Effects of Home Literacy Environment and Parental Beliefs on Additional Language Learners' Literacy Development: A Closer Look at What Can Be Done to Facilitate the Process.

By

Roza Naderi

BA, Simon Fraser University, 2008

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University of Victoria

Supervisory Committee

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Dr. Kathy Sanford (Department of Curriculum and Instruction)

Supervisor

Dr. Kristin Mimick, (Department of Curriculum and Instruction)

Departmental Member

Abstract

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Dr. Kristin Mimick, (Department of Curriculum and Instruction)

Departmental Member

According to Statistics Canada (2011), the foreign population represents 20% of the total Canadian population and around 75% of these new immigrants speak another language other than English. Experts in the field of education have concerns about the need of young bilingual learners. Research shows that early language experiences and emergent literacy are important precursors for children's language development and reading success in the later years (Snow et al., 1998). Being an immigrant and an early childhood educators I am aware of the importance of additional language learning in immigrant families' young children. Home Literacy Environment has been identified as an important factor influencing children's literacy and language development (Whiteburst & Lonigan, 1998). This paper reviews current literature on Home Literacy Environment and the relationship between native and additional language learning. Ultimately, a series of workshops have been developed for immigrant families with young children to attend and as such facilitate their youngsters' additional language learning.

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Acknowledgements

Completing a Masters Degree has always been a goal of mine and having been privileged to be part of the first Early Childhood Education Cohort at the University of Victoria has made it more significant. Having my Bachelors of Arts in Psychology from Simon Fraser University and my Early Childhood Educator Diploma for the past five years, I always felt the need to enhance my knowledge in this field. After all, it is the field that I truly enjoy being a part of and can only hope to advance further in.

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Chapter I- Introduction

As stated by Statistics Canada (2011), the foreign-born population represents around 20% of the total Canadian population with 75% of these immigrants speaking a mother tongue other than English. Moreover, the number of children in the United States of America who speak a second language other than English has had an increase from 9-20% from 1972 to 2007 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). As described by Hammer, Scarpino and Davison (2011) this increase is observed in the number of children entering preschool programs with approximately 30% of children being Second Language Learners (SLLs). These numbers are also reflective of developments in Canada, considering Canada is the number one country among the G8 countries to admit immigrants annually, with Germany and United States standing second (Statistics Canada, 2011). Assuming the ratio of preschoolers in United States are reflective in Canada, one third to one fourth of children entering preschools are second language learners.

Educational and language researchers have concerns about the needs of young bilingual learners and whether or not this group is at risks of poor academic outcomes, a concern that is eminent in Spanish-speaking children in the United States (Paez, Bock, & Pizzo, 2011). Whether these concerns are also present in Canada needs more in-depth research, as stated by Paez, Bock and Pizzo (2011), however the main contributors to this problem are the low socio-economic status of the families and lower parental education.

The acquisition of strong language and literacy skills is of most importance for children to be able to compete academically with their peers in school and be successful in today's information and technology-based environment. Research has shown that language experiences

and early exposures to literacy are important precursors for children's language development and reading success in later years (Snow et al., 1998). Moreover, parenting practices seem to be strong predictors of early literacy skills (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2003). As suggested by Snow et al. (1998) it is the quality of parental interactions with the children that make the most effect.

The Personal Significance

Being an early childhood educator for the past five years in the community where the presence of these families is obvious, I am in close contact with this group. I watch the challenges these young families face doing the simplest things such as communicating with the teachers due to the lack of language proficiency. In the classroom of sixteen children, at any time, at least five of these 3 to 5 year olds are additional language learners with minimum knowledge of English language when they first enter the pre-school. Additionally, their parents also have little to no knowledge of English and communicating simple messages to and between the parents and teachers is often challenging. I observe these children first hand being shy and withdrawn from the group for at least few months until they learn a few words and sentences with which they can start communicating with their peers. On many occasions these children become upset and frustrated by their inability to convey their message, despite the teachers' efforts to help them. These frustrated and disappointed children feel lost and alone and often want to leave the preschool. Faced with their children's lack of interest in coming to preschool, the parents ultimately have to decide on what they should do. From one side they witness their young child's feelings of fear and frustration and from the other side they believe that the child's attendance to the school, where English language is being practiced, is beneficial to them and their success. I cannot count the times when these desperate parents, faced with their children's

feelings of anxiety and loss, seek help from the teacher while they, themselves, face obstacles of communicating clearly and effectively. Encountering these experiences first hand I realize the urgent need and attention that this group requires.

Because of how the Canadian population is changing due to immigration, the issue of additional language learning and the challenges that surrounds it have are very important. Aside from this importance, this issue resonates with me personally as well. I immigrated with my family to Canada few years ago and at the time I had beginners' knowledge of the English language. I was able to communicate with others and understand them but at beginners' level. As I entered Secondary school I had no choice but to gear up and focus on my language development in order to proceed through high school with success. However, during those years I witnessed the struggle that my parents especially my mother had to go through not knowing a word of English. My younger brother being only in elementary school with no knowledge of the English language and the circumstances surrounding families such as mine at that stage of their lives has inspired me to direct my research at this angle. The uncertainty that my mother faced on whether to use English language or her mother tongue at home and the lack of accessible resources for her to make this decision wisely has resonated with me to this day. Faced with this difficult dilemma, she had to decide whether to speak English at home and practice her new language and help with my brother's or to use her mother tongue at home, a language that felt more comfortable and created less anxiety for her. However, she was under the impression that using her mother tongue at home could result in slower acquisition of English language both for her and her children.

I remember that for the majority of time in those early years my father had to work out of town and my mother who had no knowledge of English language was forced to face all the

challenges of new life in Canada alone. Of all the things she had to deal with, it was obvious that

the well-being of her children came first, however she felt disabled and frustrated when the

school's administrators would call to speak to her about my brother's difficulties at school. She

felt embarrassed and frustrated not being able to communicate her concerns about my brother to

the school. I clearly remember the uncertainties she faced dealing with my brother's language

development and she had no resources to refer to. My mother and many like her are desperate for

accessible resources that they could use to accelerate and facilitate their children's English

language development but these resources are not readily available for them.

The Purpose of Present Study/Project

Hence, the focus of this study is on young Additional Language Learners (ALLs),

specifically in preschool and kindergarten years, and how Home Literacy Environment and

parental roles and beliefs could be modified to facilitate their language learning process. The

term Additional Language Learners (ALLs) is used to express that this group under study are not

just English learner and they could be other language learners (e.g. indigenous learners, etc.).

The term Second Language Learners has also not been used because many of these ALLs have

more than one native or stronger language and as such SLLs is not representative of the group I

am focusing on. Additionally, this project focused on reviewing available research on the

relationship that exists between development of native and additional language and how each

affects the other. The terms used to describe this group of learners vary in different literatures

reviewed, whether English Language Learners (ELLs) is used or Second Language Learners

(SLLs), they could all be applied to Additional Language Learners (ALLs). Moreover, I have

developed a series of workshops which second language learners' families could have easy

access to in their communities. These workshops could also be utilized for teachers, early

childhood educators and community members and I hope to be able to present them in local libraries and community centers later on. To understand these issues further a comprehensive review of current literature on these topics is eminent. It is hoped that this study could call the necessary attention to these important matters and to shed light on the struggles that immigrant families, such as mine, face in regards to their children's second language development. It is critical that this issue receives the necessary attention because the success and well-being of this group of children in that stage and later in their lives depend on it.

Chapter 2-Literature Review

Role of Parents and Home literacy Environment in Literacy and Language Development.

It is widely accepted by experts in the field of education and language that parents and the Home Literacy Environment they provide for their children play an important role in the development of children's reading and language skills (Senechal, Lefevre, Smith-Chant, & Colton, 2001). This applies to children from both English speaking and Additional Language learners (ALLs). Literacy is a vital skill in today's world and a powerful tool for academic, intellectual and personal growth; the emergent literacy skills which are developed prior to five years of age strongly predict achievement in later literacy learning and many other fields throughout life (Coursin, 2012).

Home Literacy Environment, Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness and Letter Knowledge

In a study done by Evans, Shaw and Bell (2000) on the relationship between the home environments of 67 children and their language and literacy development, the results are evident. The authors specifically wanted to find out the interrelationship between the general literacy environment of the home, the activity of reading to children and coaching children in reading. In addition, the authors wanted to determine the contribution of these activities to children's knowledge of letter names, their receptive vocabulary and phonological sensitivity after accounting for the child's cognitive activity and the parents' education. The data pool formed from 67 children with 62 mothers and 5 fathers and the average child's age in the sample was 5 years, 11 month (SD= 3.77 months; range = 5:5 to 6:8). The parents were asked to complete a literacy practice questionnaire which was a taped-recorded interview and a combination of both closed and open-ended questions. The questions consisted of how much time parents could

allocate to read to their children and whether anyone else besides them reads to their children. Other questions included who initiated the reading and whether the parents utilized any other activities related to reading. In addition, the study involved interviewing the children about the frequency of shared storybook reading at home, frequency of library visits and how the parents helped them read. The results of the study emphasize that it is the frequency of activities that involve working with letters such as learning letter names and sounds and printing letters that predict knowledge of letter names, letter sounds, and phonological sensitivity after controlling for parents' education and child's ability. The authors point out that the results of this study is in accordance with other similar studies (Meyer, Wardrop, Stahl, & Linn, 1994; and Wagoner, Torgesen, & Rashotte, 1994, as cited in Evans, Shaw, and Bell, 2000) and emphasize the importance of parental involvement and the enhancing role they play in the children's reading achievement (Evans, Shaw, and Bell, 2000).

"Home Literacy Environment" (HLE) has been defined differently by different researchers. Some predominantly defined it by a single feature of parent-preschooler reading (Bus, Van Ijzendoorn & Pellegrini, 1995 as cited in Griffin and Morrison, 2010); others have a broader and more multifaceted definition that includes measures of the duration of shared book reading, number of books and frequency of children's request for book reading activities (Payne, Whiteburst & Angell, 1994 as cited in Griffin and Morrison, 2010). In their study, Griffin and Morrison (2010) included the broader definition similar to Payne and colleagues, addressing two major issues concerning HLE. One related to how Home Literacy Environment predicts unique variance in children's performance on academic achievement measures after controlling for child's IQ and maternal education and secondly, the effectiveness of the measure of Home Literacy Environment in predicting literacy-based achievement differences among children as

determined by their measure of receptive vocabulary, general knowledge, and reading recognition skills. The study was done on 295 elementary school students in North Carolina from 55 kindergarten classes in 16 elementary schools. The authors measured children's literacy and numeracy skills in the fall of kindergarten and each subsequent spring from kindergarten throughout second grade using Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-R, Form L; Dunn & Dunn, 1981 as cited in Griffin and Morrison, 2010) and Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT-R, Form-L; Markwardt, 1989 as cited in Griffin and Morrison, 2010). The PPVT was used to measure receptive vocabulary and PIAT-R was used to measure general knowledge, reading recognition, and mathematics skills. The information about maternal education, occupation, family structure and the home literacy environment was gathered through a two-page questionnaire. The authors conclude that their measure of Home Literacy Environment reliably predicts unique variance in children's literacy skills at school entry and second grade even after controlling for IQ and social background. The authors emphasize that having higher home literacy environment is associated with higher performance on tests of receptive vocabulary, general knowledge, and reading recognition skills during kindergarten and these skills persist through the end of second grade.

In a Canadian study by Senechal and LeFevre (2002) with children from English speaking homes, Home Literacy Environment (HLE) explained significant amounts of variance in vocabulary, phonological awareness and listening comprehension in preschool. In regards to the precursors of reading and spelling, many studies have identified phonological awareness as the most important (Bus & Van IJzendiirn, 1999; Ennemoser, Marx, Weber, & Schneider, 2012 as cited in Niklas and Schneider, 2012), followed by vocabulary (Torgesen, 2002; Troppa et al., 2007 as cited in Niklas and Schneider, 2012) and letter knowledge (Torppa, Poikkeus, Laakso,

Eklund, & Lyytinen, 2006 as cited in Niklas and Schneider, 2012). Niklas and Schneider (2012) explain that Home Literacy Environment is mainly linked to later reading performance by strengthening these precursors in a positive learning environment. However, the authors point out that most studies using HLE as a predictor of later competencies concentrate on a single measurement, ignoring possible long term effects of HLE on the development of children's competencies. Hence, these authors carried a longitudinal study in Germany from kindergarten to the end of grade one, in which the authors not only focused on HLE but also SES and migration on one hand and reading and spelling and their precursors on the other hand. The study was done in south Germany on 921 children with a mean age of 4.6 years. The children were assessed at the beginning of the school year and again at the end of grade one. During kindergarten, children's vocabulary was measured by the first part of a vocabulary test. In addition, several tasks measuring phonological awareness were applied. To test children's letter knowledge, small cards with the twelve most common German letters were presented to the children and they had to name them. From this sample 52% had no migration background, whereas the rest had at least one parent who was born outside of Germany. The authors explain that the information about Home Literacy Environment was assessed by a questionnaire which was provided not only in German version but also in other common languages in the sample (e.g. Turkish, Greek or Russian). Results of their study indicate that individual differences in both cognitive abilities and HLE influenced the school relevant precursors from the very beginning. Similar to other studies on HLE, this study also shows HLE to be an important predictor for early phonological awareness and vocabulary in German context; however to a lesser degree to letter knowledge which, as the authors explain, could be due to letter teaching being seen as a task for primary school in Germany. Moreover, HLE acted as a mediator between SES and migration background

on the one hand and the specific precursors on the other hand. The authors explain that based on their analysis, SES and migration background do not affect early competencies directly, but their influence is mediated by the Home Literacy Environment families provide.

Home Literacy Environment and Concept of Print Knowledge

Home is the first place where children get exposed to language and have opportunities to observe, discover and engage in literacy-related activities (Lonigan & Shanahan, 2008). Exposure to books, magazine, newspapers, and environmental prints influence children's literacy development (Whiteburst & Lonigan, 1998), and children with better Home Literacy Environments show higher levels of reading knowledge and skills at kindergarten (Nord, Lennon, Liu & Chandler, 2000) and primary school (Wade and Moore, 2000). In a study conducted by Brown, Byrnes, Watson and Raban (2013), the relationship between Home Literacy Environment and knowledge of printed words prior to entering school was investigated. The participants were 147 children with the average age of 57 months. The authors explain that parents with stronger literacy profiles and habits whether related to traditional forms of print or new techno-literacies were more likely to read to their children on a daily basis and these children had higher knowledge of printed words. The results of the study suggest that Home Literacy Environment has positive effect on children's early literacy knowledge.

Home Literacy Environment and Oral Language Development

Moreover, studies show that positive outcomes are associated with home environments that provide multiple opportunities for children to interact with parents (caring adults) with meaningful age-appropriate materials (Hart & Risely, 1992; Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2006). In a study done on African-American mothers with children aged 3 to 5 years old, Roberts,

Jurgens, and Burchinal (2005) examined four measurements of home literacy practices including shared reading storybooks, techniques of maternal reading book, enjoying reading book and maternal sensitivity. The results of this study are consistent with a Canadian study (Jang et al. 2013) and show that home literacy practices show significant correlation with the language and literacy development. Findings of Roberts, Jurgens and Burchinal (2005) reveal that the quality of home environment predicts later reading progress of children. Home literacy practices that have shown to be predictors of child literacy development include: parent-child interactions, shared book reading, early literacy experiences that involve games, nursery rhymes, songs, and conversations in addition to library visits, parents' own reading habits and interactions with caring adults other than parents (Landry & Smith, 2007; Payne et al., 1994).

One of the main aspects of Home Literacy Environment involves oral language and the opportunities that parents provide for their children's verbal interaction. Research shows that early literacy in children occurs mainly through listening and talking experiences and not through reading and writing (Dickson & Tabors, 2001; Foster, Lambert, Abbott-Shim, Mccarty, & Franze, 2005). These authors emphasize that children build up their vocabulary steadily through interactions with significant others. The effects of oral language are both direct and indirect on phonological skills later in preschool years (Lonigan, Burgess, & Anthony, 2002). Other authors also agree that differences in oral language skills have huge influence on later literacy skills that are important to the development of children's early literacy skills (Foorman, Anthony, Seals, & Mouzaki, 2002). In a study done by Gonzalez and Uhing (2008) the importance of different dimensions of home literacy and the relationship between family literacy and English and Spanish preschoolers' oral language were investigated. The study involved 48 preschool children from Hispanic-Spanish speaking families with an average age of 4.3 years

with majority of them speaking only Spanish (92%). The authors used Familia Inventory (Taylor, 2000 as cited in Gonzalez and Uhing, 2008) which is a 57-item diagnostic questionnaire in Forms A and B designed to assess the multidimensional aspects of family and home literacy by family literacy programs. Data was collected by a trained bilingual data specialist and doctoral level special education university student. Findings of Gonzalez and Uhing (2008) reveal that for English Oral language proficiency, families' reported use of libraries was most useful and for Spanish oral language proficiency, having extended family members was most important. As noted by the authors, their findings are consistent with the work of other authors (Taylor, 2000; Christine, Enz, & Vukelich, 20006 as cited in Gonzalez and Uhing, 2008). In the case of Spanish oral language proficiency, the authors explain that caregivers may support children's language development through several processes including reciprocal communications, cognitive stimulation, scaffolding which are the activities that actively promote the skills that are critical foundations of literacy and learning to read.

Parental Roles in Home Literacy Environment

Research (Hemphill & Snow, 1996) has shown that simple activities in the family environment, such as daily conversations, reading books with children and watching appropriate TV programs (Sesame streets) are stimulating factors in children's listening development and enhancing their linguistic interactions, narratives, and explanations which are linked to spoken language. In a study done by Umek, Podlesek and Fekonja (2005), the various aspects of home environment were investigated. The authors of this study aimed to determine which aspects of HLE are especially important for child language development. The study included 353 mothers and their 3-years-old children from 53 preschools in different regions of Slovenia. The authors used Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire (HLEQ) that intended to measure the

characteristics of home environment that effects children's development. The lists of 31 items were created to evaluate the quality of different aspects of HLE. The children's literacy levels were assessed using a picture book and each child told a story while looking at a textile picture book which was then written down by the researcher; their coherence and syntactic structure were subsequently analyzed. The results of this study, based on HLEQ measures, indicate that certain aspects of HLE have better predictive validity than others. Certain aspects of HLE such as reading books to children, visiting the library and puppet theatres, interactive reading, and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) stimulation contribute to child's language development. Umek, Podlesek and Fekonja (2005) explain that the literacy activities that are planned and are more time consuming such as visiting a library, cinema or puppet theatre, teaching the letters, being involved in verbal interaction with the child while looking at a picture book are linked to greater measures of child's literacy competency. The authors (Umek, Podlesek, & Fekonja, 2005) do not thoroughly explain how or why this is but they suggest that the connection between different aspects of Home Literacy Environment and child language competence is a two-way connection. As the mother supports child's language development in verbal interactions during different activities, the child's interest and verbal responses also influence mother's choice of different literacy activities (Hoff & Naigles, 2002, as cited in Umek, Podlesek, & Fekonja, 2005).

Similar studies have been done in Arabic speaking families. Korat, Arafat, Aram and Klein (2012) investigated the contribution of maternal mediation in storybook reading, socioeconomic status (SES) and home literacy environment (HLE) to children's literacy level in kindergarten and first grade in Israel Arabic-speaking families. The participants of their study included 109 kindergarten children and their mothers and children's literacy level was assessed in

kindergarten. The authors used videotapes to assess mothers' book reading activities and HLE data was collected using a questionnaire. The literacy levels of children were assessed one year later in first grade. The authors explain that these mothers usually used paraphrasing in their reading activities and written language was emphasized less. The results of this study are also consistent with similar studies in which there is a correlation between SES and children's literacy measures in oral and written language in kindergarten and first grade (Korat, Klein, & Segal-Drori, 2007; Evans, Shaw, & Bell, 2000; and Niklas and Schneider, 2012). Moreover, significant positive relationships were found between HLE and children's literacy level in kindergarten and first grade. However, unlike other studies (Feuerstein, Klein, & Tennenbaum, 1991; Klein & Alony, 1993), no relationship was found between maternal mediation and children's spoken and written language skills in either age group.

This lack of relationship between maternal mediation and children's literacy level could be explained by a study done by Korat, Klein and Segal-Drori (2007). In their study, the authors found no relationship between maternal mediation and literacy level in families of low SES (LSES) but there was a positive relationship between the two in the higher SES families (HSES). The authors looked into this relationship among 94 five to six year old children half from HSES and other half from LSES. Maternal mediation was measured using videotapes of mothers reading an unfamiliar book to their children and their attitudes and styles were coded. Children's literacy level were assessed prior to this interaction by measuring their level of letter naming, letter sounding, letter writing, word recognition, word writing, concept about prints, phoneme isolation, antonym productive vocabulary and receptive vocabulary. The authors noted that while mothers from LSES used more paraphrasing and the use of simpler words, the mothers from HSES used discussions and making connections beyond the content of the texts. The authors

suggest that it is the quality of the interaction with the mediating agent (mother) that accounts for the higher literacy level and not simply reading a storybook. Many of these studies on Home Literacy Environment and children's literacy development focused on mother-child literacy practices. As explained by some of the authors (Boyce et al. 2004; Gozalez & Uhing, 2008) mothers are the most-studied reading partners for children, and mothers typically read with their children several times a week to several times a month. This could be understandable because mothers are usually the children's primary caretakers and generally report engaging in reading and other literacy practices with their children more often than fathers or other adults.

Parental Attitudes and Beliefs and Home Literacy Environment

The findings of this study are consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural perspective and the theory of human learning in which he expresses learning as a social process and the importance of social interactions in the expansion of cognition. Vygotsky (1978) considered learning a second language a process in two stages: 1) learning through interaction with others; 2) learning integrated into the individual's mental structure. Oxford (2003) in reference to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural perspective in acquisition of additional language states that "cognitive processes can be explained as interaction between social relations and mental functions through mediated learning which the mediated agent helps the learner move throughout the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)" (p.86). Parents as mediating agents have two important roles in their children's additional language learning process as explained by Gardner (1985); when parents encourage and support their children to learn L2 and monitor their performances towards language learning they have an active role. On the other hand, the parents' attitudes and feelings towards the additional language community explain their passive role towards their children's additional language learning (Gardner, 1985). In essence, in an

either active or passive role, the parents' attitudes influence their children's additional language proficiency (Gardner, 1985). This notion is echoed by Gao's (2006) study where he found that family members in China left their mark on his informants' early development in learning strategies. Gao (2006) conducted his research using a qualitative approach based on a socio-cultural theoretical framework. The sample consisted of fourteen Chinese learners of English in England and he wanted to explore, using retrospective interviews, participants' motivation for learning English and the strategies used. Some subjects indicated that in regards to their vocabulary learning strategies, teachers, internet and people with authority influence them. Moreover, Gao (2006) explained that the choice of vocabulary learning strategy by Chinese learners is manipulated by the encouraging English speakers in England. These participants declared that they chose social and interactive strategies such as acquiring and applying meaning of new words in actual conversations, and guessing (Gao, 2006). The result of this study implies that mediating agents do present influence on learners. Other mediating agents influencing additional language learners attitudes towards the first and the additional language are government policies which Li (2006) points out to. In a qualitative study of three Chinese-Canadian children, Li (2006) suggests that the English-only policy in the mainstream school influenced the children's language preference and use, ultimately preventing them from acquiring high native language proficiency.

In a study done by Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006), mothers' beliefs about literacy development and the association of those beliefs with aspects of Home Literacy Environment and the connection between parental literacy beliefs and preschool aged children's literacy development was examined. According to Harkness and Super (1999, as cited in Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2006), parents' beliefs are manifested in the environment they provide for the

children and their parenting practices and behaviors they engage in and the nature of their interactions with their children. In their study, Weigel, Martin and Bennett (2006) used 79 mothers and their children with the mean age of 4.5 years and data was collected using interviews and self-administered questionnaires while the children's language and literacy skills were assessed by the researchers using the Child's Emergent Literacy Task (CELT; abt associates, Inc., 1991, as cited in Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2006) which is a 17-item measure. The parents' questionnaire included thirty-two items which were used to measure the extent to which the parents agreed or disagreed with a number of literacy beliefs. Three key aspects of home literacy environment, parental demographic characteristics, parental literacy habits, and direct parent-child literacy and language activities, were assessed using a series of questions. The authors conclude that based on the results of their study two profiles of parental beliefs emerge. The authors label one group Facilitative and the other Conventional. The authors explain that the Facilitative mothers believe in taking an active role in teaching their pre-school children and in reading books with them. According to the authors, these mothers believe that providing young children with learning opportunities would help them in school and they can also learn general knowledge and specific skills through reading books. On the other hand, Conventional mothers believe they could do little to prepare their child for school and schools are responsible for teaching children not parents and they report that reading with their children is difficult. The authors explain that in regards to home literacy environment, Facilitative mothers are more likely to provide a stimulating home literacy environment and report enjoying reading and spending more time in reading and writing activities than Conventional mothers. Facilitative mothers also begin reading to their children at a younger age. The results of their study supports the authors' hypothesis in that children whose mothers hold facilitative beliefs show greater interest in

reading books, and tend to have greater print knowledge and emergent writing skills than children whose mothers hold conventional beliefs. The authors conclude that parental beliefs not only relate to the HLE they provide for their children but also children's emerging print knowledge and interest in reading as well.

Hence, there is diversity in the quality of adults' book reading styles in a way that some mothers pay attention to storyline of the book and relate the book to the events in children's lives (De Temple & Tabors, 1995). Low demand mothers focus on the information available immediately from the text or pictures such as labeling and counting. Similar results were shown in a study done on Taiwanese mother-child book reading interactions (Chang, 2000). According to Chang's study (2000), the children who have mothers with high demands have better decontextualized language skills and narrative performance, compared to children with low demand mothers. In one study done by Chang and Huang (2013) mother-child book reading interactions in different SES classes in Taiwan were investigated. The authors studied two groups of 16 mothers with their 3-year-old children from HSES and LSES and explored their reading style by visiting them at home and watching the mothers while they read a book with their children. Their interactions were videotaped, coded and analyzed using a Child Data Exchange System. The results of this study are also consistent with similar studies (Haden, Reese, & Fivush, 1996). Chang and Huang (2013) explain that mothers from HSES encourage children to narrate the story, ask open-ended questions, discuss non-immediate information, while mothers from LSES take book reading as a responsibility and require their children to be attentive. This study also indicates that effectiveness of reading to children heavily depends on the parents' reading style and the interaction.

Comparison of Native English Speakers' Literacy Levels and Second Language Learners

English Language learners perform significantly worse than native English speakers in particular areas of early reading (Geva & Zadeh, 2006). Hence, this group of children might have a need for special early intervention that focuses on the development of their language skills. The result of another study done by Harper and Pelletier (2008) has been consistent when comparing native English language learners with English Language Learners (ELLs) in three areas of early reading (alphabet knowledge, conventions of print, and ability to infer meaning from print). The results of this study show that there is a significant difference between the two language groups' alphabet knowledge, conventions of print and the ability to infer meaning from the print, with EL1 (English as a first language) children's being more advanced than ELL's (English as a second language). Research has shown that family plays an important role in the educational experiences of immigrant children (Weinstein-Shr, 1993), but parents of immigrant children often have lower self-efficacy beliefs related to their ability to teach their children (Pelletier, & Brent, 2002; Dixon and Wu, 2014). These authors (Harper and Pelletier, 2008; Weinstein-Shr, 1993; and Yu, 1994) suggest that there is a need for quality family literacy programs that encourage parent-child interactions and literacy learning and these programs should be designed to encourage parents to take an active role in their children's early literacy learning and discuss the unique characteristics of their HLE. There is evidence that these kinds of programs for immigrant families are positively effective. In a study done by Yu (1994) the same kind of programs were evaluated involving Korean immigrant children and their parents. The program encouraged families to read to the children at home using different strategies and the results of the study showed that parents who participated in the program had greater confidence reading with teachers and felt more comfortable with book and helping their children with school work (Yu, 1994).

Effect of Family Literacy Programs on English Development

In a study done by Harper, Platt and Pelletier (2011), the effects of Family Literacy Programs on early English development of both first and English Language Learners (ELLs) were evaluated. The authors suggest that many programs include interactive literacy activities between parents and children, a parent training and discussion group featuring ways in which parents can promote their children's early literacy development and also high quality instructions and activities for children, focusing on specific areas of early literacy (e.g., letter names and sounds, print, numbers) (Harper, Platt, & Pelletier, 2011). This study was done to evaluate the effects of Family Literacy programs on ELLs and EL1s (English as a first Language) by comparing the scores of children in three different areas of early reading before and after their families participated in the program. The results of both groups were compared to two control groups (ELL and EL1) who did not go through the program. The study included 147 kindergarten children (4-6 years old) and their parents. In a questionnaire, the parents were asked to provide demographic information about their children and themselves. For parents who were not proficient in English assistance was offered. The children's literacy levels was measured using TERA-3 (Reid et al., 2001, as cited in Harper, Platt, & Pelletier, 2011) which measures early English reading (alphabet knowledge, convention of print and meaning). The Family Literacy Program included topics such as: 1) how to choose books for young children; 2) how talking to children is an effective strategy ; 3) the importance of providing opportunities for children to write; 4) encouraging reading all the time whilst performing daily activities; 5) the importance of reading a book part of everyday activities; 6) the importance of dialogic reading; 7) making reading fun by discovering new words and sounds; and 8) emphasizing the importance of learning letters and sounds. The results of this study are consistent with previous studies and

reveal a significant program effect for ELL children compared to EL1s and both of the control groups in all three areas of early literacy (alphabet knowledge, concept of print and meaning). The authors emphasize the importance of Family Literacy Programs especially for Additional Language Learners (ALLs) for improving their early literacy skills.

Parental Roles in Implementing Literacy Programs at Home

Different studies show that whether in the native language or in English, parental education and the home language environment they provide affects the development of academic English, as learning to read and write in any language begins long before children enter school through engagement in activities with parents and caregivers who support language and literacy development (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). This is demonstrated in a longitudinal study done by Wei and Zhou (2012) on their own daughter Katie. The authors provided a detailed data in a naturalistic setting documenting Katie who has no background in the English language from the time she started learning English to the time she received above grade level achievements. The authors provided valuable evidence of effective parental intervention in a child's spelling and writing development and an effective general home literacy environment in the beginning years of English language acquisition. When the study started, Katie was 8-years old in a second grade with minimal alphabetical knowledge in English but a solid consonant and vowel knowledge in Chinese and Thai. The authors started by having Katie discriminate phonemes and grouping vowel-consonant combinations with different symbols. Once she had no difficulties discriminating phonemes, the authors started helping her with her spelling. The authors assumed that Katie's phonological knowledge (e.g., strings of syllable segments) in Chinese and Thai helped her pick up English vocabulary but they do not offer an explanation for this assumption. After Katie accumulated a certain amount of vocabulary in English, the authors started with her

writing development. It is interesting to note that the authors suggested that she writes about her interesting daily activities by describing them orally in Chinese first and then choosing to write about one of them by translating the Chinese sentences she expressed orally into an English journal entry. The authors explained that the minimum journal writing requirement was at least two sentences and this helped her get into a habit of writing every day. They explained that after only one month Katie was able to write her journal entries in English independently and writing became a hobby for her. The authors discussed that they chose to teach Katie extended vocabulary knowledge by using the Chinese meanings of words, and they explained that their use of Chinese to connect with Katie's cognitive knowledge in vocabulary were important for her development and acquisition of vocabulary. Wei and Zhou (2012) suggest that second language acquisition and academic achievement requires strong parental support because parents have the advantage of using students' home language during intervention activities and exercises. The authors (Wei, and Zhou, 2012) suggest that utilizing the learners' home language is better than using only English in the instruction of ELLs and provide the results of their study as proof that literacy interventions conducted in their home language at the early stages of English language learning produces superior results. The authors point out that vocabulary is very important not only for reading and oral language (August & Shanahan, 2008) but also writing development (Cummins, 2009) and direct teaching of vocabulary knowledge and writing skills affects children's productive language. Wei and Zhou (2012) suggest that many strategies such as teaching word meanings in the child's home language are significantly important as well (Cummins, 1998; August and Shanaha, 2006; Quiroz et al. 2010; Uchikoshi, 2006).

Relationship between First and Additional Language

As many studies have shown, mastering literacy in the dominant language of the society whether English or another language is the key for academic success, however there is far less research that has examined the influences of home language and literacy practices in L2 learner's literacy development. In a study done by Dixon and Wu (2014), direct and indirect influences of home literacy practices were investigated. The authors explain that the direct path happens when home literacy practices in L2 such as book reading promote the child's improvement in the second language whereas the indirect path is described when families' use of native language (L1) contributes to the child's literacy development in L1 which then transfers to improvement in L2. The authors (Dixon and Wu, 2014) conceptualize that the relationship between L1 and L2 literacy skills is bidirectional meaning that literacy skills developed in one language help to promote similar skills in the other. As cited in Dixon and Wu (2014), overall, immigrant parents read less often to their children than non-immigrant parents in the United States (Boyce et al. 2004), Turkish parents in Germany (Leyendeckera et al. 2011), and Moroccan and Turkish families in Netherlands (Scheele et el. 2010). It is common for the immigrant families to teach their children to read and write in both L1 and L2 using their own traditional methods of teaching (Sneddon, 2000, and Markose et al. 2011, as cited in Dixon and Wu, 2014). Dixon and Wu (2014) did not explain what these traditional methods of teaching could be. Moreover, library use is among the most useful ways these families help with their children's literacy development (Dixon and Wu, 2014). The authors identified four main factors that affect the choice of language or types of literacy activities that these families use. The four factors identified are: Government policy, community environment, parents' language proficiency and cultural beliefs and their SES and education. The authors explain that government policies have indirect effect on immigrants' families home language and literacy practices and they can

encourage or discourage the use of families L1 at home and hence the development of literacy skills in L1. As an example, the authors use a study done by Li (2006) which was completed with Chinese-Canadian children and suggest that the English-only policy in the mainstream schools influence children's language preference and use, ultimately preventing them from acquiring high L1 proficiency. The effects of community environment on home literacy practices are explained by the authors to be that the children who attend community center events regularly have found to be more creative in both L1 and L2; hence, community centers that provide opportunities to practice L1 contribute to its use and development and also that of L2 (Dixon and Wu, 2014). Another very important factor explained by Dixon and Wu (2014) is parents' language proficiency and cultural beliefs. The authors explain that some immigrant parents' passive role in home literacy activities could be due to their low proficiency in the new language and/or their assumption that there is less need to learn the L1 in the new country. This notion was also suggested by Yu (1994), and Pelletier and Brent (2002). Last but not least, the authors suggest that family SES and parental education influence home literacy activities indirectly by limiting or increasing the choice of languages used at home. As cited by Dixon and Wu (2014), Spanish-English bilingual fathers who regularly read and spoke to their children in Spanish at home promoted their children's cognitive development better than those who only spoke English at home and if fathers had education higher than high school, their children's language outcomes were improved even further (Duursma et al., 2008).

The question still remains does this bidirectional relationship exists between the native language (L1) and the additional language (L2)? In a study done by Quiroz et al. (2010), it was found that the mother's use of labeling questions in Spanish during shared book reading activities with their preschool-age children had positive results in their children's both English

and Spanish vocabulary. Moreover, Uchikoshi (2006) found that the number of books in the home whether in Spanish or English predicted children's English vocabulary. Other studies have found that when schooling is entirely through second language, the use of native language at home does not affect the child's additional language proficiency; however, more exposure to the additional language at home might negatively affect the native language proficiency. A study done on 72 Spanish-English bilingual children over three years of English instruction in preschool and kindergarten showed that mothers' sustained use of Spanish at home resulted in larger Spanish vocabulary with no loss to their children's English Vocabulary (Hammer et al. 2009). These authors state that the opposite was true for the use of English at home and mothers' use of English at home reduced growth in their children's Spanish vocabulary. Similar results were found in the study done by Duursma et al. (2007) in which the authors looked at fifth-grade Spanish-English bilingual children. The study found that more use of Spanish at home led to larger Spanish vocabulary but had no impact on English instructed children's English vocabulary (Duursma et al. 2007). A study done by Roberts (2008) showed that additional language learners improved their vocabulary equally whether the books read in class were taken home in English or in the child's native language (Spanish or Hmong).

Other studies have found that students' L1 is highly and positively correlated to their L2 literacy development (August and Shanahan, 2006). The authors suggest that students can use their L1 skills in multiple ways including using cognate relationships (relating words that have common Etymological origins and could be recognized in different languages. e.g. Night (English), Nuit (French), Nacht (German), Nat (Danish), and Natt (Swedish)) to aid with word reading, comprehension, spelling, writing and applying reading strategies. The authors further suggest that when parents of ELLs possess the willingness and the ability to help their children,

literacy outcomes are improved. In these cases, when families provide home environments in which first and additional languages are used positively, it would correlate with literacy achievements in the first and additional languages (August and Shanahan, 2006). Garcia (2000) explains that the most positive transfer on students' reading skills is observed when the student has increased metalinguistic awareness that allows them to apply appropriate knowledge of their L1 to their reading in L2. Moreover, studies by Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) imply that whether in the native language or in English, parental engagements and activities with the children that support language and literacy development positively affect the development of their English literacy.

According to Cummins (1981), English Language Learners (ELLs) can achieve basic interpersonal communication skills within two years of learning another language; however the acquisition of cognitive academic language proficiency that they need to succeed in an academic context that matches the level of their native-speaking peers takes between 5-7 years. Study done by Jang, Dunlop, Wagner, Kim and Gu (2013) looked at the differences that exist in overall reading achievement among students with different lengths of residence in Canada. The authors (Jang et al. 2013) examined the differences in reading achievement and mastery skill development among Grade-6 students with different language backgrounds. The authors explained that reading comprehension ability is an important part of literacy competency that is crucial for developing academic language proficiency and in order to succeed in school. Similar studies like Hakuta's (2011) analysis of assessment data from large school in California also revealed that it took 7 years for 80% of ELLs to acquire English proficiency. In their study, Jang et al. (2013) looked at how the reading skill development patterns differ by home language environment and length of residence. This study was a large study completed with 120,767

Grade-6 students test performance data from the provincially mandated reading achievement test developed by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) in Ontario. There were nine language groups based on students' home language environment and six Canadian residence groups based on the length of residence and immigration status. The results of their (Jang et al. 2013) study shows that the immigration students' reading achievement increase as their length of residence increased and achievement pattern are consistent for both combinations of home language environment. It is important to note that the results of this study shows that home language environment affects immigrants students' vocabulary development to a greater extent in the early years. More important to note is that students who are exposed to multilingual home environments while practicing speaking English, outperform all other groups in their knowledge of grammar development. Authors demonstrate that after 5 years immigrant students regardless of their home language use, show the highest skill mastery level, even higher than Canadian-born monolingual students supporting the assertion that multilingual home language environment is not associated with low achievement among immigrant students (Cummins, 1979 as cited in Jang et al., 2013).

According to Cummins (1998), an important characteristic of bilingual children is that they develop an additive form of bilingualism (Lambert, 1975 as cited in Cummins, 1998). The author explains that these children add their additional language to their repertory of skills at no cost to their development of either language and attain a relatively high level of both fluency and literacy in their two languages. On the other hand, minority students who lack the educational support for literacy development in L1 develop a subtractive form of bilingualism in which L1 skills are replaced by L2. To support this, the author uses the results of other similar studies and states that bilingual programs for both majority and minority students show that students

instructed for all or part of the day through a minority language have no long-term academic retardation in the majority language (Cummins and Swain, 1986; Krashen and Biber, 1988 as cited in Cummins, 1998). Cummins (1998) presents the interdependence principle and explains that "although the surface aspects of different languages (pronunciation, fluency, etc.) are clearly separate, there is an underlying cognitive/academic proficiency that is common across languages. Cummins (1981) explains that "this "common underlying proficiency" makes possible the transfer of cognitive/academic or literacy-related skills across language" (p. 29 as cited in Cummins, 1998). As the author explains these cross-lingual relationship exists among different language and not necessarily for similar languages (e.g. Japanese and Vietnamese) but also those that have few common roots (e.g. English and Japanese); however, these cross-lingual relationships are stronger for similar as compared to dissimilar languages. According to Cashion's and Eagen's (1990, as cited in Cummins, 1998) study on early French Immersion programs, as students acquire English reading and writing skills, they transfer this knowledge from English to French. In short, Cummins (1998) suggests that if students are slow in learning L2, it is effective to promote literacy development in their stronger language (L1) and work to transfer to their weaker language. Hence, this will activate students' prior knowledge and building background knowledge through the stronger (native) language.

More research on this topic indicates that there are many advantages to bilingualism. According to Vygotsky (1962), access to two languages accelerates the development of metalinguistic skills and bilingualism can enhance the performance of spatial tasks (Mcleay, 2003). The level of children's first-language competence affects learning in the additional language and children who have a rich vocabulary in their mother tongue when they start school find it easier to learn the school language and learn to read and write earlier (Yazici, Ilter, &

Glover, 1999). In their study, Yazici, Ilter, and Glover (1999) found a positive relationship between children's mother tongue (L1) competence and reading-readiness. Their study was done on five to six year old Turkish children living in Germany and found that those who scored higher in a test of mother's tongue also had a higher level of reading-readiness. The results of their study showed that reading-readiness of children, both bilingual and monolingual is greater if they have a higher level of mother-tongue competence (Yazici, Ilter, & Glover, 1999). Despite all these studies and the apparent results that this positive relationship exists, still many parents might use the additional language at home in the hopes of accelerating their children's learning of the second language. This could lead to these children not having enough support for learning their mother tongue at home in the early childhood period. Many parents do not know the importance of both native and additional language development together.

Moreover, according to Cummins (2001), children can learn a additional language better when they have a good grasp of their mother tongue. In a study done by Meschyan and Hernandez (2002), the mechanisms through which native-language word decoding ability predicated individual differences in native and additional language learning were investigated. The purpose of their study was to investigate the role of native language (English) decoding skills in additional language (Spanish) learning because in addition to knowledge of sounds (phonological knowledge), decoding requires letter knowledge (orthographic skills), and hence decoding skill is a phonological-orthographic ability (Meschyan and Hernandez, 2002). The authors explain that according to Sparks et al.'s (1997, as cited in Meschyan & Hernandez, 2002) article, native language vocabulary skill is a predictor of the participant's overall second language proficiency and according to Dufva and Voeten (1999, as cited in Meschyan & Hernandez, 2002), the phonological memory and literacy skills in their native language explains

58% of the variance in additional language (e.g. English) skill development. In their study, Meschyan and Hernandez (2002) investigated 82 monolingual English-speaking students enrolled in first year Introductory Spanish at the University of California and they recorded scores for 11 variables (native-language competency, native language pseudo-word decoding accuracy, second language word decoding accuracy, native-language vocabulary skill, second language vocabulary skill, second language competency, nonverbal intelligence, Spanish 1, 2, 3 and average of all three course grade). Although this study was not completed with young children in pre-school, kindergarten or elementary school, still the results of their study is in support of previous research (Wei, and Zhou, 2012; Quiroz et al. 2010; Uchikoshi, 2006; Cummins, 1998) completed on this topic on young children and it could be applied to that age group as well. The result shows that native-language phonological-orthographic ability is an important predictor of second language learning as measured by second-language vocabulary task even when controlled for participants' general intelligent level. Moreover, the results of this study supports that there is a clear cross-language transfer of decoding ability from participants' native language to their additional language and this decoding ability is an important predictor of additional language learning particularly during the early stages of additional-language study.

Concluding Remarks from Available Literatures Reviewed

Reviewing the current literature available on Home Literacy Environment and additional language, there are few distinct and important points that are apparent. They are as follows: 1) Home Literacy Environment has strong effect on children's literacy development especially in the early years in both first and additional language learners; 2) there are many aspects to HLE and parents need to realize the many dimensions of HLE in order to provide the best and highest quality HLE for their children; 3) parents need to be knowledgeable about the importance of oral

language and every day simple conversations in the development of their youngsters' emergent literacy; 4) parents need to become aware of their important role in their children's literacy development and should not see themselves as passive agents but rather important and influential ones; and 5) there is a direct relationship between native language (L1) development and additional language (L2) development in that enhancing L1 will positively rather than negatively affect L2.

It is important to note that even though most of these studies focused on the mother and the relationship between the mother and child, other significant people in children's lives are also important. The reason for including the mothers for most of these studies is the justification that mothers are primary caretakers of children. This notion needs to be attended to and the importance of including fathers and other family members in similar studies need to stressed. The role of fathers now as primary caregivers in many households in addition to other family members (grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts, etc.) in close contact with the children need to also be studied and be paid attention to.

Evidence of Reviewed Literature in Real Life:

Reviewing the current literature on the topics I wanted to explore, I can't help but agree with what the results of these studies imply. For example, if I focus on what the literature reviewed provides in the support of using Native language at home, I can see the evidence in my own life and my brothers' growing up in similar situations. Going back to those early years, my mother decided on using her native language at home. This was not because she was confident in her choice of using native language at home in comparison to additional (English) language and the results that it would bring. It was mainly because she felt more comfortable with using the

mother tongue at home. However, the results were favorable. Even though, my brother and I both used only native language at home and with family friends around us, there was no negative effect of it on us learning English (additional) language. The English (additional) language proficiency that my brother and I acquired was/is at the same level as my friends who chose to speak English at home with their families. I cannot go into details of this and how the results of the literature could be explained in my personal life, however in the case of using native language and the non-negative effect it has on learning additional language, I can clearly see the real life evidence in my own life.

Moreover, the evidence of this notion is also apparent if I consider the results from my professional point of view. Most of the immigrant families that I am in contact with only use their native language at home. I know this because their level of English (additional) language is not proficient enough for them to use it at home. In addition, I see this when they pick up their children from the preschool and how as soon as children see their parents they switch to speaking their native language and they do not speak English to them. Although these families choose to speak their native language at home, the evidence of their children learning the additional (English) language at a decent pace is evident in my classroom. These children are English proficient in about two years and they can clearly speak English in around six months to one year. As such, I strongly agree with the results of the studies that I have reviewed because I can see their evidence in real life settings both in my own life as an immigrant and also my students' lives as new immigrants.

Hence, I have developed the following series of workshops based on the results of reviewed literature available.

Chapter 3-The Workshops

Based on the results of current literature available related to these issues, I have developed a series of workshops for the parents of additional language learners (ALLs), specifically in the age range of 3-5-years. These workshops are intended to help these parents become familiarized with current findings on additional language learning and the effects of Home Literacy Environment. It is hoped that after attending these workshops parents of additional language learners become more comfortable with what they can do in order to enhance their children's literacy development in the additional language they are learning. Even though these workshops have been developed with ALLs parents (e.g. indigenous parents) in mind, they could also be used by Early Childhood Educators, librarians, students in the field of education and with simple modifications for primary teachers. The workshops have been designed for 10-20 attenders and are divided into five two hour sessions and the information provided to attenders will be predetermined so that it could be delivered in many different settings; however the ideal settings for these workshops are community centers and local libraries where attenders have easier access to. I have developed the workshops as follows:

Session 1: Where am I on the Map??

The initial session of the series is a casual meet and greet where the attenders come together to get to know each other and the presenter(s). This initial session is very important because often times this minority group feel that they don't belong and are not comfortable accessing such workshops because of that sense of loneliness. The first session, in my opinion, is the backbone of the series because this is when relationships are made among the individuals and the atmosphere that will be created for the rest of the sessions. This session is critical because if

parents don't feel that they are welcomed and accepted they are not likely to attend the following workshops. The session will begin by the presenter asking the participants to locate themselves on the world map. The 7 continents of the world will be drawn on big posters and the posters will be positioned in 7 spots around the room. The name of the continents will be noted clearly on the posters so that it is easy for the attenders to find their continent. The picture of world map will be projected on the white board at the same time using a projector. When all the participants have found their position on the world map within their continents, the presenter(s) will eliminate the continents that do not have anyone on/around them. This will give more room to move around for other continents' members. Based on how the distribution goes, participants could either stay within their continent or if a continent has too many members, they would be divided into a smaller sub-group. It is hoped to have between 4-6 members per group. After, the participants will be asked to introduce themselves to one partner from their continent (group), and between the two have five minutes of introduction time. When they are finished, the participants will start introducing themselves to the larger group within their continents. It is anticipated that the continent/group introduction will take another 10-15 minutes. The presenter(s) will have a list of what information could be requested and offered by the participants. They could include: the country/city the participants are from; their native language; how many children they have; how long they been in Canada; what they do for living; their level of education; their hobbies and interests, etc. The participants within the groups could choose a partner that speaks the same language if they prefer and they are allowed to speak in their native or English language whichever they are most comfortable with. Having the participants got up and move around the room and also introducing themselves to those who are from the same region as they are, is very important. This strategy could help them warm up to the group easier and feel more comfortable

speaking in the bigger group. For the remaining half an hour, the workshop will come together as a whole and the participants will be asked to introduce their original partner to the whole workshop. This will be following the presenter(s) introducing themselves first to the whole group. By having a partner introduce the members, it is hoped to build stronger connections between the members and within the workshop. There will be a 5-10 minute break depending on how the first hour of the workshops has progressed. After the break, the presenter(s) will be introducing a map of how the following workshops will go and will introduce the topics that will be presented.

Topics covered will be: A) What is Home Literacy Environment and what does it include?, B) The importance of Home Literacy Environment on children's literacy/language development, C) The important role of parents in their children's language development, D) Importance of oral language in literacy development and the importance of everyday simple conversations and activities, E) The importance of the nature of interactions with children including discussions about dialogical reading and extended talks, and, F) The bi-directional relationship that exists between native language and additional language learning.

The presenter(s) will be introducing these topics using a power point presentation and a handout (Appendix. D) will be given to the participants at the end of the workshop. Topics A, and B will be covered in session 2 and topics C, D, and E, will be covered in session 3 and topic F in session 4.

It is important to introduce these topics in the initial session and have a brief discussion about them so that participants could have a visual map of what will be covered in the following workshops, and also have time to think about these topics before they attend the next workshops.

Simple discussions will follow after the presenter(s) has introduces the map and the topics. The discussion will be more in the form of questions asked of the participants. For example, do they know what HLE means? The questions will be broad and no specific details will be given in this session. For the last 40 minutes of the session, participants will again be asked to partner up and take 10 minutes to talk about the challenges they are facing in regards to their young children's additional language learning. Partners will be given 5-10 minutes to write these challenges/concerns on the black/white board and the workshop will come together to discuss them as a whole for the last 20 minutes of the first session.

Session 2: Home Literacy Environment: What is it? Why is it Important?

The second session will be covering Home Literacy Environment and discussions will be about what it is and why it is important. Because the map of what will be covered in the following workshops was presented in the first session and the participants anticipated what the second session will cover, it is hoped that they have gathered some information about HLE. Even though this is desired it is not necessary for the session to run effectively. The session will start off by the presenter(s) asking the participants to pair up and discuss what they think HLE is. The pairs will have 5 minutes between themselves to discuss this. Afterwards, the participants will be asked to form groups of 5 forming 4 groups in total. The groups will be provided with colorful markers and a big poster which they can use and will be asked to visually present what HLE means to them. The groups have 15-20 minutes to discuss the issue, draw, write, and visually demonstrate what they think HLE is. After they are done, for the second half of the first hour the groups will be presenting their posters by taping them on the white/black board. The presenter(s) will be making notes of what aspects of HLE was or was not covered by all the groups as a whole. Interactive discussions will take place while each group will present their ideas.

The second half of the session will start with watching a video (Appendix. A). The links to this video and others will be provided to the parents as part of their final handout after all the workshops are finished.

After watching the video which is about 7 minutes, participants will have a chance to ask questions about the video or the HLE in general. About 5-8 minutes will be dedicated to questions and group discussions.

After, the presenter(s) will explain what HLE is, what it includes and why it is important. The presenter(s) will be presenting the following:

- Home Literacy Environment has multifaceted definition and it is not only measure of parent-child reading
- It also includes other aspects such as the number and the frequency of children's request for book readings, the amount of reading that is done by the parents themselves, and the number of books available at home.
- HLE also includes everyday activities such as going to libraries, movies, theatres, community centers and even watching TV shows.

But why is it important?

The presenter(s) will allocate 5 minutes to ask the group why they think HLE is important. After the whole group discusses this, the presenter(s) will add:

Based on the results of many studies completed on Home Literacy Environment, it has shown to play an important role in the development of children's reading and language skills. It

is critical to give HLE significant attention and importance. This is apparent for both English speaking and Additional Language Learners.

For the remaining 30 minutes of class the participants will be asked to form 5 groups of 4 and discuss what they can do to enhance their own HLE. After 15 minutes of group discussion, the ideas they came up with will be presented to the whole workshop as a whole. The presenter(s) will be making notes of all the points the participants come up with and these notes will be printed for them as part of a handed out and will be handed out in the final session.

Session 3: Make Every-day Literacy-Rich

The third session will start off by asking the participants to think about a scenario that will be presented on the projector by the presenter(s). The scenario will be up on the projector for the participants to read themselves but will also be read to the whole group by the presenter(s). The scenario is borrowed from Chase-Lansdale and Takanishi (2009, p.4 as cited in Harris, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-pasek, 2011) in which they present "Three mothers and an eggplant" (Appendix.C).

After the presenter(s) reads to the whole class they participants have a chance to read by themselves as well. Then they will be given a paired discussion in which they would talk about, with their partners, how each mother has reacted to their child's question. After 5 minutes of paired discussion times, participants would form groups and discuss the scenario in groups of 5. Another 10 minutes is allocated to group discussions and the groups will be asked to provide their opinion on: 1) what each mother did correctly and incorrectly and what could have been the alternative? 2) Which mother represents them, meaning in similar situations how would they

respond? 3) What is the consequence of each of the mother's responds in terms of their children's language development?

After these have been discussed in groups of 5, the next 15 minutes will be a whole group discussion about the "three mothers and the eggplant", and each group could present their thoughts. In the last 35 minutes of the first hour, the presenter(s) will explain the current findings from studies on language development and the importance of conversations and discussions during daily activities. The issues presented will be shown using a projector and all that is presented will be part of the final handout for the participants. After each point is presented, a brief 5 minutes discussion will take place when participants could ask questions or comment about these points. The points covered are as follows.

- Parents have crucial roles in their children's language development because before entering school children are first introduced to language and literacy materials at home and by their parents.

- Parents need to realize that their role in their children's acquisition of language is not passive and they can enhance their development by how they interact with their children.

- This is especially important for the parents of additional language learners to realize because many of them don't feel confident about this issue due to their own lack of additional language abilities and might mistakenly believe that they are not equipped and/or effective in this regard and it is better for the school to take on this responsibility.

- Parents need to be acknowledged that it is not just reading books that facilitates children's literacy development but also simple and casual every day

conversations and activities that they can have with their children. For example, parents asking their children questions about their day and requesting detailed information about topics.

- It is crucial for parents to understand that it is the nature of these interactions that make the most difference. For example, simply reading books to children without being attentive or sensitive to their requests and the information in the books is not at all effective.

- Parents need to be encouraged to provide interactive relationship with their children whether in everyday activities and conversations or when reading a book. The topics presented need to be discussed and extended talks and dialogic reading and interactions need to be implemented.

The second hour of the third session will start off by presenting the last point one more time. That it is, the nature of the interaction (book reading or else) is what makes the most difference. The presenter(s) will ask the participants to think about this statement for 2 minutes by themselves. A 4-minute video (Appendix. A) demonstrating "dialogical reading" will follow. The video is intended to show participants, visually, how to read dialogically to their children. After the video is finished, the presenter(s) will define "dialogic reading" to the participants.

" Dialogic reading occurs when adults prompt children with questions, evaluate and expand upon children's verbalizations, reward children's efforts to tell the story and label objects in the book" (Harris, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2011, p.52).

The participants will again be put into groups of 5 and will have 10 minutes to discuss their thoughts on dialogical reading and whether or not they think they practice it at home. After

the 10 minutes, the participants will be given 4 pre-school appropriate books (e.g. Love you

forever, Jack and the beanstalk, Harold and the purple crayon, Something from nothing, etc.).

The choice of books could vary and presenter(s) could choose them to their liking. Alternatively,

the participants could also be asked to bring their own favorite book or their child's favorite book

to this session. For the remaining 30 minutes of this session, the participants would choose one

book per group and demonstrate dialogical reading to the whole group.

Session 4: Native Language or Second Language?

The fourth session will start off by the presenter(s) asking the participants to get up and

position themselves within the compass (Appendix. E). The question on the board would read:

"What is your opinion about speaking the native language at home?" The participants would

choose North, South, East or West within the compass. Members of each direction (N., E., W.,

S.) would form a group and will have 5-10 minutes to discuss why they feel this way. For the

next 15-25 minutes, the groups would come together as a whole to discuss their position on this

issue and why think that is so. After the whole group discussions are finished, the presenter(s)

will explain the current findings on additional language learning and its relationship with the

native language. What will be presented are as follow:

- The most important issue for the minority group to realize is that practicing
  native language at home is not going to affect the children's acquisition of
  additional language negatively.
- The parents need to be informed that findings of studies on this issue suggest that
  the opposite relationship is actually evident where stronger first language skills

facilitates and enhances learning of an additional language and there is a transfer

of knowledge from the native language abilities to additional language learning

The second hour of the fourth session will start with a 7-minute video (Appendix.A). This video will explain how additional language learning could be enhanced in preschools and at home using native language. The video suggests book reading and learning words in native language in order to facilitate second language learning. Again, the participants will get a chance to pair up and discuss the video for 5-minutes in pairs and another 10-15 minutes in groups of 5.

For the last 30-minutes of the fourth session, the presenter(s) will demonstrate book reading using available books in different languages that are also in English language (Appendix. B). One example of such books are "Brown bear, brown bear, what can you see?" This book and many like it have been translated in various languages to help additional language children become familiarized with words in both native and English language. The presenter(s) will demonstrate how to read books in a fun and sensitive way, how to discover new words and sounds and the emphasis on the importance of learning new sounds and letters. The parents will also be shown a series of current available books that are in both native and English language (available as part of the final handout) and how they could use these kinds of books for enhancing their children's first and additional language learning. Parents will also be shown how they could use their first language to encourage writing and storytelling in their children and how to use daily events as opportunities for story writing and daily journals for children.

The participants will be asked to bring to the final session a book that they will read to their own child (who they will be bringing to the final session of the workshops) and demonstrate

what they have learnt in the workshops. They could use any of the techniques offered in the workshops or they could present new techniques they use at their home.

Session 5: Where Are We on the Map Now?

This is the final session where participants will demonstrate what they have learned in the workshop. They have been asked to bring their child and a favorite book to demonstrate to the whole workshop what they have learnt. Each participant would have 5-minutes to show case their learning through a technic they have chosen. The last 30 minutes of these workshops would be casual with participants celebrating their completion of the workshops. Food and refreshments will be provided. For the last thing, the presenter(s) will ask the participants to once again position themselves on the map. This time however, it is hoped that participants would choose the continent of North America presenting where they are from. The hopes of these workshops is to bring these families into one group of self-confident and non-isolated individuals and choosing Canada as their place on the map would give the impression that these parents now feel that they belong to their new country.

Chapter 4-Conclusion

The literacy development of children and emergent literacy which happens in the early years of their lives have profound and long lasting influence on children's subsequent success in life. As such, it is of most important for families, teachers, community and the government organizations to provide ample amount of resources and support to children and their families. The importance of literacy development is even more important with Additional Language Learners (ALLs) due to the extra challenges they face when entering a new country and culture. These groups of children are often affected by difficult situations and the challenges that their families face; they tend to fall behind in their literacy development when compared to their first language peers. One important way to help children develop their early literacy skills in both first and additional language learners is through effective Home Literacy Environment. Parents need to become educated about what Home Literacy Environment and how they can provide opportunities for their children's literacy development using strong and effective HLE. The parents need to be acknowledged on their own responsibility and realize that they can have an active and influential role in their children's language and literacy development. This is especially important for the parents of Additional Language Learners to realize as often times this group of parents are not aware of their effective role and because of their own lack of confidence in the area of additional language literacy, they could stay away from involving themselves in that route. Of most importance to realize for these parents is the understanding that their practice of native language at home and with their children will actually enhance their children's additional language learning and will have positive effects on it, contrary to common belief that it would be negative. There is an urgent requirement for the government agencies and community organizations to pay attention to this group of families and children, and provide

much required resources and literacy programs for them. The workshops I have developed could also be used for early childhood educators as part of their ongoing education. Moreover, these workshops could be used for education students and with modification for primary teachers and education administrators. These workshops and similar ones like it are critical for the future and academic success of young second language learners. More research and resources need to be allocated to enhance additional language learners' language and literacy development and community organizations, educational bodies and responsible government agencies need to put these issues in priority order.

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Appendix A: Videos

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_IIMZq8nJU

2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9TdsYaUOX0

3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=09PrmLppQ1A

Appendix B: Bi-lingual Books

Useful links for bi-lingual books:

- http://www.alien-languages.com/default.aspx

- http://www.alienlanguages.com/7/107/bilingual_books_Child/Brown_bear_Brown_Bear. aspx

- http://www.alien-languages.com/6/multicultural_books.aspx

- http://www.amazon.com/Brown-Bear-What-Chinese-Edition/dp/1844441180

- http://us.macmillan.com/osopardoosopardoquevesahi/billmartinjr

- http://www.amazon.com/Ours-Brun-Dis-moi-French-Brown/dp/0785913947

- http://www.littlebilingues.com/index_uk.html

- http://www.trilingualmama.com/

Appendix C: Three Mothers

"The first mother wheels her shopping cart down the produce aisle, where her kindergartener spots an eggplant and asks what it is. The mother shushes her child, ignoring the question. The second mother, faced with the same question, responds curtly, "Oh, that's an eggplant, but we don't eat it". The third mother coos, "Oh, that's an eggplant. It is one of the few purple vegetables." She picks it up, hands it to her son, and encourages him to to put it on the scale. "Oh, look, it's about two pounds!" She says. "And its $1.99 a pound, so that would just just about $4. That's a bit pricy, but you like veal parmesan, and eggplant parmesan is delicious too. You'll love it. Let's buy one, take it home, and cut it open. We'll make dish together."

(Chase-Lansdale, & Takanishi, 2009, p.4 as cited in Harris, Golinkoff and Hirsh-Pasek, 2012)

Appendix D: The Handout

What are the topics covered in the workshops?

 A) What is Home Literacy Environment and what does it include?, B) The importance of Home

 Literacy Environment on children's literacy/language development, C) The important role of

 parents in their children's language development, D) Importance of oral language in literacy

 development and the importance of everyday simple conversations and activities, E) The

 importance of the nature of interactions with children including discussions about dialogical

 reading and extended talks, and, F) The bi-directional relationship that exists between native

 language and additional language learning.

What is Home Literacy Environment?

- Home Literacy Environment has multifaceted definition and it is not only measure of parent-child reading

- It also includes other aspects such as the number and the frequency of children's request for book readings, the amount of reading that is done by the parents themselves, and the number of books available at home.

- HLE also includes everyday activities such as going to libraries, movies, theatres, community centers and even watching TV shows.

Why is Home Literacy Environment important?

- Based on the results of many studies completed on Home Literacy Environment, it has shown to play an important role in the development of children's reading and language

skills. It is critical to give HLE significant attention and importance. This is apparent for both English speaking and Additional Language Learners.

<u>The role of parents in their children's language and literacy development:</u>

- Parents have crucial roles in their children's language development because before entering school children are first introduced to language and literacy materials at home and by their parents.

- Parents need to realize that their role in their children's acquisition of language is not passive and they can enhance their development by how they interact with their children.

- This is especially important for the parents of additional language learners to realize because many of them don't feel confident about this issue due to their own lack of additional language abilities and might mistakenly believe that they are not equipped and/or effective in this regard and it is better for the school to take on this responsibility.

- Parents need to be acknowledged that it is not just reading books that facilitates children's literacy development but also simple and casual every day conversations and activities that they can have with their children. For example, parents asking their children questions about their day and requesting detailed information about topics.

- It is the nature of these interactions that make the most difference. For example, simply reading books to children without being attentive or sensitive to their requests and the information in the books is not at all effective. Parents need to be encouraged to provide interactive relationship with their children whether in

everyday activities and conversations or when reading a book. The topics

presented need to be discussed and extended talks and dialogic reading and

interactions need to be implemented.

What is dialogical reading?

" Dialogic reading occurs when adults prompt children with questions, evaluate and

expand upon children's verbalizations, reward children's efforts to tell the story and

label objects in the book" (Harris, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2011, p.52).

Relationship between first and second language learning:

- Practicing native language at home is not going to affect the children's
  acquisition of additional language negatively.

- Studies on this issue suggest that the opposite relationship is actually evident
  where stronger first language skills facilitates and enhances learning of a
  additional language and there is a transfer of knowledge from the native language
  abilities to additional language learning
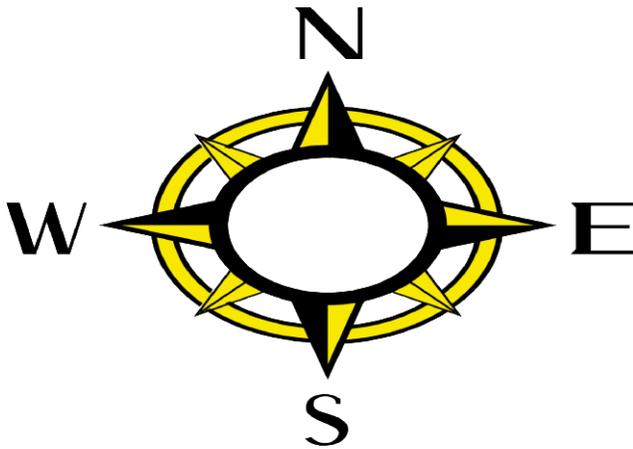
Helpful videos:

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_IIMZq8nJU

2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9TdsYaUOX0

3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=09PrmLppQ1A

Useful links for bi-lingual books:

- http://www.alien-languages.com/default.aspx

- http://www.alienlanguages.com/7/107/bilingual_books_Child/Brown_bear_Brown_Bear.aspx

- http://www.alien-languages.com/6/multicultural_books.aspx

- http://www.amazon.com/Brown-Bear-What-Chinese-Edition/dp/1844441180

- http://us.macmillan.com/osopardoosopardoquevesahi/billmartinjr

- http://www.amazon.com/Ours-Brun-Dis-moi-French-Brown/dp/0785913947

- http://www.littlebilingues.com/index_uk.html

- http://www.trilingualmama.com/

Appendix E: Compass

- **N**: No, I won't speak native language at home. It will negatively influence my child's

  English language learning

- **S**: Strongly believe I should speak native language at home

- **W**: Worrisome of what the effects of each would be?

- **E**: Excited to know more and will make my decision after