaching/showing TC how to learn to read?

Can you think of an example or instance when he was learning to read?

Who does he see reading at home?

II. PARENT EXPERIENCES IN SCHOOL

6. Parents often say how different their own elementary school experiences were from their children's. **I would like to hear about what elementary school was like for you.**

Where did you go to school? (location, country, rural/urban)

What was the school like? What did you most enjoy about school? What did you most dislike about school? Was there a teacher in particular that you remember who made an impression on you? (good or bad) How would you say that your experiences in elementary school were different from your child's experiences now? What things were similar (if any)?

7. Have you taken any classes as an adult? OR have you thought about taking any classes or going back to school?

III. ADULT LITERACY ACTIVITIES

1. FREQUENCY (SORTING) TASK (adapted From EcoCultural Family Interview/Weisner)

Next I am going to ask you about how often you have done certain kinds of activities at home in the last two months. Some of these activities are about what *you* do, and some are about what you do *with your child*. Tell me if you have done them daily, weekly, sometimes or never. Here is the Sorting Board card to remind you. How often do you:

D S N	EAT DINNER AT HOME WITH THE FAMILY	
D S N	GO TO THE LIBRARY WITH CHILD	
D S N	HAVE YOUR CHILD DO CHORES	
D S N	READ FOR PLEASURE (i.e. magazines, newspaper, books)	In English Spanish
D S N	READ WITH OR TO YOUR CHILD	In English Spanish
D S N	TAKE CLASSES (i.e. ESL, parenting, school)	In English Spanish
D S N	WRITE FOR YOURSELF (letters, email, journal, etc.)	In English Spanish
D S N	WATCH TV WITH YOUR CHILD	In English Spanish
D S N	TELL TALES OR STORIES TO YOUR CHILD	In English Spanish
D S N	USE WORKBOOKS, FLASHCARDS, OR SIMILAR MATERIALS WITH YOUR CHILD?	In English Spanish
D S N	WRITE LETTERS, POSTCARDS IN YOUR CHILD'S PRESENCE?	In English Spanish
D S N	PLAY BOARD GAMES OR CARDS IN YOUR CHILD'S PRESENCE?	In English Spanish
D S N	READ LABELS TO YOUR CHILD SUCH AS THE LABELS ON FOOD PACKAGES OR CLOTHES?	In English Spanish
D S N	EXPLAIN THE MEANING OF WORDS TO YOUR CHILD?	In English Spanish

IV. SUPPORTING CHILD'S LEARNING

3. Parents do many different things to support their child's learning in and out of school. What are some of the things that you do to support your child's learning? (Give examples. Describe the last time you did this?) Follow-up questions: How do you think this helps support your child?
4. What is TC (child's name) really good at? (give examples) Is there anything that you would like to see your child do better at? If so, what? Why? How are you helping your child do better?

V. PARENT CHARACTERISTICS: OPINIONS ABOUT LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Here is a list of opinions about children. As I read each opinion on the list can you indicate whether you Agree, Probably Agree, but probably Disagree, or Disagree with each opinion .				
	Agree	Probably Agree	Probably Disagree	Disagree
It is important for parents to teach their children at home and not rely entirely on the schools.				
It is important to talk to children about what they read				
Children need help if they are going to succeed in school				
Once a child learns to read parents don't need to read to them any more				
Children should learn mostly by asking questions				
Children can learn on their own by looking at signs and labels around them				
Children should not be taught to read before they go to kindergarten				
Children should learn mostly by observing				
Children learn the names of common objects without being taught				
The quality of my child's life will not depend on how she does in school				

It is the parents' responsibility to help their children do well in school'				
Four-year college education would help my child have a better adult life.				
It is important for children to speak English when they go to school				
When children watch too much TV, it's their parents' fault.				
It is important to take children to places like libraries, museums', zoos.				
Chlldren should be taught that life is not going to be easy.				

5. What level of schooling do you hope your child will complete? (NOTE: You might need to explain what the levels of school are. Elem, middle, high school, college)

6. And what level do you expect your child actually will complete?

What are you doing to help your child complete this level of schooling?

17. To do well-in school children need to_____ (complete this phrase)

18. If your sister, cousin or best friend came to live in San Diego for the first time and had children here, what advice would you give her on how to raise them and help them with school in America? What advice would you give her so that she could acclimate?

VI. USES OF READING AND WRITING

I am interested in how people use reading and writing outside of school.

7. Can you think of any ways TC sees people writing or reading around them when they are not at school? For example, reading the newspaper, using the internet, writing letters, writing lists, reading signs, or other ways?

8. Is there anything else you can tell me about TC's activities during the summer?

Thank you very much for spending this time in helping with my research.

APPENDIX FOUR

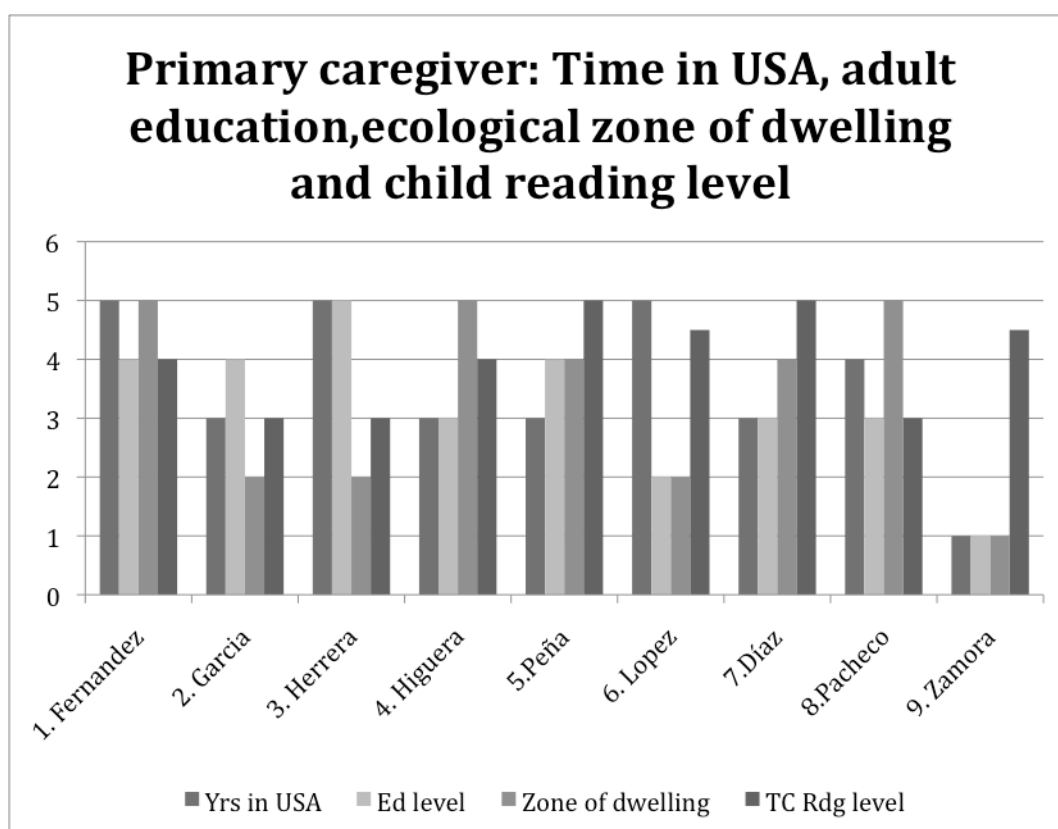


Figure 13. *Conditions of immigration: Primary caregiver education and years in USA, compared with ecological zone of dwelling, and child's reading level.*

Legend for Figure 13

Years in the USA	1:1-5yrs.	2: 5-10yrs.	3:10-15yrs.	4:15-20yrs.	5:20+yrs.
Education level	1: >6 yrs.	2:Ele-mentary	3: Junior High	4: High school grad.	5:College
Zone of dwelling*	1:Zone D	2: Zone C		4: Zone B	5: Zone A
Child reading level**	1: Far Below Basic	2. Below Basic	3. Basic	4. Proficient	5. Advanced

*See Map of Zones, Chapter Five

** California Standards Test, Second Grade, English Language Arts, 2008

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