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AN INVESTIGATION OF PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S BELIEFS OF EARLY LITERACY ACQUISITION FROM A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Althea Duren

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To: Dean Linda Blanton
College of Education

This dissertation, written by Althea Duren, and entitled An Investigation of Parents' and Children's Beliefs of Early Literacy Acquisition from a Cross-Cultural Perspective, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

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Date of Defense: December 9, 2005

The dissertation of Althea Duren is approved.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my brother, Lehman Beneby, whose funny antics would always bring a smile to my face, and Dr. Patricia Del Valle, whose smile and goodwill I will always remember.

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"Without counsel**,** purposes are disappointed: but, in the multitude of counselors they are established." Proverbs 15:22 (KJV)

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

AN INVESTIGATION OF PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S BELIEFS

OF EARLY LITERACY ACQUISITION

FROM A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

by

Althea Duren

Florida International University, 2006

Miami, Florida

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It has been reported that the cultural-historical experiences of ethnic group members can play a role in the literacy beliefs of those members. Socioeconomic conditions can also influence the belief system of the groups' constituents. This study investigated parents' and children's beliefs pertaining to early literacy acquisition as related to the ethnicity and socioeconomic status (SES) of the participants. The objectives were to determine (a) the differential patterns regarding emergent literacy and traditional skills approaches as they interact with ethnicity and SES and (b) the correspondence between parents and children's beliefs about literacy acquisition.

The study was conducted with 152 parents (38 low-income Hispanic, 38 middle-income Hispanic, 38 low-income African-American, and 38 middle-income African-American) and 36 of their 3-, 4-, or 5-year-old children (18 male and 18 female).

The parents were asked to check those items with which they agreed on a survey that consisted of an equal number of items from the traditional skills-based and emergent literacy orientations. These responses were used to determine the differences and

interaction by ethnicity and SES. The children responded to open-ended questions related to the instruction of reading and writing skills. The parents' responses and children's answers were compared to ascertain the matching parent-child dyads by ethnicity and SES.

An item analysis was conducted to strengthen the internal reliability consistency coefficient of the traditional skills-based and emergent literacy scales as measured by the Cronbach Alpha.

A two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed a significant difference in traditional skill-based beliefs for the low-income African-American and Hispanic parents. There were no significant findings for the parents' traditional skill-based or emergent literacy beliefs based on ethnicity, for the interaction between ethnicity and SES, or for the relationship between parents' and children's literacy beliefs by ethnicity and SES.

It can be concluded that low-income African-American and Hispanic parents believe in the traditional skills approach, indicating that these parents find it necessary for children to have sufficient school readiness skills prior to learning to read or write. In addition, the parent and child dyads had a strong tendency toward emergent literacy beliefs.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The family environment is an essential locus of literacy beliefs (Purcell-Gates, 2000). Similar to larger cultural systems, families have unique perspectives that govern behavior and communication. Individuals are best understood through assessing the interactions within the family or within the cultural group (Corey, 1996). To focus on the personal dynamics of an individual without considering interpersonal dynamics can yield an inaccurate picture.

More specifically, children enter this world as part of preexisting systems; the family as the most common, central one, and the child's culture as the most pluralistic. Within this cultural capital, children form their early reading and writing concepts, behaviors, and attitudes. Based on cultural-historical theory, children's cognitive development is linked to the socially meaningful activity of their environment (Vygotsky, 1978). When applying this theory to literacy acquisition, it is reasonable to assume that parents and their children will have similar beliefs. Studies have indicated that parents and children's beliefs can correspond to either the emergent literacy model which reflects learning that is developmental, holistic, and informal, or the traditional skills model which relates to learning that has a reading readiness and subskills basis (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). This study explores these beliefs from a cultural-historical perspective, a concept which takes into account the social and economic demands of the various group members (Moll, 1991).

The variations of literacy learning within cultural groups (Anderson, 1994) have often caused conflict between the home and the classroom. If the parent is more

traditional in his or her belief system for early literacy acquisition and the classroom teacher is holistic or emergent in practice, dissension may occur between the parent and the teacher. On the other hand, the parent with a developmental focus may find the educator whose pedagogical concentration is reading readiness at odds with the practices of his or her household. It has been suggested that it is appropriate to encourage parental involvement that is cognizant of the parents' existing beliefs about how children learn to read and write rather than try to change their views (Delpit, 1995; Edwards, 1994; Neuman & Celano, 1995). Parents who perceive a mismatch between the goals for their children and the goals of the school lose trust in the possibility that early schooling will make a difference (Holloway, Fuller, Rambaud, & Eggers-Pierola, 1997). Most importantly, the child that is caught in this web is at a disadvantage. He or she may not have the literacy background as expected by the holistic-minded teacher or may be unmotivated by the subskills-based format of the traditional teacher. When the parent and teacher is made aware of each other's beliefs, a more informed dialogue can take place that can lead to the development of curriculum with a defined set of perspectives. The child is the one to benefit the most from this balanced approach to home and pedagogical perceptions (Holloway, Fuller, Rambaud, & Eggers-Pierola, 1997).

In recent times, attention has been given to how teachers' beliefs, whether traditional or emergent, have affected their approach to teaching literacy (Baumann, Hoffman, Moon, & Duffy-Hester, 1998; Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, & Hernandez, 1991; Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, Thomasson, Mosley, & Fleege, 1993; DeFord, 1985; Delpit, 1995; Delpit & Dowdy, 2003; McMahon, Richmond, & Reeves-Kazelskis, 1998; Reutzel & Sabey, 1996; Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991). On the other hand,

research related to parents' beliefs of literacy acquisition has not been widely explored. Several studies such as Anderson (1993) and Fitzgerald, Spiegel, and Cunningham (1991) have investigated the correlations of parent-child beliefs related to literacy learning. However, a less frequented topic is that of parent-child dyads related to literacy learning that includes socioeconomic status (SES) and ethnicity as part of the design (Anderson, 1994, 1995a). The purpose of this study is to examine parents' and their children's beliefs of early literacy acquisition related to the factors of SES and ethnicity and the correlations of parent-child beliefs related to these factors. In addition, the ethnicity factor makes this study more representative of the United States population as opposed to other groups used in similar studies (Anderson, 1994, 1995a).

A modified version of Anderson's (1994) Parents' Perceptions of Literacy Learning Interview Schedule (PPLLIS-A) was administered to parents of low and middle SES and from two ethnic groups (Hispanic and African-American), yielding results reflective of a diversified population. Their children were asked to respond to the Children's Concepts of Reading and Writing Survey (see Appendix D) based on Anderson's (1993) instrument entitled Children's Concepts of Reading and Writing (see Appendix E).

Problem Statement

The problem investigated in this study is two-fold: (a) the correspondence between parents' and children's beliefs about literacy acquisition, and (b) the differential patterns regarding emergent literacy and traditional skills approaches as they interact with ethnicity and SES.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed:

1. Is there a difference in the parents' mean PPLLIS (Parents' Perceptions of Literacy Learning Interview Survey) scores based on low and middle SES?

2. Is there a difference in the parents' mean PPLLIS scores based on their ethnic groups of Hispanic and African-American?

3. Is there an interaction between the parents' ethnicity and their SES in determining their PPLLIS scores?

4. Is there a relationship between the literacy beliefs of the parent and child based on SES (low and middle)?

5. Is there a relationship between the literacy beliefs of the parent and child based on ethnicity (African-American and Hispanic)?

Assumptions of the Study

Based on this study, there is an assumption that parents will have beliefs in early literacy acquisition and these beliefs transfer to their children (Dodge and Heroman, 1999; Handel & Goldsmith, 1994). It is also assumed that there are two polar opposites in these beliefs, traditional skills-based and emergent literacy (Delgado-Gaitan, 1987; Holloway, Rambaud, Fuller, and Eggers-Pierola, 1995; Linder, 1997; Neuman, Hagedorn, Celano, and Daly, 1995; Taylor and Gaines, 1988). In addition, it is believed that literacy as used in this text in its strictest sense is the basic ability to read and write.

Limitations of the Study

Although the surveys were distributed to the parents in their native language (i.e., English and Spanish), the accuracy of their statements were based on their ability to read

and understand the statements presented. Parents were encouraged to ask for clarification if the statements were not understood to decrease erroneous responses.

It is also virtually impossible to neatly separate the factors that contribute to the literacy development of the child. As developmental psychologists point out, children are active, constructive thinkers who form ideas about the world based on the interactions the child encounters on a regular basis (Parke, Ornstein, Rieser, & Zahn-Waxler, 1994). From these experiences, children learn about their own and their parents' traits (Hart & Risley, 1995). This intergenerational transfer is tested as the child is asked to answer questions of his or her beliefs about early literacy acquisition.

Another limitation of this study is the use of the term *ethnicity* in its broadest sense. The different racial categories of African-Americans, Hispanics, and Whites, can trace their roots to several different countries and can be placed in many subgroups. For example, there are Hispanics from Puerto Rico, Central America, South America, and Cuba living within the United States (Ramirez, 2000; U. S. Census Bureau, 1996). Specific demographic data of this type was not collected. As a result, a cautionary stance is taken when discussing the application of this study to the general population or to specific ethnic subgroups.

Definition of Terms

The key terms used throughout the study are briefly defined here. An expanded definition of each term is presented within the study.

Accommodation. The change in existing structures to adapt to new knowledge (Piaget, 1952).

Assimilation. The association of new information with existing schema (previous background knowledge and prior experience) (Piaget, 1952).

Classical Conditioning. The process of modifying behavior by pairing an unconditioned response with conditioned stimuli, producing an involuntary, automatic response (Pavlov, 1927).

Cultural Dissonance. A sense of discomfort, discord or disharmony arising from cultural differences or inconsistencies which are unexpected or unexplained and therefore difficult for individuals to negotiate.

Discriminative stimulus. A stimulus that precedes a behavior (Skinner, 1974).

Emergent Literacy. The behaviors used by young children to imitate reading and writing activities; these behaviors occur concurrently rather than sequentially (Clay, 1966; Teale & Sulzby, 1986).

Ethnic groups. A group of people who share certain background characteristics such as common ancestors, geographical origin, language, culture, and religion (Office for National Statistics, 2003).

Family literacy. The many ways parents, children and extended family members use literacy skills to accomplish every day tasks in the home and community (International Reading Association, 1994).

Intergenerational learning. Ways in which parents and other family members contribute to the child's development (Gadsden, 1995).

Literacy. An individual's ability to read, write, speak in English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society (Employment and Training Administration, 1988).

Low Income. Meeting poverty status based on the Federal Poverty Guidelines used to determine financial eligibility for federal programs (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2004).

Maturationist. Believes development is linear and that certain levels of maturity must be achieved before a child is ready for school (Marshall, 2003).

Mediator. The more knowledgeable other. (Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Middle Income. Above the poverty status as determined by the Federal Poverty Guidelines (United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2004).

Object-regulated. Controlled by the object (Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Operant conditioning. A method for modifying behavior based on consequences (Skinner, 1974).

Other-regulated. Under another person's control (Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Race. The socially constructed assignment of individuals based on physical characteristics (Helms & Talleyrand, 1997).

Reinforcer. The stimulus that is applied or removed that increases the likelihood the desired behavior will occur again (Skinner, 1974).

Self-regulated. Under the individual's control (Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Sociocultural events. Activities and social interactions with others (Wells, 2000).

Sociocultural theory. The study of how the developing individual acquires advanced forms of thinking from his culture through social interactions with others (Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Socioeconomic status. An individual or group's position in society based on occupation, education, income, wealth, or place of residence (Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil, 2002).

Traditional Skills (Reading Readiness). The acquisition of reading and writing skills based on the identification and acquisition of print knowledge in a hierarchal arrangement (Bus, Both-de Vries, de Jong, Sulzby, de Jong, & de Jong, 2001; Sensenbaugh, 1996).

Summary

The acquisition of early literacy behaviors in the foundational years of preschool is crucial to subsequent achievement differences in the formative years of the child (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994; Smith, 1997). If the home environment and the school environment are incongruent, the child is the one who is most likely to suffer (Au, 2002; Delpit, 1995). This study considers the correlation and connection of familial and cultural beliefs with the acquisition of early literacy. It will benefit educators by providing insights into the traditional or emergent belief structures of parents which should be taken into account when planning instruction and policy. It will benefit parents by making them aware of the way other parents of like and unlike ethnicity and socioeconomic makeup perceive literacy acquisition. This information can help bridge the gap between school and home related to the choice of, and use of, reading and writing activities used in the classrooms. The child will reap the benefits of less dissonance between what he or she determines is appropriate literacy acquisition based on the belief structure of the parent and teacher.

Organization of the Remaining Chapters

Chapter II presents the theoretical framework from a sociocultural perspective and describes the theories of literacy acquisition relevant to this study. The review of literature incorporates historical trends in family reading from ancient to modern-day times, examines the factors affecting literacy acquisition related to the variables of this study (ethnicity and socioeconomic status), and describes the models of literacy acquisition important to this line of research. Chapter III includes the research methods, design, and procedures of the study. The selection of participants, instruments and materials, data collection procedures, and data analyses are described. The results of the data analyses are explained in Chapter IV. Findings, conclusions, implications for parents and educators, and recommendations for future use are discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature review presents literature from a sociohistorical perspective. Children are born into environments shaped by past generations and are surrounded by artifacts (including family) that bring the past into the present (Cole, 1996; Wells, 2000). The theoretical basis in which parents influence that environment is described in the following section.

Theoretical Framework

Parents are influential in transmitting interests, dispositions, and values about learning to their children (Cole, 1996; Handel & Goldsmith, 1994; Vygotsky, 1978, stated that “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)” (p. 57). Goodman (1984) explained that negative or positive statements made by adults about schooling and the ability to read and write influence how children come to understand the functions of literacy. Hannon (1995) further concurred that the child’s language development is formed by the traditions and mores of the family. These practices and values displayed by older family members typically influence the behaviors exhibited by the child.

Intergenerational learning primarily takes place in dyad configurations that include parent/knowledgeable other-and-child configurations or in the school where the teachers facilitate the child’s learning (Gadsden, 1998). This is demonstrated in parent-child activities or group-centered activities such as shared book reading. Reading aloud to the infant or toddler helps to lay the groundwork for much of the language and critical

thinking skills that will be needed later in life (Shapiro, Palmer, Antell, Bilker, Ross, & Capute, 1990).

Dodge and Heroman (1999) have noted that the most influential individual in the first five years of the preschooler's life is his or her parent. In this dyad, the adult is the mediator who promotes the internalized behaviors of the child. Internalization happens when external behaviors transfer into the mind, maintaining the same structure, focus, and function as their external manifestations (Vygotsky & Luria, 1930/1993). To illustrate, the child sees an object (picture book) in the home; the child is introduced to the object *(object-regulated)* by the parent *(other-regulated)* who labels and uses it; when the child becomes familiar with the use of the object and it becomes part of the child's mental inventory, he or she becomes *self-regulated*. The behavior is now internalized and functions as a mental tool for him or her (Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory is based on the premise that children adopt concepts, behaviors, and attitudes based on social and cultural events (Morrow, 2001; Neuman & Celano, 2001b; Vygotsky, 1978). From this perspective, the historical development of a child does not occur in isolation, but is the result of several factors starting with activities that involve the family and school. As the individual matures, these factors include activities of work and leisure. Further, human development is not just biological maturation, but is enhanced by activity and interaction with others (Wells, 2000). As Vygotsky (1981) explained, abilities that make us distinctively human "are a copy from social interaction;...mental functions are internalized social relationships" (p. 164).

Bronfenbrenner (1979) presented the perspective that there is an evolving interaction between the developing person and his or her environment. A key principle of this theory is that the ecological environment consists of a set of nested structures with ties between each level. For example, Bronfenbrenner explained that the child's ability to learn to read depends more on the existence and nature of the connections between the school and home and less on how he or she is taught (Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2005).

Bronfenbrenner stated that the innermost unit of analysis in the ecological schema is the dyad, or two-person system, (e.g., the parent and child). At this basic level, when one member of the pair undergoes change, so does the other. This microsystem also incorporates the child's family, peers, school, and neighborhood. At the mesosystem level, the relationships between microsystems are emphasized. The exosystem includes much broader social contexts that affects children's experiences such as the parents' workplace, community affiliations, and social networks. The macrosystem is the most outermost system of attitudes, values, laws, regulations, and cultural customs. An essential element in the macrosystem is the priority that has been given to the child's needs and quality of experiences at the lower levels. In addition, Bronfenbrenner stressed that the effective function of settings as contexts for development depends on the existence and nature of social interconnections (joint participation, communication, and information) between each level.

Cultures play a large role in shaping the development of individual minds (Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff, 2003). Human behavior cannot be shaped or understood without also considering the history of the social group or groups of which the individual is a member and the particular social events in which he or she has successively taken part

(Wells, 2000). For example, during work, play, and problem-solving activities, younger or less experienced children become familiar with and integrate habits and attitudes from their friends, relatives, and teachers. Social interaction with the child's culture determines what will be encoded from these encounters and how that information will be interpreted by the child. In other words, who a person becomes depends on which activity systems he or she participates in and on the support and assistance he or she receives from other members of the social communities; this type of learning occurs on a lifelong basis (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The theories of literacy acquisition that follow explain the process of learning literacy from a social and/or biological perspective and how this learning is influenced by the child's environment.

Theories of Literacy Acquisition

Because there is no single, universally accepted theory of literacy, academicians support different beliefs related to early childhood development and literacy acquisition. The three most closely related to this study are the behaviorist, cognitive, and early literacy approaches.

Behaviorist theory. The behaviorist theory promotes the belief that young children are able to learn abstract knowledge and skills basic to the reading process as a result of environmental influences. J. B. Watson, a major proponent of behaviorism, rejected the notion that behavioral differences are due to hereditary variables, and claimed that environmental influences were essential to observed differences (Watson, 1924/1970). Classical conditioning experiments conducted by Watson supported the assumption that through environmental conditioning a child could be shaped, behavior by behavior, to perform academic tasks (Frost, 1972).

Behavioral theorist B. F. Skinner (1974) illustrated through experimentation that a gradual change in a child's behaviors is achieved through the manipulation of operant conditioning. The parent or teacher may serve as discriminative stimuli by reinforcing the desired behavior or decreasing the behavior by punishment. For instance, to explain the accumulation of literacy skills, the behaviorist may promote the use of reinforcers such as verbal praise and tangible awards when a child learns an alphabet letter or sound. As a result, children are more likely to perform those behaviors. The presence of the reinforcer can strengthen the child's positive response to phonological awareness leading to the ability of the child to put the sounds of letters together and pronounce words found in picture books of simple text. In this example, the child's acquisition of literacy is programmed and reliant upon the presence of stimuli. Thus, the child's response is conditioned by the use of positive reinforcers (Hawkins, 1990; Skinner, 1981; Sparzo, 1992).

Closely tied to behaviorism is the self-efficacy theory of Albert Bandura (1986) which refers to one's belief of how capable he or she is to learn or perform designated behaviors. Children can appraise their behavior to perform a task through observation of models. For instance, acquisition of literacy skills could be achieved primarily by observing others perform them or through imitation. Observing others perform the task makes the child more apt to believe that he or she is capable of accomplishing it (Schunk, 1989). This is demonstrated when children model the book reading behaviors of parents or teachers who have read to them.

Cognitive theory. Cognitive-developmental theory is based largely on Jean Piaget's principles of constructivism. A key principle of this theory is that knowledge is

constructed through the physical and mental action of the learner (Piaget, 1971). From this point of view, the child can learn through physical action when recognizing that a book consists of pages to be turned. The child can also learn the new information presented in the book by using assimilation (i.e., enlarging existing schema with the new contextual information) and accommodation (i.e., modifying previous understandings with the new contextual information). Providing literacy experiences that promote the optimal development of cognitive abilities are recommended for parents and children (Mitchell, 1982).

Bandura (1986) also takes the position that the child's ability to perform academic skills is not only related to the environment but is cognitively appraised. In other words, children differ in their self-efficacy as a result of prior experience, social supports, and because of their attitudes and aptitudes. High self-efficacy will not yield high performance if motivation or ability is lacking (Schunk, 1995).

Early literacy theory. In *Reading Begins at Home* (Clay, 1987) and *Writing Begins at Home* (Clay, 1987), Marie Clay expresses her beliefs about the effects of the child's home environment on literacy growth. In recent years, Clay (2001) has emphasized the acquisition of reading and writing skills as a simultaneous process, claiming that the child's writing ability contributes significantly to the literacy learning needed to be a successful reader. Both physical (fine motor) skills and mental processes such as serial order and phonological information are used when the child first constructs words, then sentences, and, finally, stories during reading or writing tasks. The joint involvement of the eye, ear, and hand can lead to the successful recognition of a specific written or printed word. The Reading Recovery program, used to help children overcome

problems in reading and writing, is based on the emergent literacy concept (Clay, 1990). Her philosophy will be covered further in another section of this chapter.

The whole language movement as described by Goodman (2000) put the learners in control of what they read and write. The students are allowed to generate questions and answer them cooperatively and collectively. A splice of several educational concepts are incorporated including developmentally appropriate experience, language across the curriculum, literature based reading instruction, critical pedagogy, critical thinking, and emergent literacy. In his philosophical view, a central tenet to literacy acquisition is an interdisciplinary curriculum coupled with the insight from the reader's knowledge, value system, and background experience. The reading and writing context is authentic, prior experience enhances meaning to the context, and motivation to read and write is intrinsic (Oglan, 1997). The role of the parent based on the whole language paradigm is that of facilitator via discussion and demonstration.

Sulzby (1985) explained that the early reader begins with picture-governed attempts of "reading" by labeling and commenting on the illustrations in the story to eventually using the text to tell the story. Similarly, she indicated that the letter-like forms and scribbles of young children are prerequisites to conventional writing. Sulzby believes that the development of literacy skills is best promoted by parents, teachers, and other caregivers in the child's environment (Toomey, 1991).

Historical Review of Literacy Acquisition in the Home

From ancient times to present, literacy has taken on different forms beginning with functional literacy requiring a minimum knowledge of reading and writing (e.g., writing checks, reading the newspaper, writing letters) to academic literacy which is

usually learned in a school environment. This account chronicles history from the standpoint of cultural literacy relevant to the group impacted and details what were important literacy traditions for that time frame.

Smethurst (1975) explained that historians believed people learned to read and write in Sumeria around 3500 B.C. Initially literacy instruction was a paternal responsibility. In Middle East Sumeria, instruction in the home was at first passed from father to son and occasionally to the daughters (Claiborne, 1974). In the ancient civilizations of the Indus Valley, Brahman education appeared to have been administered by the father with the purpose to train their sons as priests (Keay, 1918/1992). During biblical times, the Hebraic tradition also placed the responsibility for children's learning to read and write upon the father (Smith, 1969). Further, Athenian law required fathers to teach their sons to read, and in ancient Rome, education was carried on exclusively in the household under the direction of the father (Smith, 1955). According to Adamson (1946), in Anglo-Saxon England, much of the instruction took place in the home, although there were schools until the time of the Northmen (Vikings). This aristocratic tutorial tradition has continued in England to the present time (Smethurst, 1975).

The American colonists as heirs to English traditions promoted the household as the principal agency of literacy instruction (Cremin, 1970). In 1642, parent teaching or its equivalent was required by law for the Massachusetts Bay Colony (Cremin, 1970; Cubberley, 1919; Gordon & Gordon, 2003). During that period several widely-distributed books on familial education slated the father as the head of the household who took on the role of primary educator in the Puritan homes (Davis, 1998; Dod & Cleaver, 1598; Gouge, 1622).

By 1647, the “Old Deluder Satan” ordinance of the Massachusetts Bay Colony was the first law that required compulsory education and setting up schools in the colonies. In areas where there were no schools, parents and masters were mandated to provide literacy instruction to the children and required the apprentices to read English (Johnson, 1904/1963). As a result, the early American primers were written for use by both parents and teachers (Johnson, 1904/1963).

The other thirteen colonies embraced the concept of literacy education outside of the home at varying degrees of acceptance (Gordon & Gordon, 2003). For example, from about 1695 to 1775 most New Yorkers of the Mid-Atlantic colonies tutored their children at home, by apprenticeships, or in the churches. Charity schools offered by the Dutch Reformed congregations, the Jewish community, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel introduced by the southern colonies were often associated with pauperism (Schultz, 1973), therefore, children from higher classes were not placed in these schools. After Congress passed an ordinance establishing the organization of a common school system in 1805, reformation emerged to accept free education with the opening of the first free common school of colonial New York City (Kammen, 1975).

Although the proliferation of petty and grammar schools opening from state to state allowed for many more children to receive free education, many parents opted to continue to provide literacy instruction in the home. This nineteenth century movement was an outcry against the overcrowdedness and “tasked lessons” of the schoolroom (Gordon & Gordon, 2003, p. 83). Due to the draft and death of many men during the Civil War of the nineteenth century, the mother became the primary educator. Instruction at that time consisted of reading, spelling, word definitions, handwriting, math, and

character education (Kuhn, 1947). Domestic education continued as a preferred choice until the tax-based schooling of the twentieth century (Goodrich, 1841; Humphrey, 1840).

In other parts of the nation (e.g., in the Antebellum South), the laws passed permitting educational systems were ignored. Although many parents acted as teachers for their children, illiteracy among native-born southern Whites measured at about 20% in 1860 as compared to 4% among native-born New Englanders (Gordon & Gordon, 2003). In addition, numerous laws prohibited the schooling of African-Americans (Bellows, 1993; Calhoun, 1945; Cornelius, 1991; Cremin, 1980; Morison, 1965).

In 1880, states that had passed compulsory laws for schools saw no immediate growth in attendance. However, with each passing year, the mandate and enforcement of these laws created increases in school attendance. In 1870, 20% of the population was illiterate; by 1920, illiteracy had shrunk to 6% (Morison & Comager, 1960; U. S. Census Bureau, 1965). Several factors (e.g., the need to assimilate immigrants into the American way of life, more mothers working outside of the home as a result of the two world wars) contributed to the increased responsibility of teaching literacy in the schools (Cubberley, 1909; Prost & Vincent, 1991).

Two separate waves of research related to family literacy became evident in the early to mid-twentieth century. In a summary of research on early readers published from the 1930s to the mid-1970s, Teale (1978, 1980) found that four home factors were repeatedly associated with early conventional reading: (a) a range of printed materials were available, (b) reading was done by adults and older children in the home, (c) writing instruments and materials were readily accessible to the children, and (d) other persons in

the home responded to the children's reading and writing activities. In contrast, the 1950s and 1960s back-to-phonics movement was promoted particularly by educators and parents who supported Rudolf Flesch's book, *Why Johnny Can't Read–And What You Can Do About It*. Flesch (1955) encouraged parents to teach the child phonics at home in contrast to the "look-say" method that was prevalent in the schools at the time.

The 1960s and 1970s sparked a research impetus on studies related to lower income families in response to the civil rights movement and the campaign for educational equality. Experts in reading, linguistics, educational psychology, and sociology at that time sought to determine the connections between success and failure in schools as related to the literacy approaches of parents in the home (Billingsley, 1968; Coleman, et al., 1966; Durkin, 1966, 1974-75; Stack, 1974). This paradigm shift towards the concern for social inequity brought in a greater interest in cross-cultural studies that questioned universal assumptions of parental practices and traditional research of monocultural literacy development (New, 2001).

From the 1980s to present, family literacy practices have had research, practice, and political agendas (Gadsden, 1994; Paratore, 2001; Rodriguez-Brown, 2003). One line of research has focused on cultural, social, and historical aspects (Edwards, 1994; Heath, 1983; Paratore, 1993; Taylor, 1983), whereas, other studies highlight classroom learning and the bridging of home and school (Epstein, 1992; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). In addition, in recent years several family literacy program models have promoted school-like practices (Edwards, 2004; Pfannenstiel, Seitz, & Zigler, 2002; Westheimer, 2003) and emergent literacy behaviors (Allen & Sethi, 2004) for parent-child interactions.

Models of Literacy Acquisition

Researchers have for years investigated developmentally-appropriate practices for the teacher to implement in the early childhood classroom and/or the parent in the home. Two concepts in particular, traditional readiness skills versus emergent literacy, have been at the height of the debate in both academic and research circles. The question remains regarding which methodology provides the most positive effects. The answer varies between the parent and the educator.

Traditional Skills Model

Historical perspective. This concept has roots from two schools of thought. First it was believed that changes in children's thinking began on the inside as a result of '"neural ripening" or biological "maturation" and then proceeds outward (Gesell, 1925, 1928, & 1940). In other words, the behaviors necessary for literacy development would become evident after the child reached a certain age. It was argued that children must navigate through a number of stages as they progress through biological maturation. This framework of thinking brought about the production of standardized tests such as the *Metropolitan Readiness Tests,* the *Betts Ready to Read Tests* (Betts, 1946), and the development of the *basal reader* series.

The second train of thought was the belief that children's literacy development could be nurtured through experience (Durkin, 1968). Those who endorsed this perspective argued that if children had appropriate experiences then their reading ability could be accelerated. As a result, educators were encouraged to use more direct instruction and structured curriculum in their reading programs. Children were

considered ready to read upon meeting certain social, physical, and cognitive levels (Morrow, 1997).

Traditional reading and writing behaviors. Based on this concept, children must master prerequisite skills of phonemic awareness, letter recognition, and letter-sound correspondence before learning to read. The foci of instructional methods related to this approach emphasize practicing these skills in isolation until sufficient mastery and automaticity is obtained before children attempt to derive meaning from reading written texts (DeBaryshe, Binder, & Buell, 2000).

The notion of readiness is also based on the idea that certain levels of maturity must be obtained before other information can be learned (Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984). According to Vacca, Vacca, & Gove (2000), traditionalists think that children must master a set of rudimentary skills before they can learn to read or write, (i.e., children learn to read or write in a sequential or hierarchal order and children master reading before writing). Those who agree with this view also believe that reading and writing should be taught in a school-like setting (Teale & Sulzby, 1986).

Two researchers often associated with the traditional view of literacy acquisition are Jeanne Chall (1996) and Marilyn Jager Adams (1990). In classroom comparisons of meaning versus code-emphasis approaches from 1983 to 1993, Chall (1996) found that children in teacher-directed phonics classrooms scored higher on year-end tests of reading achievement, including comprehension. In contrast, in a meta-analysis of basal reader and whole language experiences, Chall (1996) reported that kindergarten children benefited more from the whole language program but first graders who were exposed to

stronger instruction in phonics tended to score higher as measured by achievement tests (Stahl and Miller, 1989).

Adams (1990) concluded that systematic instruction of letter-to-sound association resulted in higher achievement in word recognition and spelling in the early grades, particularly for slower and economically disadvantaged students. She also emphasized that the strongest predictors of learning to read are the preschooler's ability to identify and name letters of the alphabet, application of concepts of print, and awareness of phonemes. In the more recent *Report of the National Reading Panel* (2000), for which Adams was named as a contributor, phonemic awareness instruction and phonics instruction (termed as "alphabetics" in the report) are pointed out as essentials in learning to read. Garan (2002) has initiated strong arguments against the recommendations of this report, claiming that the National Reading Panel members did not monitor the studies chosen for the meta-analysis of the alphabetics section and thus were unable to identify possible research flaws, contradictions, and/or errors.

Parental beliefs. Research has shown evidence of systematic group-based differences in parental beliefs about the traditional approach. In a longitudinal study conducted by Holloway, Rambaud, Fuller, and Eggers-Pierola (1995), 14 low-income mothers of different ethnicities (4 White, 6 African American, and 4 Hispanic) were interviewed about their perceptions of their child's day care center and the parent's role in preparing the child for school. The interviews took place over 3 years at 9-month intervals, resulting in almost 2,000 pages of transcriptions coded for emic concepts regarding school preparation. In general, the mothers expected the children's day care centers to prepare the 2- to 4-year old children to enter school by emphasizing didactic

lessons of basic literacy and mathematical skills. One parent explained, “His attention span with me just isn’t long enough for him to really learn anything” (Holloway et al., 1995, p. 468).

In their study, Neuman, Hagedorn, Celano, and Daly (1995) assigned 19 African-American parents to four interview discussion groups to determine their perceived roles in their child’s education. From the interviews it was determined that the majority of the African Americans viewed being taught the alphabet as an important benchmark in learning to read. Skill instruction was also seen as the primary means of acquiring knowledge of letters by most of the parents.

Emergent Literacy Model

In the following example, Trelease (1989) described what can happen to a child who is systematically read to from infancy, given the appropriate materials and a literate home environment. At six months, Greta’s favorite toy was a small vinyl book, *God’s Blessings from A to Z* (Castagnoli, 1974). She would lie on her back studying the book for ten to fifteen minutes at a time, carefully turning the pages. At eleven months, she would stand at her ‘book box’ (a magazine rack consigned to her a month earlier) and throw books on the floor until she found the one she wanted. The effects of reading to this toddler were more evident when at eighteen months her last words for the day was a plea for one more book to be read to her. From the emergent literacy perspective, children who integrate reading behaviors as described above are applauded for these efforts from infancy to their formal years of school.

Definition. The term “emergent literacy” as introduced by Marie Clay (1966) can be described as behaviors used by young children with books and when reading and

writing, even though the child cannot read and write in the conventional sense. Emergent literacy, also known as metalinguistic awareness, print awareness, early literacy, concepts about print, and literacy before schooling (Sulzby & Teale, 1996), is characterized as children's early literacy behaviors and their development in informal settings at home and at school prior to the onset of formal literacy instruction (Yaden, Rowe, & MacGillivray, 2000). A central tenet of this perspective is that children acquire crucial foundation skills and an understanding of literacy well before the onset of formal instruction as significant others engage the child in literacy activities (Teale & Sulzby, 1986).

Proponents of emergent literacy see listening, speaking, reading, and writing as interrelated aspects of the same linguistic ability. Literacy skills are acquired by immersion in a functional literate environment. Code skills such as phonemic awareness, letter recognition, and letter-sound correspondence are addressed as the need arises in the context of "authentic" literacy activities (DeBaryshe, Binder, & Buell, 2000). In sum, emergent literacy incorporates child-initiated, exploratory activities in which process is emphasized (Stipek, Milburn, Clements, & Daniels, 1992).

Emergent reading and writing behaviors. Print-focused emergent readings are performed in a number of ways. The child may read by concentrating on an isolated feature of reading (e.g., sounding out real words or nonsense strings) or the child may focus on isolated strings of sight vocabulary words while reading. In addition, the child might track text of print while reciting parts that do not correspond to the print (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

In oral storybook reading, the parent or teacher find ways to make the activity interesting so that the child will want to participate; social interaction takes place while

asking the child questions, answering questions, and explaining things (Saint-Laurent, Giasson, & Couture, 1997). As a result, young children begin to simulate adult reading. They typically turn the pages and hold the book to read the print from left to right, often retelling the story based on the illustrations (Uhry & Ehri, 1999).

In New Zealand, Clay (1975) demonstrated that the early marks of children form the foundation for more conventional writing later. As early as two- and three-years of age, many children produce reading-like behaviors as well as drawing-like scribbles, recognizable letters, or letter-like forms. At ages 3 and 4, children display growth in literacy by writing scribbles, strings of letters, and letter-like forms. Some 4-year-olds demonstrate the identification of sounds within words by beginning to use invented spelling in their writing, at least with initial consonants. Also, these children enjoy play with toys and manipulatives that represent letter sounds and other symbolic systems (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Roskos and Neuman (1994) generalizes that the emergent writer uses scribbles to communicate ideas, (e.g., making lists, pretending to read these scribblings, and drawing pictures to accompany the scribblings).

Parental beliefs. The research related to parents' beliefs about emergent literacy is varied in outlook and outcomes. Linder (1997) explored the literacy attitudes of eleven low-income families in Northeast Ohio. Six of the parents were African-American and five were Caucasian. All received government assistance. The parents participated in free-style writing in their journals or responded to questions or comments provided by the teacher. When asked "Why do you read?" and "Why do you write?" the parents answered with varied responses. Many parents wrote in their dialogue journals that they used reading and writing because of the utility of literacy, (e.g., reading to get information).

Seventy-five percent of the mid-level and low-level readers in the group said they liked writing occasionally or wrote only when they had a need. From the overall analysis of the journal entries, it was found that the parents recognized effective readers and writers as those that used strategies and attached meaning to the act of reading and writing.

Taylor and Gaines (1988) surveyed low-income families living in poverty level conditions and discovered that within this context of day-to-day survival, in spite of their surroundings, high literacy activity took place in the homes. The environmental print in the homes were varied including letter-writing, newspapers, applications for employment and financial aid, romance novels, and the like. Although the choice of materials read was inconsistent with what was promoted in the classrooms of many children in the community, it can be concluded that these parents were print-focused. A similar study in a Mexican community (Delgado-Gaitan, 1987) found that the four families investigated had English and Spanish texts within their homes that went beyond traditional school-like reading. This reiterates the concept of print priority in low income homes.

Factors Affecting Literacy Acquisition

Literacy skills are not acquired equally across all cultures (DeBaryshe, 1995; Gadsden, 1998; Moll, 1991). There are several reasons that this inequity in distribution may occur. Some have claimed that literacy is distributed based on power, suggesting that the more dominant classes of society are able to maintain or provide enrichment of academic skills for their children (Freire, 1970; Stanovich, 1986). Others believe the literacy divide is politically driven, stating that the mandate of national legislation (e.g., National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) further segregates the masses. In several studies, ethnicity and socioeconomic status have also been found to

influence literacy acquisition (Goldenberg, Reese, & Gallimore, 1992; Harry, Allen, & McLaughlin, 1996; Piotrkowski, Botskob, & Matthews, 2000).

Goldenberg, Reese, and Gallimore (1992) conducted a study with 10 families, one each from five experimental classrooms and five control classrooms. All the parents were born in Latin America and lived in an urban Los Angeles Latino community. Nine of the 10 children in this study were born in the United States. Spanish was the primary language used in these homes. Simple text, predictable books were used by the teachers and parents every few weeks over the course of the school year in the experimental classrooms.

The parents and teachers of the control classrooms used letter and syllable packets of photocopied work sheets. Both sets of teachers continued to carry out the regular district program consisting of readiness books from basal series along with the use of the books and worksheets provided. Observations took place at the homes of the children once or twice monthly during the school year with a focus on literacy events such as homework completion, explicit teaching by a household member, playing games in and out of the house, coloring, and paper-pencil activities.

The researchers concluded that the Hispanic parents involved in their yearlong case studies did not see reading and discussing stories as activities that actually teach children to read. Rather, repeated practice in writing and pronouncing letters and their corresponding sounds, practicing how letters combine to form syllables and words, and practicing accurate oral reading were perceived as essentials for learning to read.

In a 3-year qualitative study by Harry, Allen, and McLaughlin (1996), a sample of 18 African American regular education preschool students was selected from the class

lists of three elementary schools in an urban school district where 80% of the students and 70% of the school personnel were African Americans. Their low- to- middle income parents were interviewed to determine what skills they thought were necessary for their 4- to 6-year olds to acquire before entering kindergarten. The researchers audiotaped the family interviews at least once a year and also kept in touch with the parents by telephone periodically throughout the year.

From these interviews, most parents indicated that academic skills such as learning the numbers, shapes, ABCs, and learning to write were goals to be accomplished during the preschool and kindergarten years. In addition, many of the parents proclaimed phonics instruction, particularly decoding as the basis for reading, multiplication tables, and spelling lists as practices that worked for them in the past and were not perceived as punitive in their childhood. These parents also believed it was the teacher's job to teach by explicit instruction, with repeated drill and practice. When the teacher was perceived as inadequate in promoting these 'old-fashioned' methods, exasperation was felt by most as expressed in the following comment: "They did not work with them kids at all. As far as their ABCs go, and stuff like that...I've seen teachers just throw stuff in front of the kids and go on about their business and expect the child to know what to do. I've seen teachers do this, and I just be looking and saying, 'There's no way in the world that child knows what to do.'...And I be saying, "Gotta get my kids outta here!" (Harry et al., 1996, p. 196).

Although a specific percentage was not in given in the report, Harry et. al (1996) indicated in kindergarten many parents were satisfied with their children's progress at the end of preschool year. This satisfaction depended on if they thought the children were

mastering the basic skills necessary for reading and mathematics. By first grade, 5 out of 18 students were receiving Chapter 1 support or were in transitional classes for the academic deficient students.

A study by Piotrkowski, Botskob, and Matthews (2000) was conducted in a high-need community consisting mostly of Hispanic and African-American families where close to 90% of the students from these families were eligible for free or reduced lunches. Parents' and teachers' beliefs regarding school readiness was assessed by a survey developed based on specific indicators related to five school readiness dimensions identified by the National Education Goals Panel and a review of literature on school readiness. The surveys were distributed to 355 parents of preschoolers in the district and to the teachers of those preschoolers. For analysis purposes, the beliefs about school readiness were separated into two domains: (a) general readiness resources that pertained to the child's everyday life, and (b) classroom related readiness resources related to the classroom setting.

The findings indicated that most of the Hispanic and African-American parents believed it was necessary for children to have basic knowledge of literacy skills before entering kindergarten. Of the 355 parents in this sample, 82% believed that prior to entering kindergarten children should know their ABCs; 81% felt knowing some colors was important; 76% considered counting from 10 to 15 as an essential prerequisite. In terms of advanced knowledge, 59% indicated that the child should know how to write his or her name, and 40% agreed that recognizing rhyming words and being able to read a few words was critical.

Socioeconomic Status

In the Neuman and Celano study (2001a), two low income and two middle income neighborhoods in Philadelphia were used as part of a 3-year study to determine if differences in settings contributed to variations in early literacy development. The low-income neighborhoods were in highly segregated, poverty-stricken areas with a diverse population of Puerto Rican, African-American, Vietnamese, Eastern European, and Caucasian families. Conversely, the middle-income population was less populated and composed primarily of Caucasian, Irish and Eastern European families. This study also investigated the amount, type, and age distribution of the reading materials found in community stores, signs in the neighborhoods, public places for reading, books in child-care centers, resources and staffing of the school libraries, and the size as well as usage of the public library collection.

Results indicated that the data was significantly skewed in favor of the middle-income children. The middle-income group had a wide variety of reading materials compared to the low-income children who had limited access to reading resources in their communities. The drug stores and bargain stores were the most common resource of print material for children in the low-income neighborhoods. Bookstores held the most children's books in the middle class neighborhoods. The percentage and condition of the signs differed in the middle-income neighborhoods where they were more likely to be in good readable condition. The public places in low-income neighborhoods were not conducive to reading with uncomfortable seating, poor lighting, and lack of reading materials compared to the friendly atmosphere of the middle-income neighborhoods. Statistically significant differences in book access added to the inequality of the

neighborhoods. Availability and quality of books were rated as good or excellent in the middle-income neighborhoods; however, book areas in child care centers or libraries were rated from poor to good to somewhat better than adequate in the low-income neighborhoods. Neuman and Celano (2001a) suggested that a change in the design of classrooms and in the definition of literacy (to reflect situational based activity), a strengthening of connections between the home and the family, and advocating for equitable funding of resources in the child care centers and community settings would provide equal opportunity for access to print in the low and middle income communities.

Furthermore, there are vast differences in literacy experiences that exist among kindergarten and first grade children of different socioeconomic backgrounds (Neuman, 1999; Padak, Vacca, & Stuart, 1993, Paratore, 1993: Rodriguez-Brown & Meehan, 1998). More specifically, Sonnenschein, Baker, Serpell, Scher, Fernandez-Fein, and Munsterman (1996) found differences between the home literacy experiences of 54 low income and middle income African American and European families of the Baltimore area. The lower income families in the study had fewer opportunities for experiences such as storybook reading and pretend play. Low income families also tended to view literacy as a more deliberate skills-oriented activity of using flashcards or completing workbooks. In contrast, middle income families reported more play and more joint book reading consistent with the view that literacy was a source of entertainment.

In a study by Lapp, Fisher, Flood, and Moore (2002), a survey was collected from 174 parents residing in a cultural and economically diverse area of San Diego. Approximately 70% of the children in the school district received free or reduced-price lunch. The ethnicity of the children in the school district was 45% Hispanic, 21% African

American, 18% Asian, and 15% Caucasian. The survey consisted of 20 items that questioned parents' perceptions of the definition of literacy, the parents' role in early literacy development, and ways in which they helped to develop their children's literacy. The majority of the survey questions were Likert-type in format, along with 3 open-ended questions. From the 174 parents that returned the survey, 24 parents in this random sample participated in individual or group interviews facilitated by one of the researchers. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed for coding purposes. The parents consistently reported that teaching activities such as reciting the ABCs, reading stories, writing numbers, and writing the ABCs were the teacher's responsibility. In other words, the more academic the task, the greater the teacher's responsibility. As one parent reported, "I don't want to teach him wrong. I know the teacher can do it right. We have a good teacher, and I'm happy about that" (Lapp et al., 2002, p. 279). Many parents reported that they were so engaged with the day-to-day responsibilities of feeding, housing, and caring for children that they had little time to support school-related literacy issues at home.

Heath's (1983) 10-year ethnographic investigation of three groups in the Roadville and Trackton communities of the Piedmont Carolinas revealed the significant ways the social and linguistic environment differed in each community. The first group of residents consisted of the Roadville Caucasian working class population. The second group was the primarily African-American working class families of Trackton. A third group consisted of Caucasian and African-American middle class families that lived in Trackton and Roadville. After spending ten years of observing and documenting the activities and conversations of the residents, Heath (1983) concluded that the literacy

perceptions of the African-American and Caucasian working-class members were in contrast to those beliefs of the mainstream middle- class members of the two communities. In particular, the home and school literacy practices in the middle-class homes were similar to those of the schools of the communities. The African-American and White working-class populations were similar in their emphasis placed on oral traditions versus literate traditions.

Heath (1983) concluded that "Roadville and Trackton residents have a variety of literate traditions, and in each community these are interwoven in different ways with oral uses of language, ways of negotiating, deciding on action, and achieving status" (p. 234). The beliefs of what constituted literacy from parents' perspectives were not fully comprehended by the teachers of those children.

Conflicts of Home and School Literacy

Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines' three-year ethnographic study of the six African-American parents and children (1988) revealed that these families used literacy integrally within their daily lives. This took on many forms including drawing pictures and self-portraits, writing cards and letters, reading books, and completing schoolwork for the children and completing forms, reading the newspaper, checking for information, and reading for pleasure by the parents. They found parents to be "highly literate, and yet not educated in the traditional sense of the word" (p. 202). The traditional form of literacy acquisition had not taken place in these homes; however, this did not deprive the children's involvement in a print-immersed environment.

Delgado-Gaitan's (1990, 1996) four-year study began in 1985 with 20 Mexican, Spanish-speaking working-class families of which the majority had fewer than six years

of formal education. The ethnographic interviews and observations provided insight on the struggles between the families and the schools. The parents noted differences between the school's emphasis on written text and the focus on the oral tradition in the homes. The parents also commented on their lack of ability to communicate with the school personnel which caused feelings of inferiority. In addition, although the staff encouraged parental involvement, the parents often had insufficient time for parent-teacher conferences. After Delgado-Gaitan presented the results of her data to a large group of families within the community, a collective group of these families organized a community parent group, the Comite de Padres Latinos (COPLA), where they began a dialogue with each other about educational concerns. When the community group increased in size, school-wide committees were formed. Delgado-Gaitan's (1996) research included observing the COPLA meetings to understand how the collaborative discussion served as a mediation tool between the parents' and school culture.

Valdes (1996) examined the literacy traditions of 19 Mexican-American families that differed in several aspects: (a) most spoke English well, some did not; (b) some had some schooling in their countries, other had no schooling at all; and (c) some read Spanish well, others could not. The parents believed that it was their duty to teach the children to be respectful, attentive to the lessons taught, and to behave well in school. They believed that literacy-related activities involving letters, colors, and numbers were to be taught by teachers. Incongruence between the beliefs and practices of parents and teachers were also found in this sample.

Parental Beliefs Scales

The Parental Reading Belief Inventory (PRBI) developed by DeBaryshe and Binder (1994) measures the extent to which parents agree or disagree with developmentally appropriate (e.g., “As a parent, I play an important part in my child’s development” and “Children do better in school when their parents also teach them things at home) and developmentally inappropriate beliefs (e.g., “There is little I can do to help my child get ready to do well in school” and “I don’t read to my child because I have other, more important things to do as a parent). The PRBI contains 42 items and is formatted with a 5-point Likert-scale (1 = “strongly disagree” and 2 = strongly disagree). The broad range of beliefs measured the parent’s role in the child’s language and literacy development, the pleasure and importance of reading, and the need to converse with children.

As discussed in Saracho (2000), The Family Literacy questionnaire was created after interviewing 10 families of young children about their perceptions of their contributions to their children’s acquisition of literacy. Specific experiences were solicited from the families by asking questions such as:

1. Does your child read at home?
2. What does your child read with you at home?
3. What does your child read with you when you’re away from home?
4. What board games does your family play that has letters, pictures, or numbers?
5. What games do you and your child play that involves letters, pictures, or numbers?

6. What TV programs do you and your child watch?

7. Do you and your child go to the library?

8. Do you and your child engage in any writing activities?

Family factors related to literacy acquisition derived from the interviews were developed into a 60-item questionnaire with each section containing from 1 to 8 items. Most of the questions are presented in a 3-point Likert scale format with choices of "sometimes," "frequently," and "daily." Other questions are answered with a "yes" or "no" response with space for elaboration (e.g., "Do you and your child watch TV together? If so, what do you watch?" and "Do you engage in any literacy-oriented computer games or stories with your child? If yes, how often?").

Anderson's PPLLIS-A (see Appendix F) has been used primarily in his studies to ascertain the parents' congruence and noncongruence with an emergent literacy perspective. In the first phase of his studies related to parents' beliefs about literacy acquisition, Anderson (1993, 1994) reported on the results of his investigation involving twenty five parents and their 3- and 4 year old children. The parents were interviewed using the Home Literacy Environment Index and his PPLLIS-A. The ethnicity of these parents was not provided or considered in this study.

From these interviews it was discovered that some parents held views more consistent with emergent literacy and others held more traditional views. In the second phase, the children were audiotaped while answering questions from the CCRW (see Appendix E). The results of this study were presented as outcomes related to the children's literacy knowledge and their perceptions of literacy. The children were

grouped according to the parents' PPLLIS-A scores, with eight children placed in the emergent literacy group. T-tests revealed no significant differences between the groups on the various measures of the children's literacy knowledge. Based on Pearson Product Moment Correlations of the PPLLIS-A and CCRW scores, very weak relationships were found between the parents' and children's measures. The children's perceptions of literacy were analyzed by grouping their responses into themes with unremarkable findings. In sum, the study revealed no statistically significant differences between the measures of the children's early literacy knowledge whose parents believed in a traditional or emergent literacy philosophy.

In similar study, Anderson (1995a) tested sixteen 3- and 4-year old children and their parents to determine the relationships between the beliefs the parents held about literacy learning and their children's perceptions of early literacy knowledge and learning how to read and write. There was an extremely weak relationship between the parents' perceptions and the children's emerging literacy knowledge. T-tests yielded no statistically significant differences between those children whose parents subscribed to an emergent literacy approach to literacy acquisition and those whose parents held more traditional views.

In other papers by Anderson (1995b, 1995c) and Gunderson and Anderson (2003), the population consisted of 10 parents from each of different ethnicities: (a) Chinese-Canadians of white-collar occupations, (b) Euro-Canadians of white-collar occupations, and (c) Indo-Canadians of blue-collar occupations from an urban area of British Columbia. This sample was drawn from three schools in various demographic locations, (i.e., one school was located in a working class neighborhood, another in a

middle-class residential neighborhood, and the third was situated in a residential-commercial area). There were eleven parents of kindergarten children, ten of first grade (G-1) children, and nine with children in second grade (G-2). Each parent was administered the PPLLIS-A and then were asked to respond to the open-ended question, "What are the five most important things you are doing to help your child learn to read and write?" The responses from the open-ended question were sorted into five categories: (a) Participating in activities/events (e.g., "Reading to my child"), (b) Teaching literacy skills (e.g., "Teaching child to print and write properly"), (c) Valuing, demonstrating, and encouraging literacy (e.g., "Child sees parents or significant others reading"), (d) knowledge development (e.g., "Answering my child's questions"), and (e) Other responses (e.g., "Teaching him numbers" and "Restricting the amount of television viewing"). The following trends emerged from the parents' responses to the open-ended question:

1. The white-collar Euro-Canadians and blue-collar Indo-Canadians afforded considerable importance to the social aspects of literacy, whereas the white-collar Chinese-Canadians did not.
2. The majority of the white-collar Chinese-Canadian responses were classified as direct teaching of literacy skills eluding that this group was more traditional in their perceptions of literacy learning.
3. The white-collar Euro-Canadians placed more value on valuing, demonstrating, and encouraging literacy than the other groups.
4. The blue-collar Indo-Canadians were more prone, than the other groups, to value the role of general knowledge development in literacy learning.

The mean scores on the PPLLIS-A revealed no significant differences among the three groups: (a) Kindergarten, 21.5, (b) G-1, 23, and (c) G-2, 21.8. On the other hand, it was found that 54% of the white-collar Chinese-Canadian responses were consistent with the emergent literacy view, 84% of the white-collar Euro-Canadian responses were congruent with an emergent literacy perspective, and 63% of the blue-collar Indo-Canadian responses corresponded to the emergent literacy point of view.

The descriptive statistics described in Anderson's studies are categorically different from the multivariate techniques of this study. However, when conducting any type of research a reliable and valid instrument is needed. The reliability of the instrument was questioned due to the population used for the reliability testing (students in the British Colombia area) and the timeframe of when the test was created (ten years ago). In addition, Anderson's PPLLIS-A was used in several studies with different populations and with less than optimal results for each study. The repetition of such findings also caused the researcher to question if the reliability of the instrument was a contributing factor. Thus, an item analysis using the reliability procedure was conducted in an effort to strengthen the constructs tested and minimize measurement error.

Summary of the Literature Review

The theoretical framework postulates that internalization of behaviors is conditional upon the child's social settings (Vygotsky, 1978). It can be proposed that if the child's parent is traditional in his or her literacy beliefs and behaviors then the child's internalization of behaviors and memory of events will be traditional in scope. The same rationale can be used for the child's whose home environment is emergent-like in its

structure; that child's description of events will include emergent behaviors of his or her parents and/or more knowledgeable others in the home environment.

Family literacy has always been a part of this nation's agenda. The historical review paints this picture in varying degrees. From the past to the present, parents have taken the initiative to educate their children, at homes, or in schools. This is a common interest among families; however, the difference lies in the methodology of presentation, (i.e., phonics-based or holistic practices). These practices are described and literature studies related to each construct are presented in detail.

The review of literature spans the spectrum of parents' beliefs about literacy acquisition from an economic and ethnicity related perspective. It appears that those of lower class populations have a slant towards traditional beliefs and those of the middle class are more emergent-like in their belief structure. The literature also reveals differences between the lower and middle class in their group beliefs and parent-child correlations.

It is important to understand parents' beliefs of what is important to them in literacy learning for their children. When parents' voices are heard they are more likely to be more involved in the classroom and school activities. Thus, it is essential that educators take parents' and children's beliefs into account when planning literacy instruction and curricula.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This research was designed to investigate the beliefs of parents and children of Hispanic and African-American origin pertaining to traditional school readiness and emergent literacy. In addition, those beliefs are correlated between the parent and child. The research methods used are described as follows: (a) the general community, (b) the sample population, (c) the measurement tools, (d) the implementation of procedures, (e) the research design, and (f) the statistical analysis used to analyze the data.

The methods used in this study are primarily quantitative as defined by Kamil (2004). He indicates the "important distinction [between quantitative and qualitative] is whether the research is using measures that are quantifiable in numeric terms" (Kamil, 2004, p. 100). The adult and children's data in this study is divided into traditional readiness and emergent literacy scores, deeming this a quantitative design. In addition, an inferential test of means is used, which is still considered a critical descriptive tool in literacy research (Lomax, 2004).

Participants

Participants of this study were the parents and their 3- , 4- , and 5-year-old preKindergarten (preK) students selected from day care centers, preschools, and a family literacy program in the metropolitan Dade County area. Miami-Dade County has large Hispanic and African American communities which provided the opportunity for ethnic diversity. In the year 2000, according to Miami Dade County Department of Planning and Zoning (2003), 57.3% of the total population was comprised of Hispanics, an increase of 44% from 1990, a change attributed primarily to immigration. The percentage

of African Americans residing in the Miami-Dade County area in 2000 measured at 19.0%, also largely due to immigration. In 2000 the majority of Hispanics lived in the municipalities of Miami and Hialeah, whereras most African Americans were located in Miami and North Miami (Miami Dade County Department of Planning and Zoning, 2003).

Sample

The sample consisted of 152 parents from several public and private schools residing in the Miami, North Miami, and South Miami areas of Miami Dade County and 36 of the 3- , 4- , or 5-year-old children from the parents' sample. The parents were selected using quota sampling to obtain 38 low-income Hispanic parents, 38 low-income African-American parents, 38 middle-income Hispanic parents, and 38 middle-income African American. Nine children were randomly selected from each cell to execute the correlation analysis. These sample sizes were deemed necessary to provide statistical power of slightly over .80 for a standardized effect size of $d=.5\sigma$ at the .05 level of significance.

The parents from the public schools of the study were classified as low SES if the child received free or reduced-cost lunch. Otherwise, the parent was listed as middle SES. Parents from the private day care centers and schools who were provided subsidy for tuition were categorized as low SES and those who did not receive subsidy were categorized as middle SES. The parents of the family literacy program were enrolled in an Even Start project for low-income families. The goal of the Even Start program is to improve the literacy of families through (1) parenting education, (2) adult education, (3) early childhood education, and (4) parent-child literacy activities (St. Pierre et. al, 2003).

The ethnicity of the parent and child were based on a form developed by the researcher asking for the parent's name, address, phone number, parental status (mother or father), ethnicity (with given choices of African-American, Hispanic, or Other), and the age of the child.

Instruments

Parents' Perceptions of Literacy Learning Interview Survey (PPLLIS)

The PPLLIS was used in this study as a measure of the parents' beliefs on early literacy acquisition (see Appendix G). The researcher's PPLLIS consisted of 30 items from Anderson's PPLLIS. Fifteen items (items 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 27, 29, and 30) were classified as traditional skill practices (e.g., Learn the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, then words, then sentences, and then stories). Fifteen items (items 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 28) were categorized as emergent-like behaviors and practices (e.g., Permit the child to "read" familiar books using only the pictures to tell the story).

Two university professors first reviewed the instrument to establish face and content validity for the PPLLIS. The instrument was then issued to 40 senior primary education undergraduate students who studied emergent literacy in their language methodology courses (Anderson, 1995b). Half of the students were instructed to select those items related to the traditional readiness orientation, the other half were asked to point out those of an emergent literacy perspective. The answers were coded to anticipated responses. The results indicated a high consistency of the traditional readiness and emergent literacy views of the students ($r = .95$).

PPLLIS item analysis. An item analysis was conducted on the 15 traditional skills-based items (numbers 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 27, 29, and 30) and the 15 emergent literacy items (numbers 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 28) of the Parents' Perceptions of Literacy Learning Interview Schedule (PPLLIS). The item analysis procedure was performed in order to strengthen the internal reliability consistency coefficient of the two scales as measured by the Cronbach Alpha (referred to as "Alpha" throughout these analyses). An internal reliability coefficient that ranges from .00 to .20 reflects no or a negligible relationship between items, .20 to .40 is classified as a low relationship, a .40 to .70 coefficient would be considered a moderate relationship, and a .70 to 1.00 coefficient indicates a high relationship (Wolpert, 1984).

Item-total correlations and the "Alpha if item deleted" values were calculated for the traditional skills-based items and the emergent literacy items. Green, Salkind, and Akey (2000) stated that the removal of those items with low corrected item-total correlations and high "Alpha if item deleted" values would increase the Alpha. The following three analyses were conducted for the traditional skills-based scale.

Table 1 lists the corrected item-total correlations and "Alpha if item deleted" values of the traditional skills-based items of the PPLLIS. In the first analysis, items 2, 8, and 16 were removed due to the low corrected item-total correlation and the high "Alpha if item deleted" values. The corrected item-total correlations of .13, .08, and .08 for these items were clearly not consistent with the other scores of .21 to .39. The high "Alpha if item deleted" values of .62, .62, and .62 for these items also indicated that the original Alpha of .62 would increase if these items were removed from the 15-item scale. Upon the elimination of these items, the Alpha did increase from .62 to .64.

Table 1

First Corrected Item-Total Correlations and Alphas of the Traditional Items

Item number	Corrected item-total correlation	Alpha if item deleted
1	.23	.60
2[a]	.13	.62
3	.21	.61
8[a]	.08	.62
10	.36	.58
11	.39	.58
12	.35	.58
14	.27	.60
16[a]	.08	.62
17	.31	.59
18	.30	.59
20	.25	.61
27	.27	.61
29	.23	.60
30	.21	.61

Note. [a]Items removed.

After the removal of Items 2, 8, and 16, a second analysis revealed new calculations of the corrected item-total correlations and "Alpha if item deleted" values for

the traditional skills-based items were conducted. The results are presented in Table 2. An inspection of the new calculations revealed that the only item to be eliminated was Item 3. This item has a corrected item-total correlation of .16, compared to the other corrected item-total correlations ranging from .25 to .39. In addition, Item 3 had the highest "Alpha if item deleted" an indication that its removal would increase the Alpha the most as compared to the other items.

Table 2

Second Corrected Item-Total Correlations and Alphas of the Traditional Items After Three Items were Removed

Item number	Corrected item-total correlation	Alpha if item deleted
1	.26	.63
3[a]	.16	.64
10	.39	.60
11	.37	.61
12	.35	.61
14	.30	.62
17	.33	.61
18	.25	.63
20	.28	.63
27	.26	.63
29	.26	.62
30	.26	.63

Note. [a]Item removed.

After the removal of Item 3, corrected item-total correlations and "Alpha if item deleted" values of the traditional skills-based items were reported in the third analysis (see Table 3). There were no outlier corrected item-total correlations, and the removal of any item would have decreased the Alpha. Thus, there were no more items removed from the scale resulted in an Alpha of .64, reflecting a moderate relationship.

Table 3

Third Corrected Item-Total Correlations and Alphas of the Traditional Items After Fourth Item was Removed

Item number	Corrected item-total correlation	Alpha if item deleted
1	.27	.63
10	.38	.60
11	.39	.60
12	.32	.61
14	.32	.61
17	.32	.61
18	.26	.63
20	.27	.63
27	.24	.63
29	.26	.62
30	.28	.62

Note. No items removed.

Based on Green, Salkind, and Akey (2000), "researchers should select items to include in their scale not only on the correlations...but also on their knowledge about the items and how they rationally and theoretically relate to the constructs" (p. 313). The following four items were removed from the traditional skills-based scale:

2. Use flashcards (show example) to learn words the child is not familiar with.

3. Use reading workbooks (show example) and reading textbooks (show example) to learn to read.

8. Check for understanding by asking the child questions about the story at the end.

16. Use a writing workbook like this (show examples) to learn how to write.

The four items removed were examined to determine their relationship to the traditional skills-based construct. The researcher concluded that these items did not reflect a traditional skills-based or emergent literacy perspective and were removed.

For the emergent literacy scale, two item analyses were conducted. Table 4 presents the first analysis of the corrected item-total correlations and "Alpha if item deleted" values of the emergent literacy items. Items 13 and 21 were removed due to low corrected item-total correlations and high "Alpha if item deleted" values. The corrected item-total correlations of .16 and .12 for these items were less consistent with the other corrected item-total correlations ranging from .23 to .37. In addition, their "Alpha if item deleted" values of .69 and .69 indicated that Items 13 and 21 should be removed.

A second analysis showed corrected item-total correlations and "Alpha if item deleted" values calculated for the remaining emergent literacy items (see Table 5). There were no outlier values of corrected item-total correlations, and the removal of any item would have decreased the Alpha. Therefore, no more items were removed. After the

removal of Items 13 and 21, the Alpha for the emergent literacy items increased from .68 to .69, maintaining a moderate relationship.

Table 4

First Corrected Item-Total Correlations and Alphas of the Emergent Items

Item number	Corrected item-total correlation	Alpha if item deleted
4	.27	.67
5	.34	.66
6	.30	.66
7	.27	.67
9	.23	.68
13[a]	.16	.69
15	.32	.66
19	.32	.66
21[a]	.12	.69
22	.40	.65
23	.28	.67
24	.33	.66
25	.37	.66
26	.35	.66
28	.37	.66

Note. [a]Items removed.

Table 5

Second Corrected Item-Total Correlations and Alphas of the Emergent Items With Two Items Removed

Item number	Corrected item-total correlation	Alpha if item deleted
4	.28	.68
5	.34	.67
6	.31	.68
7	.28	.68
9	.26	.68
15	.35	.67
19	.30	.68
22	.40	.67
23	.29	.68
24	.30	.68
25	.36	.68
26	.34	.67
28	.35	.67

Note. No items removed.

Upon examination of the two deleted items from the emergent scale, it was found that Item 21, “The child learns to read when the parent reads to and with the child,” did not distinguish the traditional skills-based construct from the emergent literacy construct. However, Item 13 (i.e., “Expose the child to a lot of experience copying words, sentences, and finally stories before she attempts to write stories on her own”) was

connected in theory and practice to the traditional skills-based perspective (Vacca, Vacca, & Gove, 2000). Item 13 was added to the traditional skills-based item scale and new calculations were performed as listed in Table 6.

Table 6

Corrected Item-Total Correlations and Alphas of the Traditional Items with Item 13 Added

Item number	Corrected item-total correlation	Alpha if item deleted
1	.25	.67
10	.40	.64
11	.41	.64
12	.35	.65
13	.40	.64
14	.32	.66
17	.33	.65
18	.29	.66
20	.29	.67
27	.27	.67
29	.25	.67
30	.26	.67

Note. No items removed.

As expected, there were no outlier values within the group of corrected item-total correlations, and removing any item would have decreased the Alpha. With the addition of Item 3, the Alpha increased from .64 to .68, which represents a moderate relationship.

Based on the item analysis, the PPLLIS was renamed the Parents' Perceptions of Literacy Learning Interview Schedule-Revised (PPLLIS-R). The traditional skills-based scale was modified to include 12 of the 15 original items (1, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 27, 29, and 30), $\alpha = .68$; the emergent literacy scale consisted of 13 of the 15 items (4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 15, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 28), $\alpha = .69$. To maximize reliability, the revised scales (see Appendix H) were used for further data analysis.

Children's Concepts of Reading and Writing Survey (CCRWS)

The researcher's CCRWS is based on Anderson's (1993, 1995a) CCRW found in Appendix E. The researcher's CCRWS is an open-ended, four question instrument designed to assess children's beliefs about the acquisition of reading and writing. It specifically asks the child to identify who teaches him or her to read and write.

The instrument consisted of the following four questions:

1. Who reads to you?

2. Who teaches you how to write?

3. What people teach children how to read?

4. What people teach children how to write?

The questions were kept short considering the age of the children. Peterson, Dowden, and Tobin (1999) found that a young child who is asked specific questions is more likely to report the information requested.

Procedures

The researcher sought and was granted approval from the Florida International University (FIU) Institutional Review Board. In addition, a research application was submitted to the Miami Dade County Public Schools Office of Evaluation and Research,

a requirement of Miami Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS). The research application included the consent form approved by FIU's Institutional Review Board. After receiving approval from both institutions, the principals or day care directors of the day care centers and schools used in this study were contacted and asked to allow their parents to participate in the study. Parents of the MDCPS received the consent forms and surveys from the preK teachers. The researcher distributed the consent forms and surveys to the day care center parents. The family literacy teacher issued the consent forms and surveys to the parents of the family literacy program. Each parent also completed a demographic information form that included the parent's ethnicity and child's age.

The 152 completed parent surveys were categorized into four groups: (a) 38 low-income Hispanic parents, (b) 38 low-income African-American parents, (c) 38 middle-income African-African parents, and (d) 38 middle-income Hispanic parents. The researcher randomly selected 9 children from each group, 36 in total, for the CCWRS administration. The children were interviewed individually either at the school, day care center, or family literacy program. The children's responses to the four questions of the CCRWS were transcribed verbatim.

Research Design

An item analysis was used to decide on which items were to be included and excluded from the PPLLIS for statistical analysis. The two constructs of traditional skills-based items and emergent literacy items are based on parental beliefs and are not observable.

A two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to investigate if there were differences or an interaction between ethnicity and

socioeconomic status in determining the PPLLIS scores. The two independent variables were ethnicity (African-American and Hispanic) and SES (low and middle). The dependent variables were the traditional readiness and emergent literacy scores for both the parent and the child. The CCRWS responses were coded into nominal data indicating emergent and traditional scores.

A chi-square test was performed with the CCRWS' and the PPLLIS nominal data. The children's verbally stated responses to the CCWRS were categorized and (dummy) coded into traditional skills-based and emergent literacy beliefs. A congruence chart was developed that divided the parents' responses to the PPLLIS statements into traditional skills-based and emergent literacy preferences. The relationship of these responses was evaluated using a 2 × 3 contingency table.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the data was conducted with the Statistical Package for Social Science, Version 13.0 (SPSS, 2004). All alpha levels were set at .05. Means and standard deviations were calculated for the PPLLIS scores. The results of these analyses are explained in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The data were analyzed using multivariate and correlational analyses to investigate the beliefs parents and children held about how children learn to read and write. The variables considered in the analyses were the traditional subskills approach and the emergent literacy perspective. This chapter presents the results from the study including the distribution of families, an item analysis of the data-gathering instrument, descriptive statistics, and data analysis results for each hypothesis.

Distribution of Families

A total of 152 forms were signed by a parent or guardian who wished to participate. This sample came from parents and their children who attended several elementary schools and day care centers throughout Miami-Dade County, Florida. The parents' sample consisted of 126 (83.1%) mothers and 26 (16.9%) fathers. The children's sample consisted of 18 (50%) female and 18 (50%) male. Table 7 provides the ethnic and SES distribution of the parents' and children's sample.

Table 7

Sample Size by Ethnicity and SES

	SES	
Ethnicity	Low income	Middle Income
	Parents (*n=152*)	
African-American	38 (25%)	38 (25%)
Hispanic	38 (25%)	38 (25%)
	Children (*n=36*)	
African-American	9 (25%)	9 (25%)
Hispanic	9 (25%)	9 (25%)

Results of the Data Analysis

A two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to investigate if there were differences or an interaction between socioeconomic status (SES) and ethnic groups in determining the PPLLIS-R scores (traditional skills-based and emergent literacy). In this 2 × 2 MANOVA, there were two factors, SES with two levels (low and middle) and ethnicity with two levels (African-American and Hispanic). The two dependent variables were the traditional skills-based scores and the emergent literacy scores of the PPLLIS-R. Three research questions were presented with three hypotheses generated from them.

The means and standard deviations for the traditional and emergent literacy scores as a function of the two factors, SES and ethnicity, is presented in Table 8. The maximum score of the traditional skills-based items was 12 and 13 for the emergent literacy items. The maximum total score was 25.

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations for the PPLLIS-R scores by SES and Ethnicity (N = 152)

Income		Traditional			Emergent		
		AA (*n*=38)	H (*n*=38)	Total (*N*=76)	AA (*n*=38)	H (*n*=38)	Total (*N*=76)
Low	*M*	6.87	6.82	6.84	8.50	9.39	8.95
	SD	1.95	2.63	2.30	2.88	2.41	2.68
Middle	*M*	5.89	5.16	5.53	9.34	9.82	9.58
	S*D*	1.93	2.37	2.18	2.59	2.36	2.47

Notes. AA = African-Americans; H = Hispanic; LI = Low Income; MI = Middle Income

The variances of the traditional skills-based and emergent literacy scores are shared in the linear function of the MANOVA. This results in a linear combination of the scores' means. The correlation of these scores was found to be moderate, $r = .36$, $n = 152$, $p > .05$, a criteria to be met when using the MANOVA (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006).

The multivariate Box *M* statistic evaluated whether the variance and covariance matrices were equal for all levels of the dependent variables. This test was nonsignificant, F (9, 251016) = 1.238, $p > .001$; thus, the multivariate assumption of homogeneity was met.

Multivariate Test for Hypotheses

Wilks' lambda was used to evaluate three hypotheses. Table 9 presents the results of the Wilks' lambda for the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is a difference between low and middle SES parents in the linear combination of the means of their emergent and traditional PPLLIS-R scores.

Hypothesis 2: There is a difference between African-Americans and Hispanics in the linear combination of the means of their emergent and traditional PPLLIS-R scores.

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant interaction between parents' ethnicity and their SES in determining the value of a linear combination of their PPLLIS-R emergent and traditional scores.

The first hypothesis states that a significant difference is expected for the PPLLIS-R scores based on SES. Table 9 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 9

Multivariate Analysis of Variance for PPLLIS-R scores

Source	*Λ*	*df*	*F*	*p*	η²
SES	.891	2	9.01*	.000	.11
Ethnicity (E)	.969	2	2.34	.100	.03
SES × E	.993	2	.50	.610	.01

Note. $*p < .05$

The significant differences of the multivariate combination of the PPLLIS-R scores for SES were $\Lambda = .891$, F (2, 147) = 9.01, $p < .05$. The multivariate η² of .11 indicates that SES accounts for 11% of the variability in the linear combination of the two PPLLIS-R scores, which is a medium effect size.

The results of the analyses of variances (ANOVA) are indicated in Table 10.

Table 10

Univariate Analysis of Variance for PPLLIS-R Scores

	Traditional Skills-based				Emergent Literacy			
Source	*df*	*F*	*p*	η²	*df*	*F*	*p*	η²
SES	1	13.15*	.000	.08	1	2.30	.132	.01
Ethnicity	1	1.18	.278	.01	1	2.70	.103	.02
SES × E	1	.89	.347	.01	1	.26	.614	.00

Note. $*p < .017$

The ANOVA test for the traditional skills-based scores of SES was significant, F (1, 148) = 13.146, $p < .025$. The η² of .08 indicates that SES accounts for 8% of the variance in traditional skills-based scores. Low SES parents scored higher in traditional skills-based

beliefs (M = 6.84) than middle SES parents (M = 5.53) but there was no significant difference for their emergent scores.

The second hypothesis stated the expected difference in the PPLLIS-R scores based on ethnicity. However, the results indicated that there was no significant difference between the African-Americans and Hispanics in their PPLLIS-R scores, $\Lambda = .969$, F (2, 147) = 2.34, $p > .05$.

The same conclusion was drawn for the third hypothesis related to the interaction between the parents' ethnicity and SES in determining the value of a linear combination of their PPLLIS-R scores. The results also indicated no significant difference for the third hypothesis, $\Lambda = .993$, F (2, 147) = .50, $p > .05$.

Relationships between Parents' and Children's Beliefs

The parents' and children's sample consisted of thirty-six (36) parent-child dyads (9 low-income African-American parents and their children, 9 middle-income African-American parents and their children, 9 low-income Hispanic parents and their children, 9 middle-income Hispanic parents and their children). A chi-square test using a 2×3 contingency table was conducted to determine the relationship between the parents' and children's beliefs about literacy learning (traditional-skills based or emergent literacy) based on SES and ethnicity. This procedure established whether a relationship existed between two variables: (a) the coded data of the parents' responses to the PPLLIS-R, and (b) the children's verbally stated responses to the CCRWS. The hypotheses for this data analysis were:

Hypothesis 4: There is a relationship between the literacy beliefs of the child and the parent based on SES (low and middle).

Hypothesis 5: There is a relationship between the literacy beliefs of the child and the parent based on ethnicity (African-American and Hispanic).

The PPLLIS-R scores were converted to percentages for the analysis. Traditional skills-based and emergent percentage scores were calculated for each parent, (i.e., percent of the traditional items and percent of emergent items checked). Then the percentages were assigned into the three categories, 1 = traditional skills-based or 2 = emergent, based on the higher percentage score. If the emergent or traditional scores had a negligible difference of 5% or less, the PPLLIS-R score was assigned into the category of 3 = neither.

The CCRWS was used to determine the literacy instruction mode preferences of the children. The questions were short and simple: (a) Who reads to you? (b) What people teach children how to read? (c) Who teaches you how to write? and (d) What people teach children how to write? The children answered that the parent, the teacher, or the parent and teacher were responsible for teaching children how to read or write.

The children's responses were assigned into the three categories of 1 = traditional skills-based, 2 = emergent, or 3 = neither. The child who indicated the *teacher* as the person who teaches the child to read or write with no reference to the parent was categorized as traditional skills-based in his or her belief structure. The child who stated that *parent* is the person who teaches the child to read or write with no reference to the teacher was labeled as emergent literacy in his or her belief system. The child who indicated that *both the teacher and the parent(s)* were responsible for teaching him or her to read or write was categorized as neither.

Table 11 presents the count of parents and children assigned to each literacy beliefs category of traditional skills-based, emergent literacy, or neither.

Table 11

Count of Parent and Child Beliefs (N = 72)

Participant	Traditional	Emergent	Neither
Parent	9	26	1
Child	3	20	13
Total	12	46	14

It was found that twenty-six parents and twenty children believed that the parent was the primary literacy teacher (emergent), while only nine parents and three children believed it was the teacher (traditional skills-based). In addition, a total of forty six parents and children were emergent in their belief structure, a total of twelve parents and children were traditional skills-based, and fourteen were neither traditional-skills based nor emergent in their beliefs.

Each parent was then paired with his or her child to determine if the parent and child matched one another in their literacy beliefs of traditional skills-based, emergent literacy, or no match. There were 2 parent-child dyads that matched in traditional-skills based beliefs, 16 parent-child dyads that matched in emergent literacy beliefs, and 18 parent-child dyads that did not match.

The 2 parent-child dyads that matched in traditional skills-based beliefs and the 16 that matched in emergent literacy beliefs were examined for a relationship between

the literacy beliefs of the parent-child dyads based on socioeconomic status (SES) and ethnicity. The remaining 18 no-match dyads were eliminated from the analysis.

A chi-square test revealed that there was no significant relationship for the 18 matching dyads based on SES (χ^2=.281, p>.05, V=.13) or ethnicity (χ^2=1.432, p>.05, V=.28). Table 12 presents the results of the 18 matching dyads per count and percentage for SES and ethnicity. Caution must be taken when interpreting this data due to the expected count in the 4 traditional cells of the contingency table.

Table 12

Relationship between Matching Parent-Child Dyads by SES and Ethnicity (N = 36)

Factor	Traditional		Emergent	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
SES				
Low	1 (1)	16.7%	5 (8)	83.3%
Middle	1 (1)	8.3%	11 (8)	91.7%
Total	2 (2)	11.1%	16 (16)	88.9%
Ethnicity				
African-American	2 (1)	18.2%	9 (8)	81.8%
Hispanic	0 (1)	0.0%	7 (8)	100.0%
Total	2 (2)	11.1%	16 (16)	88.9%

Note. Parentheses present number of expected count.

Summary

The multivariate generalization of the Box's *M* test was nonsignificant, indicating that the multivariate assumption of homogeneity was met. The overall MANOVA for the

2 x 2 design was conducted to test two hypotheses for the main effect and one hypothesis of the interaction effect. One main effect was found to be significant in the parents' linear combination of the PPLLIS-R traditional skills-based and emergent scores per SES, Λ = .891, F (2, 147) = 9.01, p <.05. There were no significant differences for the main effect of the parents' linear combination of the PPLLIS-R traditional skills-based and emergent literacy scores for ethnicity or for the interaction effect of SES and ethnicity. The follow-up tests revealed significant differences for the traditional skills-based scores of SES, F (1, 148) = 13.146, p <.025.

The relationship of parents' and children's literacy beliefs based on SES was not significantly related, (χ^2=.281, p>.05, V=.13). In addition, relationship of parents' and children's beliefs per ethnicity were non-significant (χ^2=1.432, p>.05, V=.28).

The following chapter will explain the results from this chapter as related to the framework of this study. The conclusions and implications of this study will be discussed. Future research related to this study will be addressed.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a discussion of the study. A summary of the investigation is presented, results and limitations of the research are discussed, and recommendations for future research are indicated. The chapter concludes with implications for parents and educators.

Summary of the Study

This study investigated parental and children's beliefs pertaining to early literacy acquisition as related to the ethnicity and SES of the participants. The sample population consisted of 152 low and middle income African-American and Hispanic parents and 36 of their 3-, 4-, or 5-year-old children. A total of 126 mothers and 26 fathers participated. The children's sample population consisted of 18 male and 18 female children of equal proportions for ethnicity and SES.

The parents completed the PPLLIS-R that consisted of an equal number of items from the traditional skills-based and emergent literacy orientations. The children responded to open-ended questions (the CCRWS) related to the instruction of reading and writing skills. The parents were asked to complete the survey at the day care center or school the child attended and the children answered the questions at the day care center or the school.

An item analysis was conducted to strengthen the two constructs of the parental belief survey (i.e., traditional skill-based and emergent literacy). The parents' responses to the survey were used to determine differences by ethnicity and SES. The parents'

responses were also compared to the children's answers to ascertain the reading instruction mode preferences between the two groups.

Discussion of the Findings

First, the results of the reliability analysis are discussed, followed by the results from the quantitative analyses of each research question. Data obtained from the adult's surveys and children's interviews are used to clarify and corroborate the respondents' beliefs of early literacy acquisition.

Reliability Analysis

Anderson (1995a, 1995b, 1995c) established content validity of the PPLLIS-A ten years ago with the use of professional inspection by novice teachers. Due to the 10-year time difference from the Anderson studies to the present study, the parental belief survey used in the study was analyzed for reliability to strengthen the measures of the two constructs, traditional skills-based and emergent literacy. Moderate relationships were established for each scale.

Reading researchers (Chall, 1967, 1977, 1996; Loveless, 2001) have labeled the concepts related to the constructs of traditional skills-based and emergent literacy differently over the course of time (e.g., top-down versus bottom up approach; whole language versus phonics; holistic versus skills-based). In addition, differences are evident in the conceptual framework of the constructs. Traditionalists believe it is essential to teach the foundations of reading and writing skills in a school-like setting (Teale & Sulzby, 1986) and think that children must master a set of rudimentary skills before they can learn to read or write (Vacca, Vacca, & Gove, 2000). In contrast, emergent literacy is characterized as children's early literacy behaviors and their ongoing development in

natural, informal settings prior to the onset of formal literacy instruction (Sulzby & Teale, 1996; Yaden, Rowe, & MacGillivray, 2000).

In this present study, this difference in interpretation was evident. Several items were removed from the scale because they could not be clearly categorized as traditional skills-based or emergent literacy. The items removed were Item 2, "Use flashcards (show example) to learn words the child is not familiar with," Item 3, "Use reading workbooks (show example) and reading textbooks (show example) to learn to read," Item 8, "Check for understanding by asking the child questions about the story at the end," and Item 16, "Use a writing workbook like this (show examples) to learn how to write."

These traditional skills-based practices are offset by the current trend which emphasizes a balance between phonics-based and holistic text reading (Farris, Fuhler, & Walther, 2004; Tompkins, 2006). As the classroom teachers begin to incorporate this balanced approach in their classrooms, parents are starting to embrace this philosophy as well (Hammond & Raphael, 1999; Rasinski, 2001), which can lead to rejection of traditional skilled-based beliefs as demonstrated in this study.

One item was deleted from the emergent scale, Item 21, "The child learns to read when the parent reads to and with the child." Reading to the child is an activity that can be categorized as either traditional skills-based or emergent literacy. However, the approach used when reading to the child differs based on each philosophy. The traditionalist believes that while reading there should be a concentration on construction of words (DeBaryshe, Binder, & Buell, 2000), but the parent endorsing emergent literacy focuses on meaning (Stipek, Milburn, Clements, & Daniels, 1992). This difference in

philosophy could have contributed to the ambiguity of the items and to justification for elimination.

Item 13 was removed from the traditional skills-based scale and transferred to the emergent literacy scale based on the item analysis. This item which reads "Expose the child to a lot of experience copying words, sentences, and finally stories before she attempts to write stories on her own," is clearly connected to the traditional skills-based construct. This item can be interpreted as the child will not be encouraged to follow the pattern of emergent writing behaviors such as drawing-like scribbles, strings or letters, and letter-like forms (Clay, 1975; Roskos & Neuman, 1994; Snows, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) before more conventional writing is introduced. Reading researchers point out that that traditionalists believe children must learn to read or write in a sequential or hierarchal order (Vacca, Vacca, & Gove, 2000), and should practice these instructional methods in formal settings (Teale & Sulzby, 1986) until sufficient mastery and automaticity is obtained (DeBaryshe, Binder, & Buell, 2000).

Research Questions

The first question examined the differences in the parents' mean PPLLIS-R scores based on low and middle SES. The results indicated that SES was significantly related to the parents' perceptions of early literacy acquisition. In particular, the low-income SES parents scored higher than middle SES parents on the skills-based items. These results are consistent with prior findings that indicate low-income families are typically skills-based in their belief structure. In a study conducted with a population similar to this study, Piotrkowski et al. (2000) found that 355 low-income parents of preschoolers believed it was necessary for children to have basic knowledge of literacy skills before entering

kindergarten. The parents of the 174 low-income families in the Lapp, Fisher, Flood, and Moore's (2002) study also reported that teaching activities such as reciting the ABCs, reading stories, writing numbers, and writing the ABCs were the teacher's responsibility.

The second question examined the parents' mean PPLLIS-R scores based on their ethnic groups of Hispanic and African-American. Although several previous works have validated the Hispanic and African-American preference for basic skills (Goldenberg, Reese, & Gallimore, 1992; Harry, Allen, & McLaughlin, 1996; Piotrkowski, Botskob, & Matthews, 2000), this was not demonstrated in this study.

The results for the third question related to the interaction between the parents' ethnicity and their SES in determining the PPLLIS-R scores were also not significant. There was no relationship between beliefs based on both SES and ethnicity.

The fourth and fifth questions examined the relationship between the parents' and children literacy beliefs, with no significant relationship found based on SES or ethnicity. One contributing factor related to this may have been the age of the children. The limited discussion from the 3- , 4- , and 5-year-old could have minimized the results. In addition, children at this age are mostly influenced by the parents and thus the parents would most likely have been seen as the primary teacher in the child's life. Also, a larger sample size may have produced different results. Only 18 of the original 36 parent-child dyads were matching in beliefs, and therefore only these 18 dyads were used for the analysis. In addition, the instrument may not have been sensitive enough to glean the requested information. Children's questions that were more aligned with the parents' survey may have yielded more useful data.

Although there were no significant findings for the hypotheses of the fourth and fifth questions, one notable observation was that the majority of the parent-child dyads, regardless of SES, were categorized as emergent in their belief structures. In addition, the means of the total sample were higher for emergent literacy than traditional skills-based. In contrast, the dated study of Anderson (1995b, 1995c) found the majority of the white-collar families and less of the blue collar families endorsed the emergent literacy philosophy. The current emphasis on parental involvement, particularly adult-child storybook reading, has possibly contributed towards this trend of emergent literacy beliefs.

Recommendations for Future Research

A larger study could further clarify whether more parents of the low or middle SES, regardless of ethnicity, are more emergent in their ideals. This would be important to know in light of the traditional skill-based approach emphasized in the No Child Left Behind schools. A larger study may also yield significant results for interaction between ethnicity and SES for the PPLLIS-R scores.

The responses from the PPLLIS-R can be analyzed for commonalities among the groups. Trends may emerge from this analysis providing insight on the literacy perceptions per SES and/or ethnicity. These similarities and differences in responses can also be presented in a frequency distribution per SES or ethnicity.

In addition, parental beliefs regarding early literacy acquisition may be impacted by SES if subgroups are used in future studies. For example, Hispanics do not consider themselves a homogeneous group. Based on a report by Therrien and Ramirez (2001), individuals who answered “yes” to the question “Are you Hispanic?” on the 2000 Census

were asked to check if they were Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or fill in the fourth box with a more appropriate response (e.g., Argentinean, Dominican). There is also a sizable Haitian-American in South Florida. A study can be conducted that incorporates the Haitian-American populations as a subgroup of African Americans. The use of White non-Hispanic and Asian populations of the United States could be compared to the other ethnic groups for a greater understanding of parental beliefs.

The determination of SES can include income, educational attainment and occupational status. In this study, income was the only criteria. Future studies that use education level and/or occupation as a factor may yield different results.

Implications

The significant results this of study offer educators and administrators guidance in shaping practices and policies. The results confirm that SES contributes to the belief structure of the parents. In a school system with a diverse population the beliefs of parents may be inconsistent with the educators (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990, 1996; Harry, Allen, and McLaughlin, 1996; Heath, 1983). For example, many educators practice the traditionalist' 'drill and skill' approach for literacy instruction; this method of acquiring reading skills was further justified in the National Reading Panel Report with an entire chapter hinging on the benefits of phonics and phonemic awareness (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). This practice of traditional skills-based activities in the classroom may be in direct conflict with the parent who is more emergent in his or her belief structure. It takes a culturally, economically responsive teacher to be open to the possibility of that SES can be influential at how learning is supported in the home (Rasinski, 2001).

The item analysis revealed that some of the items were not clearly interpreted as traditional skills-based or emergent-like in philosophy. This lack of distinction may be the result of the school and multimedia appeal at the local and national level for parents to be more proactive in their children's academic growth (Epstein, 1992, 1995; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman & Hemphill, 1991; Trelease, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 1997). When parents establish a partnership with the schools, parents become more familiar with the literacy-related activities endorsed by the school and may adopt these principles. This may result in a parental belief structure that is merged with the climate of the school and less characteristic of their own personal belief system.

Sixteen of the children involved in the parent-child dyads were not classified as either traditional skills-based or emergent in their beliefs. Age may have been a factor in this phenomena. The complexity involved in asking young children questions has been extensively covered in the literature (Brady, Poole, Warren, & Jones, 1999; Delfos, 2005; Doverborg & Pramling, 1993; Fritzley & Lee, 2003; Peterson, Dowden, & Tobin, 1999). Using the mothers of the children to ask the children's survey questions may help to resolve the difficulty encountered in engaging conversation with this age group (Goodman, Sharma, Thomas, & Considine, 1995).

Conclusions

It can be concluded from this study that SES was influential in the early literacy beliefs of low-income African-American and Hispanic parents. These parents believed in the traditional skills approach, surmising that these parents find it necessary for children to have sufficient school readiness skills prior to learning to read or write. When the beliefs of the parents, low- and middle-SES were classified, the total sample appeared to

slant more towards the emergent literacy belief structure, endorsing the child's acquisition of early literacy skills before the onset of formal instruction.

The relationship between the parents' and children's beliefs was not confirmed by this study, although a large body of research supports parental influence and transfer of behaviors as a result of this influence. Three factors may have influenced the results. The children may have been too young to adequately express their belief. In addition, a larger sample or a more sensitive instrument may have yielded different results.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

I.R.B. APPROVAL

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM IN ENGLISH

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY
TITLE: PARENTS' AND CHILDREN'S BELIEFS ABOUT READING AND WRITING

We would like you and your child to be in a research study. The investigator of this study is Althea Duren, a graduate student at Florida International University (FIU). The study will include 152 parents and their children. The study will take about one-half hour of you and your child's time. The study will look at what beliefs you and your child have about reading and writing. If you decide to be in the study we will arrange to meet at your child's school or at your home.

We will ask you and your child questions about what you think is important to learn how to read and write. The parent's survey has 30 questions that can be answered with either a "yes" or "no." The children's survey has four questions that the child will answer based on his or her ability and experience. We will audiotape the child so that we can write the child's answers on paper at a later date.

A random number, not your names, will identify your data. All of your answers are private and will not be shared with anyone unless required by the law. The results will be presented as a group at conferences and in a paper.

There are no known risks related to the surveys. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you or your child become anxious or upset we take a break.

There is no cost of payment to you or your child as a participant. You or your child may not gain anything by being in the study. However, your help will give us new information about what beliefs parents and children have about reading and writing.

If you would like to know more about this research after you are done, you can contact Althea Duren at (305) 668-7473. If you feel that you or your child were mistreated or you have questions about being in a study, you may contact Dr. Jonathan Tubman, the Chairperson of the FIU Institutional Review Board at (305) 348-3024 or (305) 348-2494.

If you have had all your questions answered to your liking and would like to be in the study, sign below. Your signature also indicates that you will allow your child to participate in the study.

_____ _____

Print Child's name Print Parent's Name

_____ _____

Signature of Parent Date

I have explained the research procedure, subject rights, and answered questions asked by the participant. I have offered him/her a copy of this informed consent form.

_____ _____

Signature of witness Date

Your signature below indicates that you and your child do not want to participate in the study.

_____ _____

Print Child's name Print Parent's Name

_____ _____

Signature of Parent Date

APPENDIX C

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM IN SPANISH

PERMISO PARA PARTICIPAR EN UN ESTUDIO INVESTIGATIVO LLAMADO:
LO QUE PIENSAN LOS PADRES Y NIÑOS SOBRE LA LECTURA Y LA ESCRITURA

Nosotros deseamos la participación de usted y su niño/a en un estudio investigativo. La investigadora de este estudio es Althea Duren, estudiante a nivel graduado de la Universidad Internacional de la Florida (FIU). Este estudio incluirá a 152 padres y sus hijos. El estudio le tomará trenta minutos de su tiempo a usted y a su niño/a. El estudio buscará averiguar lo que piensa usted y su niño/a sobre la lectura y escritura. Si usted decide participar en este estudio, nosotros haremos los arreglos pertinentes para reunirnos con usted y su niño/a en la escuela o en su hogar.

Nosotros le haremos preguntas a usted y a su niño/a sobre el por qué ustedes piensan que es importante el aprender a leer y a escribir. El cuestionario de los padres cuenta con 30 preguntas que pueden ser contestadas "si ò no." El cuestionario de los niños cuenta con 4 preguntas que ellos contestarán basadas en sus habilidades y experiencias. Nosotros grabaremos las respuestas de los niños para más tarde transcribirlas al papel.

Un número tomado al azar, se le otorgará a cada participante. No se usaran sus nombres para identificar la información recibida. Todas sus respuestas serán privadas y no se compartirán con nadie a no ser que la ley lo requiera. Los resultados serán presentados en grupos, en conferencias y por escrito.

No existe riesgo alguno relacionados con este estudio. Usted puede saltar cualquier pregunta que no desee contestar. Si usted o su niño/a lo requieren, tomaremos un descanso durante la entrevista.

Ni usted ni su niño/a tendrán que pagar por participar en este estudio. Quizás, usted y su niño/a no ganen nada por participar en este estudio investigativo, sin embargo, su ayuda nos dará a nosotros nueva información de lo que piensan usted y su niño/a sobre la lectura y la escritura. Al final del estudio usted y su niño/a recibiran un pequeño obsequio por haber participado en este estudio.

Si usted quiere saber sobre esta investigación una vez terminada, usted se podrá poner en contacto con Althea Duren en el (305) 668-7473. Si usted tiene alguna queja de cómo

usted o su niña/o fueron tratados o tiene preguntas sobre este estudio, por favor llame al Dr. Jonathan Tubman, Chairperson, FIU Institutional Review Board al (305) 348-3024 o (305) 348-2494.

Si hemos contestado todas sus preguntas en esta carta y quisiera participar en el estudio, por favor firme abajo. Su firma también indicará la participación de su niño/a en el estudio,

_____ _____

Imprima el nombre del niño Imprima el nombre del padre

_____ _____

Firma del padre Fecha

Yo le he explicado el procedimiento de este estudio, sus derechos y he contestado todas las preguntas llevada a cabo por el participante. Yo le he ofrecido una copia de esta planilla de consentimiento.

_____ _____

Firma del testigo Fecha

Su firma abajo indica que usted y su niño/a no desean participar en este estudio.

_____ _____

Imprima del nombre del niño/a Imprima el nombre del padre

_____ _____

Firma del padre Fecha

APPENDIX D

Children's Concept of Reading and Writing Survey (CCRWS)

1. Who reads to you?
2. Who teaches you how to write?
3. What people teach children how to read?
4. What people teach children how to write?

APPENDIX E

Children's Concepts of Reading and Writing (CCRW)

1. [*Child's name*] Do you know how to read?
2. How do children learn how to read?
3. [*Child's name*] Do you know how to write/print?
4. How do children learn how to write/print?

APPENDIX F

Parents' Perceptions of Literacy Learning Interview Schedule (PPLLIS-A)

1. Does a child learn to read by first learning the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, then words, then sentences, and then stories?
2. Is teaching a child to recognize isolated words on sight (flashcards) a suitable technique for teaching her to read?
3. Does a child need workbooks and basal readers to learn how to read?
4. Is this book (e.g., *The Giving Tree*) suitable to read to very young children?
5. Does a child benefit from hearing favorite stories that she has memorized read again and again?
6. Should you encourage a child to join in sometimes while you read a book with which he is familiar?
7. Will you be teaching your child a bad habit if you point to the print as you read?
8. Are you helping a child to learn to read by encouraging her to discuss what is being read?
9. Is it necessary to check a child's understanding by asking him questions at the end of each story?
10. Should you permit your child to "read" familiar books from memory using the pictures as cues?
11. Does real reading begin only when a child begins to say the words as they are printed on the page?
12. Is it necessary for a child to know the letters of the alphabet, and the sounds of the letters of the alphabet before she begins to write?

13. Should a child learn to print neatly the letters of the alphabet before attempting to print messages, notes, stories, and so forth?
14. Is it necessary for a child to have lots of experience copying words, then sentences, and finally stories before she attempts to write on her own?
15. Should a child be encouraged to write only easy words and short sentences when he begins to write?
16. Are a young child's early scribblings (show example) related to later development in writing stories, messages, etc.?
17. Does a child need workbooks to learn like these to learn how to write?
18. Can a child learn to write before she has learned the correct spelling of the words?
19. Should you correct a child if she writes "kt" for the word "cat"?
20. Is a child's confusion of "b" and "d" and "p" and "q" in printing an indication of a major problem?
21. Can a child begin to write (e.g. notes, stories) before she knows how to read?
22. Are learning to read and learning to write similar to learning to talk in that children learn these skills gradually?
23. Is it only gifted children who learn to read and write before receiving formal instruction in preschool or elementary school?
24. Does reading to and with children help them learn to write?
25. Do children learn important things about reading and writing before they begin formal reading programs at preschool or elementary school?

Do these activities help children learn to read and write?

26. talking to them?

27. taking them on outings?
28. having them pretend to write grocery lists with you?
29. reading to them?
30. Should schools be totally responsible for teaching children to learn to read and to write?
31. Is it important that children see their parents reading and writing?
32. Should children have reached a certain age before they can begin to learn to read and write?
33. Do children need training in hand-eye coordination, recognizing shapes, and forth before they begin to learn to read and to write?

APPENDIX G

Parents' Perceptions of Literacy Learning Interview Survey (PPLLIS)

From the following items, check what should be done to help your child learn to read and write.

_____ 1. Learn the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, then words, then sentences, and then stories. (T)

_____ 2. Use flashcards (show example) to learn words the child is not familiar with. (T)

_____ 3. Use reading workbooks (show example) and reading textbooks (show example) to learn to read. (T)

_____ 4. Re-read favorite stories that the child has memorized. (E)

_____ 5. Have the child join in with the parent while reading a book the child is familiar with. (E)

_____ 6. The parent points to the print as the book is read. (E)

_____ 7. Encourage the child to talk about what is stated in the book. (E)

_____ 8. Check for understanding by asking the child questions about the story at the end. (T)

_____ 9. Permit the child to "read" familiar books using only the pictures to tell the story. (E)

_____ 10. Ask the child to say the words only as they are printed on the page. (T)

_____ 11. Teach the child the letters of the alphabet and the sounds of the letters of the alphabet before he/she begins to write. (T)

_____ 12. Learn to neatly print the letters of the alphabet before making an attempt to print messages, notes, stories, and so forth. (T)

_____ 13. Expose the child to a lot of experience copying words, sentences, and finally stories before she attempts to write stories on her own. (E)

_____ 14. Encourage the child to write only easy words and short sentences when he begins to write. (T)

_____ 15. The young child's early scribblings (show example) relate to his/her future ability to write stories, messages, and so forth. (E)

_____ 16. Use a writing workbook like this (show examples) to learn how to write. (T)

_____ 17. Learn to write letters before learning the correct spelling of words. (T)

_____ 18. Correct your child if she writes "kt" for the word "cat." (T)

_____ 19. Encourage the child to begin to write (e.g., notes, stories) before he/she knows how to read. (E)

_____ 20. Only talented children can learn to read and write before they are taught in school. (T)

_____ 21. The child learns to read when the parent reads to and with the child. (E)

_____ 22. The child can learn important things about reading and writing before they begin to learn to read at preschool or elementary school. (E)

_____ 23. Talking to the child helps the child learn to read and write. (E)

_____ 24. Taking him/her to different places can help the child learn to read and write. (E)

_____ 25. Have the child pretend to write grocery lists for you. (E)

_____ 26. Reading to the child will help the child learn to read and write. (E)

_____ 27. Teachers are totally responsible for teaching children to read and write. (T)

_____ 28. Children should see their parents reading and writing. (E)

_____ 29. The child should reach a certain age before he/she can begin to learn to read. (T)

_____ 30. Train the child to hold the pencil and paper correctly before he/she begin to learn to write. (T)

APPENDIX H

Parents' Perceptions of Literacy Learning Interview Survey-Revised (PPLLIS-R)

From the following items, check what should be done to help your child learn to read and write.

_____ 1. Learn the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, then words, then sentences, and then stories. (T)

_____ 2. Re-read favorite stories that the child has memorized. (E)

_____ 3. Have the child join in with the parent while reading a book the child is familiar with. (E)

_____ 4. The parent points to the print as the book is read. (E)

_____ 5. Encourage the child to talk about what is stated in the book. (E)

_____ 6. Permit the child to "read" familiar books using only the pictures to tell the story. (E)

_____ 7. Ask the child to say the words only as they are printed on the page. (T)

_____ 8. Teach the child the letters of the alphabet and the sounds of the letters of the alphabet before he/she begins to write. (T)

_____ 9. Learn to neatly print the letters of the alphabet before making an attempt to print messages, notes, stories, and so forth. (T)

_____ 10. Expose the child to a lot of experience copying words, sentences, and finally stories before she attempts to write stories on her own. (T)

_____ 11. Encourage the child to write only easy words and short sentences when he begins to write. (T)

_____ 12. The young child's early scribblings (show example) relate to his/her future ability to write stories, messages, and so forth. (E)

_____ 13. Learn to write letters before learning the correct spelling of words. (T)

_____ 14. Correct your child if she writes "kt" for the word "cat." (T)

_____ 15. Encourage the child to begin to write (e.g., notes, stories) before he/she knows how to read. (E)

_____ 16. Only talented children can learn to read and write before they are taught in school. (T)

_____ 17. The child can learn important things about reading and writing before they begin to learn to read at preschool or elementary school. (E)

_____ 18. Talking to the child helps the child learn to read and write. (E)

_____ 19. Taking him/her to different places can help the child learn to read and write. (E)

_____ 20. Have the child pretend to write grocery lists for you. (E)

_____ 21. Reading to the child will help the child learn to read and write. (E)

_____ 22. Teachers are totally responsible for teaching children to read and write. (T)

_____ 23. Children should see their parents reading and writing. (E)

_____ 24. The child should reach a certain age before he/she can begin to learn to read. (T)

_____ 25. Train the child to hold the pencil and paper correctly before he/she begin to learn to write. (T)