Using Funds of Knowledge to Build Trust

Between a Teacher and Parents of Language-Delayed Preschoolers

by

Alissa Quintero Gonzalez

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved March 2014 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Debby Zambo, Chair
Cory Hansen
Aura Villamil-Rubin

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2014

ABSTRACT

Preschool children with language delays often struggle to learn new concepts. Proven strategies such as modeling, prompting, reinforcing responses, direct teaching, and hands-on experience matter to young children with language delays. Also important are social interactions and shared experiences with more knowledgeable persons. Within a cultural context Funds of Knowledge, that is the talents, traditions, and abilities families possess and pass down to their children may be a context for these. However, despite their importance the value Funds of Knowledge have has not been explored with parents of children with special needs.

This action research study used a mixed-methods design to understand if Funds of Knowledge could be used as context to improve communication between parents and their children and build trust between parents and a teacher. Seven families participated in the study. Quantitative data were gathered with surveys and were analyzed with descriptive statistics. Qualitative data consisted of transcripts from home-visit interviews, parent presentations, and a focus group, and were analyzed with a grounded theory approach.

Results indicate parents entered the study with trust in the teacher especially in terms of having competence in her abilities. Data also show that parents used the language strategies provided to improve communication with their children. Data also indicate that the use of a Funds of Knowledge activity allowed parents to share their knowledge and interests with their children and children in the classroom, feel empowered, and express emotions. From these findings, implication for practice and further research are provided.

DEDICATION

I would like to thank my family and friends for their love and support. To my parents, I thank for their never-ending love and encouragement to follow my dreams and reach for the stars. Mom, you're the best I could ever ask for. Dad, thank you for telling me to keep going.

To my daughter Laura, you amaze me with your intelligence, wit, sense of humor, and your beauty, both inside and out. I love you!! Learn to trust God's timing in your life. We spent many years involved in Girl Scouts, swim team with the YMCA, children's ministry and summer camps at church, and travelling to New York and California. I've loved watching you grow, especially in your love to help and serve others. Thank you for understanding that this season of life was my time to go back to school and pursue a dream. I encourage you to reach for the stars, pray and act on dreams God places in your heart. Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." God has BIG plans for you!

To my husband Joey, thank you for loving me unconditionally. You have always let me spread my wings and venture to reach my goals. I could not have completed this program without your love, encouragement, and ability to calm me when I was all wound up in emotions. You balance me, and I am thankful to have a husband and best friend that is perfect for me. I love you Babe.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Throughout my doctoral program and growth as an educational leader, there have been many words of encouragement from family, friends, and colleagues, many hugs for strength and support from those dear to me, and prayers lifted for focus and endurance in this race. The one well of enduring strength has been from My Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. John 15:5 (NIV) says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." This work is the fruit of my labor, and I could have not completed this undertaking without God's grace and love.

I would like to thank my faculty committee Dr. Debby Zambo, Dr. Cory Hansen, and Dr. Aura Villamil-Rubin for their guidance, time, expertise, and experience throughout the dissertation process. To my committee chair Dr. Zambo, your kindness, gentle demeanor, mentoring, countless hours of reading, and constructive criticism were the perfect fit for my learning style. I am forever grateful for your wisdom and time. Dr. Hansen, thank you for sitting with me early on in the development of the innovation to discuss ways to involve parents in the classroom. Your insight was invaluable. Dr. Villamil-Rubin, Aura, as colleagues we have worked alongside for many years, and I have learned from your expertise and experience. But you are also a dear friend that I cherish. Thank you for always believing in me.

Thank you is not enough for the special ladies in my Leader Scholar Community. This model of collaboration has been priceless. I know I could not have completed writing this dissertation without your support as we cheered each other on. I am honored

to call you my friends. Finally, to the Limitless cohort, it was a pleasure learning with you; I wish you the best in everything.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

CHAPTER Page

CHAPTER Page

APPENDIX Page

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

Chapter 1

Leadership Context and Purpose of the Action

Preschool children with language delays often struggle to learn new concepts and interact appropriately with those around them. Like any other children they need language to grasp new concepts, understand others, and express their wants and needs. As a child's environment expands from home to school, these needs become greater. As they develop, children must interact with a variety of people and have more opportunities to communicate (Bodrova & Leong, 2003). However, increased opportunities outside a familiar environment may create problems if adults do not understand what a child is trying to say. To flourish, children with language delays and other developmental disabilities require adult assistance so that they obtain the foundations of language development and understanding and behaviors they need to interact. Proven strategies such as modeling, prompting, reinforcing responses, direct teaching, and hands-on experience matter to young children (Kaiser, Yoder & Keetz, 1992; Landa, Holman, O'Neill & Stuart, 2011; Roberts & Kaiser, 2011; Schertz & Odom, 2007; Wetherby & Woods, 2006). Children need others and good experiences to extend and transform the knowledge they know. Vygotsky's (1978) social cultural theory of child development shows how children learn through hands-on experience with materials and shared interactions with more knowledgeable persons. Shared interactions that facilitate language development are an important part of a child's development and for preschoolers, parents and teachers matter in their lives (Harkness & Super, 2002). When children are engaged with others in activities of high interest, these interactions can be meaningful and influence their thinking, language, and learning. Shared activities within

a social context helps children develop mental processes by linking new skills to their interests and needs. In families, shared activities are often rooted in the talents, traditions, and abilities they possess and pass down to their children through cultural experiences, such as traditional music, art, and ethnic foods. Gonzalez, Moll and Amanti (2005) call these shared traditions Funds of Knowledge (FoK) and their use has been around for a very long time. For example, in 1966 Wolf studied how families from lower economic status used everyday math abilities to support the family household. In this work Wolf discovered that previous generations, extended family members and neighbors within the circles of a neighborhood and community teach 'funds' to younger generations. Families accumulate these resources through the production of materials and for minority families this often becomes a part of their pride (Velez-Ibanez & Greenburg, 1992). Ethnographic research studies on FoK (González & Amanti 1997; González et al., 1995; Moll et al., 1992) with minority families capture the premise that people possess skills, talents, and abilities learned in their life experiences and share these with others to survive. Families use their skills to supplement their incomes, and children living in the homes actively learn these funds through first-hand, hands-on experience. However, viewing FoK as a context parents use and may be able to use to facilitate their child's language has never been tested, and this is a gap. Interactions between parents and their children around life events and activities foster a shared vocabulary specific to the familial and cultural context (Girolametto & Weitzman, 2009). Use of these interactions and the wealth of knowledge they produce should be valued and respected, but too often it is not invited or integrated in the school setting. Despite their cultural wealth and knowledge, low-income and minority families are characterized as hard-to-reach and their children are

characterized as hard to teach. This has implications for our nation's growing diversity and the students in our schools (Munn-Joseph & Gavin-Evans, 2008). In 2000, the percentage of English Language Learners (ELL) in the United States was at 8%, but in 2011, this rose to 34% and this has implication for who is in our schools. In the United States in 2012, 41% of four year-olds attended a public preschool and of these 14% were placed in a special education program. In 2011, the percentage of Hispanic students living in poverty was 34%, the highest our country has ever seen. Hispanic children with limited Spanish development and with language disorders demonstrate a slower rate of acquiring English as a second language. Children entering kindergarten and learning English as a second language have language and literacy skills lower than native English speakers. Acquiring English as a second language at a slower rate is one of the earliest indicators of a deficit that may impact academic development, representing a larger percentage of children with reading or reading-related disabilities (Barnett, Carolan, Fitzgerald & Squires, 2012; Gutierrez-Clellen, Simon-Cereijido, & Sweet, 2012; Hoff, 2013; Kaiser & Roberts, 2011; Petersen & Gillam, 2013). Given the rising population of Hispanic students learning English and their challenges, something needs to change. As a teacher I value and honor these students and understand how much their parents have to offer, yet I know I am not doing enough to integrate parents or their FoK in my preschool classroom.

Teachers like myself recognize the value of parents and seek opportunities to help them become involved in their child's education. However, for parents to come to school, they must feel wanted, welcomed, and an important member of the team, especially for students with special needs (Angell, Stoner & Sheldon, 2009). When a family enters into

a bond or connection with a school, teachers should treasure the relationship. Teachers must recognize the importance of merging language development, FoK, and the important role parents play in the language and learning of their children. Integrating the FoK of the child and family into a classroom may create personal significance and show that the teacher honors the child's home culture, interests, skills, and talents (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Gonzalez et al., 2005).

Situational Context

The Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) students in my classroom demonstrate delays in their vocabulary and language development. These delays can make it difficult for students to pay attention in small and large group activities, share toys and materials, or take turns when engaging in play. In speaking with parents about their child's behaviors outside of class, I hear a different story. Parents tell me that their child is attentive when involved in FoK activities such as helping in the kitchen, playing instruments, or dancing. Given this, I believe there is a need to include these motivating activities in my classroom. There is a cultural divide between home and school because 90% of my ECSE students are Hispanic and come from native Spanish households. Despite this, they are being educated in an ethnocentric and English-focused curriculum. They are struggling to not only learn English, but also with a language delay in their native language. My students are often not using their native language or home talents when involved in classroom-based activities.

In addition to cultural barriers, there are socio-economic barriers and challenges. The families of my students demonstrate economic needs consistent with low socio-economic status, and many are recent immigrants from Mexico, or on the path to

citizenship. Many families face hardships such as homelessness, low-income jobs, and fear of deportation. These circumstances compounded with knowledge that their preschooler requires special education services, make parenting difficult to manage. The families of my students struggle to make a home for their children and provide for their needs. In addition, parents often lack the skills and understanding they need in order to help their special needs child understand and use language appropriately. As their teacher I have been investigating the implications of these challenges.

An Investigative Cycle of Action Research

Last fall I wanted to understand my context better. During home visits, I conducted an investigative cycle of action research to try and understand the FoK my students and their parents possessed and engaged in outside of school. I also sought to understand if parents would be interested in participating in my classroom if their FoK were used. To collect data, I conducted semi-structured interviews, and in these, asked parents to share their stories about the traditions, customs, and skills that mattered to them. Questions asked included:

- What are the interests and traditions your family enjoys?
- What do you like to do with your children outside of school?
- Are you as a parent interested in coming into my classroom to share a cultural tradition?

Collecting this data fit into my normal practice and work with parents. Conducting a home visit was part of my routine and provided an opportunity for me to raise questions and ask about concerns parents had. The semi-structured interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The process of data analysis entailed labeling the

transcripts with initial codes, finding themes, and from themes, making assertions to answer my research questions. From this analysis I learned that the families I work with have varied interests relating to traditions, their home culture, and language. These interests included cooking, baking, listening to traditional and cultural music, dancing, and development of entrepreneurial skills.

An example of entrepreneurial activity was one family's work as they pursued certificates and licenses to open their own mobile kitchen, and eventually their own Mexican/ Italian restaurant. The father is an Italian gourmet chef, and both parents are from Mexico and have recipes passed down through the generations. In addition to learning the traditions (FoK) of this family, I also learned about their lives. During the interview conducted on an afternoon visit to their single family home, I learned that their home is shared with a sister-in-law and her baby. I learned how important this extended family was because the sister-in-law helps the family with childcare for their boys. The boys, age 5 years and 3 years, were also actively involved in family life. They helped developing the evening menu by telling their parents their favorite Italian and Mexican foods. The parents also catered large functions, such as weddings, and when potential clients came to the home to sample meals, the boys always help set the table and place food on the plates of their guests.

The second family I visited during my investigative phase loved music and the Mother choreographed dances for groups of children at festivals. I conducted the interview in the family's apartment, shared by the parents and their twin boys. This Mother involved her four year-old boys in her everyday work by teaching them dance moves and routines.

From these visits and others I discovered that the families of my students have much to offer, value their language, have positive interactions among family members, offer social support, display interdependence when completing daily tasks, and seek to retain cultural values (Rodriguez, Bingham Mira, Paez & Myers, 2007). I also learned that they that many of them were willing to share their interests and talents with other children at school. Given this data, my experience, and my desire to use FoK and bring parents into my classroom, I conducted an action research study to answer the following research questions (RQ):

1. How and to what extent will use of FoK as a context, and in that context, teach parents language skills, build trust between parents and myself, and improve communication skills between the parent and child?
2. How will my view of parents grow and change?
3. How am I developing and changing?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

In Chapter 1, I discussed the national context and noted the increasing number of Hispanic students in our schools. In addition, I discussed the importance of valuing the FoK and culture of families and students. At the local level, I discussed my situational context and a previous mini-cycle of action research I conducted. I concluded that parents matter and have much to offer to the education of their children, in particular, the knowledge rooted in their culture and traditions. I also showed that the families I interviewed possessed skill and were willing to share these in the classroom setting. I concluded with my idea for an innovation and the research questions I would ask. In this chapter I provide literature to support my ideas and explain the theoretical framework I used.

Families, Communication, and Relational Trust

Communication, trust, and respect are foundational in relationship building between professionals and families (Blue-Banning, Summers, Nelson, Frankland, & Beegle, 2004; Harry, 2008; Kummerer, 2012; Zuniga, 2004). Being culturally responsive to the needs of families is necessary to develop successful relationships especially when it comes to families with special needs children. Professionals working in the school system need to develop positive relationships with families and caregivers who do not speak English. They need to build relational trust, or collaborative relationships. The steps a teacher can use to develop trust include creating an atmosphere where families can express their vulnerabilities, receive kindness and compassion, be honest with the teacher, and receive a teacher's genuine interest in their child's cultural and linguistic

background and the traditions they hold as special (Angell et al., 2009). Furthermore, professionals need to understand the negative effects poverty has on children, their development, and their learning. Moreover, they should have a working knowledge of strategies to promote academic success, especially for children learning English as a second language. Teachers need to develop the cultural competence they need to think, feel, and display behaviors that may be interpreted as respect towards families from diverse cultures and language (de Fur, 2012; Espinosa, 2005). Honoring and valuing the culture, skills, talents, and knowledge parents possess and forming positive partnerships based on the traits of relational trust, such as transparency and receptiveness, is important (Angell et al., 2009; Blue-Banning et al., 2004; Gonzalez et al., 2005). Professionals must take steps to reach out and initiate actions that help parents feel comfortable in the school setting. Key to this is realizing how important parents are and building equal power between parents and professionals (Kummerer, 2012; Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Relational partnerships encourage parents to realize the talents, power, and agency they possess and understand how important it is that they contribute to their child's learning as well as the learning of others (Rodriguez, 2013).

Building Trust

Bryk and Schneider (2002) say that trust is action on the part of the teacher in reaching out to families through conversations and welcoming them on the school campus. Inviting interactions make parents feel comfortable with other parents, teachers, and administrators, and help them realize and that the school staff truly cares and wants what is best for their children. Trust is an important factor when discussing a child's personal needs, especially as they relate to their families and the schools. Interactions

between professionals at school and parents of special needs students have a different dynamic than those of students in general education. There is frequent and often important communications regarding the special needs of their child.

Parents who feel authentic, genuine care from teachers develop high levels of trust and in doing so communicate more, and become more active at school. This is important to my study because I worked with families, developing trust through home visits, interviews and conversations about their culture, traditions and their child's use of language.

Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) note that trust ('confianza') is crucial to the dynamics between the family and outsiders that are working with the family. Nowhere is this more evident than with students of minority descent. According to Moll et al., Hispanic families highly regard teachers as professionals but in order for them to feel comfortable teachers must work to gain their trust. Teachers can gain this by getting to know each family's needs through home visits, positive messages, and listening for cues or key words parents express as they describe their child's experience in school. This may be especially important for parents of children with language delays because they often get frustrated with their children. If a child has a language processing disorder, the amount of verbal information parents provide may be too much for the child to process resulting in a breakdown of communication between parent and child. A suggested strategy is to offer the child short, simple phrases, using the level of speech demonstrated by the child, which could be one to three words per phrase (Moore, Barton, & Chironis, 2013). Research like this is important to my study because of the frequent and close contact I have with the parents of the special needs students in my program. I have to make a concerted effort to gain the parent's trust. To alleviate frustrations parents

experience with their language-delayed preschooler, I believe that parents and teachers need to work together to embed language strategies into the daily routine and highly motivating activities at home.

Family-School Partnerships

Partnerships are collaborations between a family and school, founded on intentional development of relationships with the goal of carrying out a shared vision (de Fur, 2012). Partnerships like these matter, because they lead to joint interests, goals, and activities that support both families and schools (de Fur, 2012). The best way to achieve these types of relationships is for school professionals to initiate and reach out to parents (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). This is confirmed by the work of Blue-Banning et al. (2004). These researchers investigated the meaning of collaborative relationships to understand what school professionals and families think are the actions and attitudes that facilitate collaborative relationships. This study was part of a larger research study, exploring the research question, "What specific indicators of professional behavior do parents and professionals identify as indicative of collaborative partnerships?" (p. 169). To answer this research question, the researchers conducted thirty-three focus groups and collected qualitative data from administrators, service providers and families of children with and without special needs. Furthermore, the researchers conducted thirty-two interviews with non-English-speaking parents and their service providers. Participants were asked to think of what behaviors constituted a collaborative partnership and then they were asked to provide an example of both a successful and unsuccessful partnership. The results identified six professional behavior participants noted: communication, commitment, equality, trust, respect, and skills/competencies. Participants also provided indicators of

each behavior including commitment, equality, trust, and skills. Commitment was a sense of assurance that all parties were dedicated, devoted, and invested in pursuing goals for the well-being of the family. Indicators included being flexible, accessible, consistent, sensitivity to emotions, and regarding families as more than just a number or another case. Equality was a sense of equity among the parties in decision-making and equally influential to help the children and their families. Indicators included empowering and validating each other, acting as advocates for the children and the families, and fostering harmony among all the parties. Trust was the sense of confidence that the members of the parties are reliable, dependable, and have the ability to complete their work. Indicators included being reliable, being discreet, and making the safety of the child a priority. Respect was regard and esteem for members of the parties, demonstrated through interactions and communications. Indicators included being courteous, non-judgmental, and valuing the child. Skills were behaviors the members of the partnership demonstrated, such as competence and fulfilling the responsibilities in their roles as service providers and administrators. Indicators were having expectations for children to progress on skill development, taking action to meet individual special needs, and taking into consideration the whole family and the whole child. The results of the study indicated that both parents and professionals provided similar responses as to the qualities that constitute a successful relationship. These commonalities show the need for understanding and developing partnerships.

Partnerships between schools and families develop via different avenues. Sanders (1996) described one way to develop partnerships and in this work noted the importance of action teams and the importance of full-time facilitators to guide teams. Sanders notes:

> Each school's Action Team for School-Family-Community Partnerships is a committee of parents, teachers, administrators, and community members who work to nurture and maintain strong links between schools, families, and communities. Each member of the team serves as chair or co-chair of one of six committees that characterize six types of involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. (p.61)

Sanders (2000) purported the use of Action Teams in general education and within the special needs population, emphasizing the need for communication that was both informative and caring. Parents need information about their children and their education especially in terms of their child's academic strengths, needs, and goals. The caring component is sensitivity to the needs of the family, understanding how the special needs child gets along at home, and the needs that family has. In a study conducted by Sanders (2008), district employed parent liaisons were able to bridge the gap between home and school when they advocated for families at meetings, offered translation services, helped families understand their child's academic needs, and supported families of children at risk. In Sanders' (2001) words, "School-community collaborations focused on academic subjects have been shown to enhance students' attitudes toward these subjects, as well as the attitudes of teachers and parents" (p. 21). Along the same lines, Price-Mitchell (2009) discusses how, "…These partnerships help children succeed through an emergent process of dialogue and relationship building in the peripheral spaces where parents and schools interact on behalf of children" (p. 9). Collaborations begin with communication and conversations between teachers and families about

children's learning, about what the family needs to help their child, and about what the school has to offer in terms of academic support. Price-Mitchell (2009) further explains how these conversations generate new knowledge, which leads to innovations specific to each child. Within the dynamic of the family-community partnerships, the parents and teachers are the two most important groups of people trying to connect. In their work, O'Donnell, Kirkner and Meyer-Adams (2008) found parents to be most interested in improved collaboration between themselves and the school and in the improvement of their children in school. Associations the families experienced became stronger as they participated in classes and programs that benefitted their own learning of English, and a new skill such as CPR or parenting skills.

Knowledge-developing conversations between parents of special needs preschoolers and teachers are essential to determine what needs are present (Angell et al., 2009; Price-Mitchell, 2009). Communication matters because asking parents to participate in their child's learning makes a family feel valued and part of a team (Munn-Joseph & Gavin-Evans, 2008). When teachers of students with special needs look at parents as partners, they come to see the whole child, not just a child described in an IEP. Successful rapport is dependent on the frequency and quality of interactions between families and teachers. When families are able to communicate without language barriers, they feel welcomed and accepted (de Fur, 2012).

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) provides insight into the relationships between systems and children. The theory focuses on four systems: the microsystem, meso-system, exo-system, and the macro-system. The micro-system is

closest to the child and the proximal characters in it are the parents, siblings, and other members living in the household, such as grandparents, aunts, and uncles. The next layer is the meso-system of influence and individuals in this layer include the teacher and staff at school, daycare, or church. The next layer is the exo-system with influence from parents' workplace, local industry, and government. The last and most remote level is the macro-system, which includes cultural beliefs and values.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) notes that the micro and meso-systems have the greatest influence on a child because the individuals in them need to interact for the welfare of the child. They also need to learn from and with each other by sharing information, skills, and support for each other. As noted earlier parent school networks can accomplish this and help reduce stress among parents who have children with special needs (Kayser, 2008). Facilitating opportunities for families to connect may promote interaction and advocacy (Kummerer, 2012).

Language

Three theories of language development have been developed and one informs my work and provides insight as to the language delays some students experience as early as preschool. The behaviorist perspectives of language with learning theorists such as B.F. Skinner (1972) see language development as matter of rewards and punishments. Those in an infant's environment reinforce the language skills produced by the developing infant through operant conditioning. An example of this is a mother hearing her baby babble 'mama' and in response, reinforcing this expression with a smile and kind words. From this perspective, reinforcement will encourage the infant to repeat what was said. The second theory is the nativistic perspective of Noam Chomsky (1968) who

proposed that there are universals in the development of language that are innate to all children around the world. These three universals include:

1. The development of language occurs between ages 2-3 years.
2. Children develop language before they have a use for it.
3. The early vocalizations children express are not related to the practice of language.

In addition, Chomsky believed maturation is the reason language develops in children because language is a component of a child's genetic makeup. A language acquisition device (LAD) is the innate ability to develop language and every child is born with this capacity to deduce the rules of a language, regardless of reinforcement from others in the environment. The LAD represents the development of vocabulary and the manner in which a child uses knowledge to learn new words by associating the visual of an object with the sound of the word labeling the object and the concept of the use of the object. For example for the word 'cup', the child sees the cup, hears the sound of the word 'cup' and makes associations with their use of the cup. The auditory/visual/conceptual knowledge of experiencing the cup stimulates various regions of the brain, establishing new knowledge. Given the impact of the LAD, interactions with others in the environment have little impact on language development. The third theory is a middle ground of the two mentioned above. The social-interactionists' perspective sees the development of language as innate biological functioning with social interactions with others. What this means for a child developing language is that s/he must interact with others in their environment and his/her brain needs to be able to process the information and generate meaning. Language is a code we humans use to express ideas

and thoughts through a conventional system of communication. The development of language is an intersection of the three components that comprise it: form, content, and use. Language delay or specific-language impairment is a label that identifies differences in the behaviors and order of language development expected in developing children. A delay means a child is developing at a slower rate, learned a different code, or the code is learned, but the child is not able to use it to express or understand the intended message (Lahey, 1988). Parents and caregivers that spend the most time with their children are able to observe differences in behaviors when their child fails to talk, talks minimally, has little to no understanding of directions or commands, or produces immature grammatical skills and phrases. It is parents who often find their child's communication and messages difficult to understand (McCormack, McLeod, McAllister, & Harrison, 2010).

Preschool children affected with language delays and varying levels of cognitive delays, produce language with differences in form, grammar, content, vocabulary, and use (Kaiser et al., 1992). Young children with language delays have difficulty processing information, understanding vocabulary, answering questions, and retelling events (Gutierrez-Clellen et al., 2012; Lahey, 1988; Moyle, Stokes & Klee, 2011). As a result of miscommunication, children with language challenges often feel frustrated and misbehave out of frustration. Preschool children with language delays need help communicating especially with their parents because caregivers often feel frustrated when they cannot share information or understand their child's wants and needs (McCormack et al., 2010).

The struggles of children with language delays often continue when they enroll in school because they continue to have trouble communicating with others and

participating in the general education setting. Preschool children can be screened to determine if there is a delay in their development. If this is believed, a comprehensive evaluation in the five domains of early childhood development (adaptive, motor, cognitive, communication, and personal-social, McDevitt & Ormrod, 2010) is completed. If evaluation results indicate delays, the child is appropriated special education services, and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed including the present level of functioning for the five domains of development and needs of the child. After this, services are provided in the least restrictive environment (LRE; U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

The IEP ensures children receive a free and appropriate public education because it is law. Signed in 1975 by President Ford, Public Law 94-142 was written in response to Congress' concern that children with disabilities were being excluded from the school system because of their disabilities, and because of their disabilities many children were being denied an appropriate education. "This latter group comprised more than half of all children with disabilities who were living in the United States at that time" (Individuals with Disabilities Act, 2004, p. 4).

Theoretical Lenses

In my study two theoretical lenses will be used, FoK and Vygotsky's (1978) social cultural theory.

Funds of Knowledge

Yvonne DeGaetano (2007) described a project that helped parents improve their children's academic scores and language through learning strategies based on cultural strengths. In her words the "use of culture as a mediator of learning" was vital, as it

created an arena that was familiar to the children and the families (p. 147). Her work shows that no one aside from the parents can speak about their child's experiences, interests, background, and language.

Culture matters and for many parents, it is a challenge to teach their language-delayed child a new skill because they do not know how to help their child understand concepts and the skills they need. Gonzalez et al. (2005) describe the Funds of Knowledge approach as a way to eliminate this challenge. The FoK approach is based on the skills, talents, and abilities families possess and pass down to their children through traditions and cultural experiences. It uses these to teach and reach children, often of minority descent, in our schools. In their work, FoK are described as, "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functional and well-being" (Moll et al. 1992, p.133). There has been research conducted on this focus. For example, Moll et al. used a qualitative approach to understand how Hispanic families in the southwestern United States formed connections in networks with relatives and neighbors to support their children's learning of new skills, and at the same time, used their FoK to improve their home and economic situations.

Social Cultural Theory

Vygotsky's (1978) social-cultural theory describes the development of cognition and mental processes. Mental processes are the content and form of knowledge gained through exchanges that first happen externally as an individual exchanges information through a shared experience or activity. Mental processes move internally when a child transforms information received from the world outside and makes it their own. This

process leads new information to be connected with what has previously been learned or experienced. Vygotsky (1978) believed shared activities, experiences, and language facilitate the internalization of new knowledge and shared memories. The common factor between Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) and Vygotsky's view is that learning occurs within social relationships. Bronfenbrenner sets learning within various systems like the home and the groups/agencies that influence the child, such as school and community. Vygotsky sets learning within the context of culture and the social interactions occurring between a child and others (Owens, 2002). The idea of looking at development from a social interaction perspective was used to frame my study, along with FoK as the context for parents to teach their child language strategies.

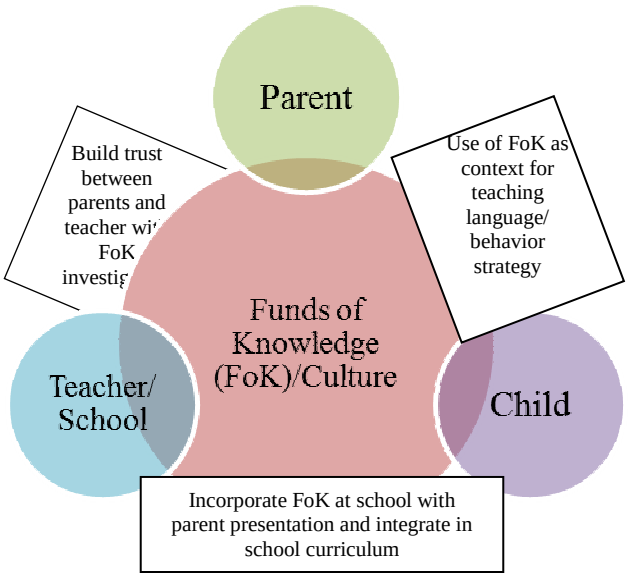

Figure 1. Framework of study.

Chapter 3

Methods

In Chapter 2, I provided insight for the need to establish communication and trust with families in order to discuss language needs of young students with disabilities and the important role their parents play in remediating these challenges. I also discussed the role FoK play in the lives of students and their families. In this chapter, I describe my innovation and the methods of my action research study. The chapter is divided into the following sections: action research tradition, a description of the setting and participants, my role as teacher-researcher, the mixed methods design I employed, my innovation, data collection tools, how these tools were used, and the analytical strategies I used to answer my research questions.

Action Research Tradition, My Stance, and Goals

Action research is a cyclical process of action on a problem and reflection on the results to make changes to the next cycle (Riel, 2010). Stringer (2007) describes the primary purpose of action research as to provide an opportunity for people to participate and be directly involved in a systematic inquiry and investigation to achieve a goal and evaluate the effectiveness of their action. This makes sense in the context of working with families because it offers opportunities to implement a plan of action, observe any changes, and make decisions in the plan based on observation.

This action research study was a Participatory Action Research (PAR, Stringer, 2007) because the main goal of my study was to develop a community of learners, to foster parental involvement, and to help parents to understand how to use their FoK as the context to improve communication with their child by implementing language

development strategies. The secondary goal was to empower parents with skills from the cultural wealth of their FoK to foster effective communication with their children, especially when engaged in valuable FoK activities and experiences. Given these goals, knowledge may be co-constructed between the parents, children, and teacher-researcher, with each group learning from the others. This process of inquiry supports the value of the parent's wisdom and knowledge, prompting trust and understanding of what each stakeholder has to offer in order to influence parent efficacy and empower parents to see themselves as able first-educators of their children. In the same vein as FoK, Stringer (2004) supports and stresses the importance of the experience and local knowledge among families in a community, "that can be incorporated into exciting and meaningful activities having the power to transform the education of people and children" (p. 33). Taking a participatory approach to action research and involving all the stakeholders affected has the potential to generate useable solutions and positive relationships (Stringer, 2004). Actions focused on building trust and empowering parents could result in changes in the community (Plano-Clark & Creswell, 2010).

Setting

This action research study was conducted at two locations, the homes of the families of the preschool children in my classroom and my early childhood special education preschool classroom.

District, School, Classroom

The school district in the southwestern United States had an enrollment of approximately 64,000 students. The school site in this study experienced a transition from a traditional elementary school campus to use as an Early Childhood Education Center in

August 2013. The center served children from three to five years old, receiving childcare, general education, and special education services in an integrated model. At this site, there were three general education classrooms and19 ECSE classrooms that are part of the larger department comprised of over 50 programs throughout the district which service over 1,300 early childhood special education students.

The first setting of this innovation was the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) classroom. The students received special education services focusing on improvement of developmental skills (e.g., adaptive, personal-social, motor, cognitive, and communication skills). In the classroom, staff integrate language development strategies and developmentally appropriate activities in centers. Teaching with thematic units offers children opportunities to participate in hands-on experiences, which are important to developing cognitive tools, supporting Vygotsky's theory of learning the use of cultural tools based on experiences (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2010). Currently, the thematic units followed American holidays and seasonal activities, but my Hispanic students were native Spanish speakers and did not relate to these traditions or to the English songs, rhymes, or folklore. What was missing was a connection to the home culture. This connection may have been achieved by involving parents in the development of thematic units based on family's FoK activities and interests. The classroom environment can be an ideal context for parents to showcase their ideas, interests, and expertise to help the preschoolers, and share a skill or talent that is important to the parents and their family (Moll et al., 1992).

Homes of Families and Trust

The second setting for this study was the homes of my students. Home visits were part of the curriculum, and in the past I found many parents willing to open up their homes to me and discuss the needs of their child. A critical factor to a successful home visit is the time taken before the visit to develop trust with families. In order to establish trust with families, I used phone calls that let parents know how much I appreciated the opportunity to visit their homes and have time to speak with them outside of school. I emphasized my desire to help their child grow and develop in the classroom; likewise, I was dependent on parental involvement for their child to be successful in my classroom.

Over the years, I have visited modest and humble dwellings. They were either an apartment, a single-wide trailer in a park, a duplex, or a small free-standing house, usually in need of repair, and often too small for the number of family members. Their homes were generally located in older, established neighborhoods that were near industrial sectors of Hispanic businesses, with store front signs in both English and Spanish. The types of businesses in the area included tire shops, car repair shops, churches with Spanish services, small grocery marts (bodegas), liquor stores, cash-advance locations, gas stations, larger grocery stores catering to Hispanic products, and small clothing/shoe stores in strip malls. I was in frequent contact with parents by phone and also daily sheets of their child's activity in the classroom. The regular communication, invitations to school events, and seeking their input on questions and concerns about their child helped establish a level of trust between the parents and school. In conversations with families, they shared that learning English has not been a priority because all the businesses they frequent speak Spanish. There are elementary

schools that serve the neighborhoods, but the ECSE programs are not available at each home school. The school district offered transportation for ECSE students to receive their services. The school site is a regional center on the outskirts of the district, and the majority of the families live 8-10 miles or a 15-20 minute drive from the site. The school bus ride for many of the students is 45 minutes to 1 hour. Despite the home size of the living space, the location or the surroundings, the families were content and expressed love and affection for their children.

Current Level of Parent Involvement

School

Parental involvement has not been high within the ECSE setting. Parents typically come to school to review their child's IEP or attend a literacy activity called Book and Breakfast where they to join their children before class begins and have a light breakfast and a story reading, followed by an activity related to the story. After this families went home with a new book. Since it started three years ago, Book and Breakfast has been well-attended.

Classroom

In the past, during classroom and home visits I had discussed the importance of parents as their child's first teacher and believed in the value of what parents had to offer, but never did anything about it. I knew this was an oversight and wondered if a parent presentation of an activity in the classroom, such as cooking/baking or skill, such as sewing, from their family's FoK, would help parents feel honored and valued. Involving parents in their child's education had the potential to enact my belief that parents were a resource of knowledge and information. I wanted parents to feel wanted, welcomed, and

an important member of the team, especially outside of the IEP meetings. Gonzalez et al. (2005) detail the theory of Funds of Knowledge (FoK), which recognizes a family's offer to the home-school connection, as a wealth of knowledge and information. To them, parents were experienced in the intricacies of their life, their work, and their children. Parents knew their children better than teachers ever would. This knowledge was specific and special like a fingerprint to each family. Believing in this, I wanted to learn from and connect with families. I thought Blue-Banning et al.'s (2004) six points of partnership--communication, commitment, equality, skills, trust, and respect--may be a place to start.

Participants

This study used a purposeful sample, because as researcher I wanted to understand and learn about parents and their use of FoK. I chose the parents as my participants because as my students' first teachers, they have the most insight and possession of FoK (Plano-Clark & Creswell, 2010). Within this PAR, my role was teacher-researcher, as I was the classroom teacher and my students and their parents were participants. Given my context, there was a potential pool of 30 families that could volunteer to be a part of the study. Out of these, seven families volunteered. Following is information about each family:

Members in Family 1 are native Spanish speakers and originally from Mexico. They have four children, ranging in age from 4 to 15. The four year-old is the second child in the family attending my program. Both Mother and Father live in the home, with interests in camping and hunting. Father works outside of the home, and Mother is a homemaker. Mother directs the conversation for her youngest son, responding verbally to his body language, gestures, and facial expressions. He uses short (one to three) word

phrases, with difficulty using labels to identify objects and actions. Mother demonstrated trust by coming to school to assist with special programs and showed willingness to have me come to the home for a visit.

Family 2 has four boys, ranging in age from 14 to age 4, with the youngest a student in my class. They are native Spanish speakers and originally from Mexico. Father works outside of the home, and Mother is a homemaker. Family 2 enjoy outings in nature and family gatherings with relatives that live nearby. The youngest has difficulty with articulation of sounds. Mother offers encouragement and models correct sound production by repeating the phrase. Mother demonstrated trust by inviting me to the home and her openness to tell me about her family and the activities they enjoy together.

Family 3 is a family comprised of native Spanish speakers and originally from Mexico, with two sons and two daughters, ranging in age from 15 to age 2. Father works outside of the home, and Mother is a homemaker. Family 3 enjoys an active lifestyle, spending time playing soccer with their children in the backyard or at the park. The youngest son is a student with language delays in vocabulary and articulation of sounds. Mother and Father support him by offering him more time to answer, and naming objects that he labels ‘eso’ (that) when requesting. Parents demonstrated trust with me by opening up and sharing details of a family crisis and asking me for advice on how to proceed. This sensitive topic was difficult to discuss, but Mother expressed that she was comfortable asking me for help.

Family 4 is a family comprised of native Spanish speakers and originally from Mexico. Father works outside of the home, and Mother is a homemaker. The family has four girls ranging in age from 10 to age 2. They enjoy learning about American culture

and integrating new traditions with celebrations and rituals of their Mexican ancestors. The second youngest daughter has difficulty with following directions and demonstrates tantrum behaviors when she does not get what she wants. Her parents have tried to accommodate their schedule to help meet their daughter's needs by ensuring she sleeps well, as this helps their daughter manage change better. Parents displayed trust by their willingness to discuss their daughter's medical needs, sharing about their traditions, and interest in trying new strategies to diffuse explosive tantrums.

Family 5 has two children, a girl, 9 and boy, 4. The Mother works long hours outside of the home, and the Father is currently working from home while caring for the children. They are American of Mexican descent and speak English and Spanish at home. Their son has a limited expressive vocabulary and difficulty producing syllables. Father describes the son's ability to understand directions related to the routine of the home. I observed how Father presents his son with frequent prompts breaking down directions to small steps and models naming of objects and actions. Parents displayed trust when they allowed me to visit, and the Father was proud to give me a tour of their first home, an older home he has been renovating.

Family 6 is a family comprised of two parents and three children, a son of 5 with Autism, a daughter, 3, and an infant of 10 months. Family 6 is from Mexico and they speak Spanish in the home. The daughter displays tantrum behaviors with argument and bargaining in the home when she does not get her way. Mother has tried to reason and agree to the bargains, using bribery to calm the child. Mother has observed the child's behavior manifest when Father gets home from work, challenging Mother's decisions. According to Mother, Father finds it difficult to follow through on behavior modification

strategies and allows the child to have her way. Mother displayed trust during the home visit when she shared her relief in releasing the stress of the behaviors by discussing them with me. Mother expressed the heaviness she feels in daily struggles with an older child with Autism and his needs, the tantrums of the daughter, and the quiet moments she has with her infant son.

Family 7 is a family comprised of one child and two parents that both work outside of the home. Mother is American, and Father is British. English is spoken in the home. Family 7 has a typically developing daughter, age 3, enrolled in my program as a language model for the special needs students. They desire to foster within their daughter a spirit of independence and self-sufficiency. They expressed trust during the home visit when opening up about their experiences on the mission field as a family and how that experience helped their family become closer in a culture where they did not know the language or culture.

Mixed Methods

This study used a concurrent mixed-methods approach to answer the research questions because this design relied on both qualitative and quantitative data collection, encouraged analysis and inference techniques that provide a comprehensive overview of the data collected (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007), and encouraged me as a researcher to analyze data together (Greene, 2007). In designing the procedures for this mixed methods study, I considered four important aspects--timing, weighting, mixing, and theorizing (Creswell, 2009). The first aspect of timing refers to when data is collected. I collected both quantitative data and qualitative data concurrently and simultaneously. The second aspect of design was weighting, referring to the priority of

the data collected. This study had a heavy weighting on qualitative data, with a minor amount of weighting on quantitative data (QUAL+quan). The reason this study prioritized qualitative data was because of my interest in the participants' stories of FoK and the family. The third aspect of design was mixing, referring to the mix of quantitative and qualitative data at various points in the study, such as data collection, data analysis, at interpretation, or at all points. In this study, the mixing occurred when qualitative data were counted for frequency in theme development, and the counts were compared with the descriptive quantitative data. The fourth aspect of design was theorizing, referring to use of a theoretical framework to guide the entire design of the study. Explicit use of a theoretical framework helped me develop my questions, select my participants, and collect the data needed to m provide reasoned results (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the two frameworks were used: FoK and Vygotsky's (1978) social cultural theory. Through these lenses, I examined the data looking for the nuances in the development of relationship and building of trust between the parent and teacher-researcher, as we learned from each other within the social context of the home visit and the classroom presentations on FoK. Likewise, I observed the relationship between parent, and supported the parent during the classroom presentation. In addition, I observed the dynamics between parent and child in the social context of FoK activities when parent implemented Language Strategies (LS) and Developmentally Appropriate Interactions (DAI).

Innovation

The innovation was designed to create and foster a Parent-to-Parent Network developed through a community of learners. It was hoped that this interaction would

allow parents the opportunity to dialogue with other parents and myself and learn strategies that would help them foster their child's language. The idea of parents helping each other and learning from each other and me was designed to create a community approach to sharing information and solving problems (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). Data were gathered to help me answer the following research questions (RQ):

Research Question 1: How and to what extent will use of FoK as a context, and in that context, teach parents language skills, build trust between parents and myself, and improve communication skills between the parent and child?

Research Question 2: How will my view of parents grow and change?

Research Question 3: How am I developing and changing?

Time Line for This Work

August 2013, All-Parent Meeting

The all-parent meeting was designed to teach parents what FoK were, how they were developed, and their use in the community and in schools. In this meeting I used terms commonly used to clarify FoK for parents, to describe culture, traditions, activities, celebrations and customs. To help parents understand FoK, I asked questions that brought to mind a memory of learning a trade or skill of significance that created opportunities for helping others or to earn an income. Furthermore, I asked parents to comment on family events that unified the family, or created feelings of family togetherness and pride. I asked families to explain the traditions they celebrated and what occurred at these events. My ideal was using FoK to help parents feel valued with the schools' interest in learning about the family's culture and traditions, in order to build trust between the parents and the teacher. It was hoped that as participants and I worked together, we would learn from

each other and build trusting friendships. It was also hoped parentis would feel good about their FoK and what they had to offer others.

The second focus of the all-parent meeting was to solicit participants for my study. I told parents about my study, the experiences they may have, and the knowledge they may gain. Participation in the study began with a home visit and a semi-structured interview to gain information about the families' FoK. I was also interested in learning about the parent's perception of their child's use and understanding of language. This information informed the recommended one or two Language Strategies and two or three Developmentally Appropriate Interactions I presented to the parents to use with their child. Later, parents came to the classroom on Family Day and taught the students an activity based on their FoK.

As an action researcher I was very aware of my interactions. I noticed the tone of the all-parent meeting, expressed gratitude and appreciation to the families for participation and for their time and effort. My goal was for the families to understand how honored I was to be welcomed in their home for the study, and the respect I had for the them in sharing their strengths, their needs, their feelings, and the FoK that were part of their family's life and culture. Through my actions, I hoped to develop a deeper level of trust with the families.

In soliciting volunteers for the study, I asked parents the following questions to consider when deciding on their participation:

1. Will you allow me to come to your home, conduct an interview, and answer a questionnaire?

2. Are you interested in learning language development strategies to use with your preschooler?
3. Are you available to come to school to share on your family's FoK?

August 2013, Volunteer Meeting

The purpose of the volunteer meeting was to allow participants to meet each other and socialize. At the beginning of the meeting, I briefly reiterated the goals of the study, reviewed the schedule of the study, and explained the following participant responsibilities:

1. Participate in interviews
2. Answer the questionnaire and survey
3. Write journal entries
4. Learn and try Language Strategies and Developmentally Appropriate Interactions
5. Come into the classroom to present a FoK activity

September 2013-December 2013: Weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11

The home visit. The first purpose of the home visit was to understand the family's FoK, see how parents worked with their child in this environment, and build trust. My intent was to learn what was important to the families, what they valued, and what skills and knowledge they gained through work, family traditions, and cultural customs. The second purpose of the home visit was to demonstrate the use of one or two Language Strategies (LS) and two or three Developmentally Appropriate Interactions (DAI) to work with their child. I modeled the LS and DAI for the parents, and told them the purpose of each skill. Through guided practice, I had the parent demonstrate how they

would incorporate the language and developmental skill into a FoK activity. I offered support in learning the new skills with the use of a scaffolding strategy, called shared activity. Scaffolding occurred after I modeled the use of the LS and the DAI. I discussed with parents the value of the FoK and how a language strategy would be effective in teaching their child a FoK skill/activity. After this we discussed the visit to the classroom. I explained how they would do a presentation of a FoK activity in the classroom and integrate the LS and DAI skills learned at home. I reassured parents that I would support them, and encourage them to view their skills and talents as valuable to others.

At school: Bringing parents into the classroom. The purpose of the parent's presentation in the classroom was to help parents understand their FoK is valued and that FoK can be part of the curriculum their child receives. The second purpose was to observe how parents used the LS and the DAI skills taught to them. I supported parents with classroom management as they conducted their activity.

At end of study: Parents at school. I conducted a focus group interview with four of the seven study participants. The purpose of a focus group was to observe the dynamics of the study participants interacting and to understand their experience through their dialogue as they answered the following 3 questions:

1. How did you benefit from in this experience?
2. How will this change what you do with your child as far as language/teaching?
3. Did you feel valued/honored when you presented the activity based on your culture in the classroom?

Data Collection Tools and Procedures

To answer the research questions, five tools were used to collect data. The quantitative and qualitative data sources included a survey, semi-structured interviews, parent journals, and teacher journal/field notes.

Research Questions	Tools to Collect Data
RQ#1: How and to what extent will use of FoK as a context, and in that context teach parents language skills, build trust between parents and myself, and improve communication skills between the parent and child?	1. Survey on trust 2. Semi-structured interview 3. Focus Group 4. Parent Journal 5. Field Notes/My Journal
RQ#2: How will my view of parents grow and change?	1.Parent Journal 2. Field Notes/My Journal
RQ 3: How am I developing and changing?	1. Field Notes/My Journal

Figure 2. Data collection by research questions.

Research Question 1

How and to what extent will use of FoK as a context, and in that context, teach parents language skills, build trust between parents and myself, and improve communication skills between the parent and child?

Quantitative data collection tools to answer Research Question 1.

Survey. The purpose of the survey was to measure parents' perceptions of their level of trust with the teacher, the school, and the classroom. This information was designed to help me understand if my innovation was successful. The survey was given at the All-Volunteer meeting prior to the beginning of the study and again at the end. In

order to ensure anonymity, I left the room and had another adult administer the survey to parents. The volunteer collected the surveys and placed them in a large envelope. The survey had ten questions with a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* (Plano-Clark & Creswell, 2010). I gave parents a printed copy of the survey and asked them to answer the questions by writing their replies. I asked parents to answer anonymously, but to use an identifier of the town/city where they were born, and the month/day they were born (ex: Houston-September 19). This relieved parents from concern of answering the questions to please me and help them to answer freely. The Parent Trust survey is in Appendix A.

Qualitative data collection tools to answer Research Question 1.

Semi-structured initial and exit interviews/focus group. The purpose of the semi-structured interviews during a one-on-one format was to ask open-ended questions, allowing the participant to develop their own types of responses (Plano-Clark & Creswell, 2010). Data was collected over three one-on-one format opportunities. The questions related to the family's strengths and their child's strengths and needs as well as the family's activities, traditions, celebrations, and customs they value. This information helped me understand how parents would use FoK as a context for teaching their children. The semi-structured initial and exit interview questions, questions, and focus group questions are in Appendix B.

Parent journal. Plano-Clark and Creswell (2010) note that journals allow participants to document their reflective observations of thoughts and interactions between me, as a teacher-researcher, parents, and parents and their children. In this study, I gave each participant a journal with prompts asking them to write reflective notes by

handwriting their thoughts, ideas, insights, ideas about their experience, and happenings throughout the study. In the journal parents noted their observations and thoughts of what they thought about the FoK activity, how they felt when teaching the FoK activity, and how this might be used at school. I asked parents to reflect on what they learned about language skills and interacting with their child, and how this made them feel. These prompts were designed to provide insight into the parents' perspective of using their FoK in a different way, as a context for teaching. I also prompted parents to comment on what they learned about language skills and interacting with their child and how this made them feel. Responses to these prompts helped me understand how parents felt about any changes or improvements to communication between the child and parent. Parent journal entry prompts are in Appendix C.

Field notes/my journal. Plano-Clark and Creswell (2010) explain that field notes are to document changes in the context of the study and how these changes can impact results. In this study, the purpose of my journal was to document observations of interactions between parents and their children, and parents and myself. The aim was to gather information that I saw happening between participants and materials in the context of the study. I kept a notebook making reflective notes by handwriting my thoughts, ideas, insights, ideas, and any changes to the context of the study. I used codes in the field notebook/journal to distinguish a field note (FN) from a journal entry (JE) as I wrote in my journal throughout the study timeline. My field notes/journal entry prompts are in Appendix D.

Research Question #2

How will my view of parents grow and change?

Qualitative data collection tools to answer Research Question 2.

Field notes/my journal. The purpose of my Journal was previously described. In my journal, I had a set of prompts to help ensure consistency of information I reflected on as I worked with each family. I reflected on how parents showed pride in their FoK, involved their child in the activity, and taught their children. The entries had me reflect on the parent's integration of the language strategies in the home and at the school presentation.

Parent journal. The purpose of the Parent Journal was previously described. In this study I asked parents to explain what they learned from their experience, and how, if at all, it changed what they did with their child as far as language/teaching. These prompts were designed to help parents reflect on the experience and discuss the process of integrating language strategies in their daily interactions with their child. This information gave me greater insight to see if they were apt to change and growth as they integrated the language strategies at home and during the school presentation.

Research Question 3

How am I developing and changing?

Qualitative data collection tools to answer Research Question 3.

Field notes/my journal. The purpose of Field notes/My Journal was previously described. I used the journal to consider what I was learning from the parents as they interacted with their child, the children in class, and how they integrated their culture in the school setting.

Data Analysis Plan

The data collected were analyzed using grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), a systematic approach of generating categories of information, choosing one of the categories, and analyzing it through the point of view of a theoretical model.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Trust survey. The survey results were analyzed using descriptive statistics to measure standard deviation to answer the research question. First, the data on the 4-point Likert scale was scored with a score of 4 = *Strongly Agree*, 3 = *Agree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 1 = *Strongly Disagree*. Next, I calculated the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. In the third step of data analysis, I summarized the tendencies of scores, the varied scores, and compared the pre- and post- survey scores to another. The results were summarized and displayed on a table, organized in rows and columns (Plano-Clark & Creswell, 2010).

Qualitative Data Analysis

Semi-structured interviews, parent journal, my journal, field notes. Qualitative data from all sources were analyzed in the same manner, to validate the accuracy of the information collected from each instrument. First, the raw data were collected from each source (interview transcriptions, parent journal, teacher journal, field notes). Original data collected were photocopied to maintain a clean copy for future photocopying as necessary. The analysis of these pieces of data began with reading the documents two times without making marks on the photocopied pages. The first reading was to get a sense of what the participants were saying in the data, then to get meaning. The first step in grounded theory data analysis was open coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). I wrote notes in the margins of the page and between the lines of the text, relating

to things that stood out to me, such as distinctions, claims, and statements that spoke the thoughts of the writer. This level of analysis produced labels for the written notes. The next step was axial coding, noticing patterns of similar statements that were grouped and revealed categories, using the theoretical model to filter the data into more specific codes. Lastly, selective coding was the analysis of the relationships between the formed categories with deeper insight, and considered the themes that emerged from the combined categories (Creswell, 2009). I returned to the photocopied data pieces, originally marked with circles and underlined marks, in blue pen and purple pen, coded the data pieces with the themes revealed through the axial coding and analysis. I created a table listing the themes, theme explanation, and an example of the results within each theme.

Data Collection Timeline

Table 1 provides the multiple data sources utilized in this study.

Table 1

Measure by Data Collection Timeline

Measure	Data Collection Timeline
Survey on Trust (Pre-/Post-)	August/December 2013
Semi-structured Interview	August-December 2013
Focus Group	December 2013
Parent Journal	August-December 2013
Research Journal	Ongoing

Reliability/Credibility/Validity/Trust

A concurrent triangulation mixed methods approach was used to analyze the multiple data collected at the same time, yet analyzed separately, to compare the two sets of data (Creswell, 2009). To check the validity of the findings, I employed validity strategies (Creswell, 2009) and used multiple methods to convince the readers of that accuracy. The strategies used were triangulation, member checking, rich/thick descriptions of the environment, researcher bias, and presenting negative or discrepant information (Creswell, 2009).

Triangulation

Triangulation looked at data from multiple points of view to compare the strength of one data, to offset the weakness of another data set. The data collected supported, complemented, and helped to confirm one another and the overall findings. In this study, the parent survey was used to measure the level of trust parents experienced at different levels, between parents and the school, parents and the teacher; and parents and the classroom. The survey results complemented the parent, and teacher journal entries. The parent journal, teacher journal, and field notes were used to measure the social interactions and relationship between the parent and teacher-researcher, and the dynamics between the parent and their child.

Member Check

In conducting a member check, I determined the accuracy of the qualitative findings by returning to the parents and showed them the final themes that emerged through data analysis, asking if they felt the results were accurate.

Rich, Thick Descriptions of the Environment

In order to engage the reader and transport them to the home visit or the parent presentation in the classroom, I used rich/thick descriptions of the environment to bring it to life. This strategy was favorable for describing the observations I made of the classroom and the home setting.

Researcher Bias

It was important to take into consideration any bias I may have had in relation to the participants or the settings. I reflected on my thoughts, assumptions, and created transparencies of my thoughts on paper. I am Hispanic, and Spanish is the native language of my childhood home. My father was an immigrant from Colombia, and my maternal grandparents were from Puerto Rico, so I can relate with many of the struggles the families in my study have experienced. I wrote from the heart of what I saw, experienced, and what I felt throughout this study.

Presenting Negative or Discrepant Information

This study involved the lives of real people, with families and problems. The interactions and results may not have been consistent with the research questions or what I expected or hoped to happen. Describing and presenting any contradictory information was important to the credibility of the results and the reality of the study, making the account valid.

Reliability

The reliability procedures suggested by Gibbs (2007) that I employed for my qualitative data was checking the transcripts for obvious error in transcribing of interviews, and maintaining a consistency in code meaning by regularly comparing data

with the codes and generating a list of the definition of the codes in a qualitative codebook.

Threats to Validity

The threats to validity (Creswell, 2009) I considered and minimized are as follows.

History is an event that occurs in the life of the subject during the study, which changed the behavior of the subject. This event was an alternative reason for changes in the participants. Depending on the event, history could have a minimal or major effect on the behavior of the subject. To maximize validity I documented in detail the event that occurred, and all changes.

Maturation is natural growth and change in a subject. The impact on my study was minimal to the parents I taught the teaching strategies, but they experienced change as they learned. The parents implemented strategies with their children that were experiencing maturation as they grew and developed. To maximize validity I conducted short cycles to minimize the child maturation time and maximize the parent strategy implementation time.

Mortality is a subject that left the study for any reason. The impact on the study was that the results of those subjects were unknown. To maximize validity, I recruited a larger sample to account for the possibility of families moving or students mastering-out of the program.

Hawthorne Effect occurs when subjects were singled-out and they act differently and improved their performance because they felt special and important. The impact on my study was that subjects were not responding to the experiment, but to the attention

given to them and the results were not generalizable to other situations because the same people were not involved. To maximize validity I gave all subjects equal attention, praise, and appreciation for their efforts (Franke & Kaul, 1978).

Novelty Effect occurs when the subjects responded to the study and experiment because of the newness, not the innovation. Likewise, the experiment was not effective because it is too new and unfamiliar. The impact was uncertainty of the effectiveness of the treatment because of the novelty. To maximize validity I introduced the strategies to the parents so they were familiar with them, and the innovation was not new to parents.

Experimenter Effect occurs when a study was effective because of the person conducting the study. If that particular person had not done the study, the results may not have been effective. The impact was that the study was not generalizable if the person conducting the study employed a special skill or trait unique to that individual. To maximize validity I used various recorders to ensure generalizability when conducting the study.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Results

In Chapter 3, I described my innovation, my research design, and the methods used in this action research study. I discussed the action research tradition into which my study fit, my setting and participants, and my role as teacher-researcher. Furthermore, I discussed the mixed methods design I employed, my innovation, my data collection tools, how these tools were used, and the analytical strategies I used to answer my research questions. In this chapter, I first present the quantitative results from the survey used and follow this with the qualitative results from semi-structured interviews, a focus group, parent journals, and my field notes/journal. I present these findings to answer the following research questions:

Research Question 1: How and to what extent will use of FoK as a context, and in that context teach parents language skills, build trust between parents and myself, and improve communication skills between the parent and child?

Research Question 2: How will my view of parents grow and change?

Research Question 3: How am I developing and changing?

Quantitative Measure and Analysis

My quantitative data came from a survey designed to answer the first research question: *How and to what extent will use of FoK as a context, and in that context teach parents language skills, build trust between parents and myself, and improve communication skills between the parent and child?* To gain this information a Trust Survey was administered to all parents of enrolled students in my classroom. The survey contained 4 subscales, 23 items, and a 4-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly agree* to

strongly disagree. In August, 21 surveys were distributed and 9 returned. In December, 25 were distributed and 8 returned. During analysis, no attempt to match surveys was made.

For the analysis, Likert items were assigned a numerical value 4 = *Strongly Agree*, 3 = *Agree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 1 = *Strongly Disagree*. The numerical form of responses for both the pre- and post-surveys were entered into an Excel spreadsheet. Then descriptive statistics were run to determine the mean and standard deviation. The results of this analysis are in Table 2.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Pre- and Post-Survey Results

Survey Sub-Scales	Pre-Survey n = 9 Mean (SD)	Post-Survey n = 8 Mean (SD)
1. Respect for parents	3.69 (0.164)	3.65 (0.094)
2. Respect for family culture, traditions, celebrations and customs	3.42 (0.199)	3.55 (0.112)
3. Personal regard	3.71 (0.108)	3.71 (0.061)
4. Competence in role as a teacher	3.75 (0.050)	3.83 (0.068)

The first subscale asked parents to rate their perception of my respect for them. This subscale was designed to understand if parents thought I as a teacher took time for them, listened to their worries, understood their needs, valued their culture, appreciated their views, and disagreed respectfully (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). The mean for this

subscale on the pre-survey was 3.69 and 3.65 on the post-survey. In general parents *strongly agreed/agreed* that I showed respect for them and their culture.

The second subscale asked parents to rate their perception of my respect. This subscale was designed to understand if parents thought I was interested in learning about their culture, traditions, celebrations, and customs (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). It also sought to understand how strongly they thought I honored, valued, integrated, and wanted their culture, traditions, celebrations, and customs in my classroom. The mean for this subscale on the pre-survey was 3.42 and 3.55 on the post-survey. These means indicate parents were in agreement that I respected, honored, and valued their culture.

The third subscale asked parents to rate their perception of my personal regard. It was designed to understand if parents thought I really cared about their child, if I was interested in their parenting skills, and if I was willing to reach out to their family. Furthermore, it rated how strongly they agreed or disagreed as to my interest in their child's language development and if I was open, welcoming, and created a positive climate in the classroom (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). The mean for this subscale on the pre-survey was 3.71 and 3.71 on the post-survey. These means indicate parents were in strong agreement on my ability to demonstrate personal regard for them.

The fourth subscale asked parents to rate their perception of my competence as a teacher. This subscale was designed to understand if parents agreed I was competent, professional, and fair (ethical). It also sought to understand how much parents agreed or disagreed that I understood the educational needs of their child and helped them understand their child's educational needs (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). The mean for this subscale on the pre-survey was 3.75 and 3.83 on the post-survey. These means were the

highest of the subscales and indicate parents were in strong agreement as to my ability to demonstrate competence as a teacher.

The results of the survey indicate that in general parents had trust in me. They *strongly agreed/agreed* that I showed respect for them and their culture, showed a high amount personal regard, and was a competent teacher. However, parents came into the study with trust, and there were minor increases in post-study scores.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data sources included semi-structured interviews conducted with 7 parents, parent journals completed by 7 parents, a focus group attended by four of the seven parents, and my field notes/journal. Table 3 shows the richness of this corpus of data.

Table 3

Word Count of Qualitative Data Sources

Qualitative Data Source	Word Count
Semi-Structured Interviews	20,401
Focus Group	7,040
Parent Journal	1,743
Researcher Journal/ Field Notes	8,227
Total Word Count	37,411

All interviews and focus groups were audio-recorded and then transcribed. My analytical process began by reviewing all transcripts and journal entries for accuracy.

Once accuracy was established, I used a grounded theory approach. First open coding was applied (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). I coded data with ideas from the literature and my theoretical framework. My analytical process also entailed writing notes in the margins of each page of data and between the lines of the text. Notes captured things that stood out to me, such as distinctions, claims, and statements that captured the thoughts of the writer/speaker.

My next step was axial coding. As part of this process I made adjustments to my initial codes and looked for patterns and similar statements. I grouped similar ideas together and built categories. Lastly, selective coding was applied so that relationships between the formed categories could be discovered. From these relationships themes were uncovered and from these themes assertions made. Assertions are supported with quotes (Creswell, 2009).

Themes

I identified 53 initial codes. The continual revision of codes and reflection on the data set led to 8 codes, then further into four major themes. These themes include communication, relational trust, sharing of knowledge, and emotions. These themes lead to 4 assertions. Table 4 lists my themes, codes, and the assertions.

Table 4

Codes, Themes, and Assertions

Codes	Themes	Assertions
-Communication between parent and child, parent and teacher, and between teacher and child.	Communication	1. Parents used the language strategies provided in an attempt to improve communication with their child and this caused them to be aware of the needs of their children (time) and aware of their own needs and abilities as their children's teachers.
-Taking Action -Influence and offerings -Words and actions	Relational Trust	2. Parents and teacher practiced relational trust.
-Funds of Knowledge (Learning by Doing)	Sharing of Knowledge	3. Families shared knowledge and interests with their children and others in the home and in the classroom.
-Gratitude -Nervous -Excitement	Emotions	4. Parents experienced varied/conflicting emotions when presenting their FoK activities with their child and others.

Communication. *1: Parents used the language strategies provided in an attempt to improve communication with their child and this caused them to be aware of the needs of their children (time) and aware of their own needs and abilities as their children's teachers.* Parent journals and interviews showed that the parents used the language strategies I provided with their child. For example, in Family 1 the Mother expressed frustration when she did not understand what her son wanted. The child in Family 1 needed to learn how to say the names of objects, specifically things used in the home. To remedy this, parents were told ways to teach their son how to name objects by showing

him a real object or a picture of it, naming the object, then having the son repeat the object's name. Data show the strategy was used, but despite its use, there was not a quick improvement. The parents still struggled to understand what the child was saying and the child continued to struggle with the name of objects. However, what seemed like a failure on the surface really was not. Data show that the Mother realized teaching her son was going to take time, and she was willing to slow down and give him time to say each word. Use of the strategy relates to the assertion because the parents were willing to try the strategy, but realized it was going to take time to improve communication.

The next family had similar concerns with their son. The child in Family 3 had difficulty pronouncing words and needed to have words modeled for him. To remedy this need, his parents were given the strategy of maintaining eye contact with their son while he was speaking and, at the same, offering the correct pronunciation of difficult words. Data indicate the strategy was used when the son was speaking. Mother reported that when her son would ask, "Mami, como?" (Mom, how?), she would look at him and pronounce the word for him. The parent stated that the strategy made her aware of her need to make eye contact with her child, answer his questions, and model words. Use of the strategy relates to the assertion because the Mother focused on her son while speaking and had him repeat difficult words. The strategy had an effect on the child but it also affected the Mother as she expressed how important it was for her to learn language skills to help her son with speech pronunciations.

Another child struggled with the ability to pronounce words effectively enough to convey his message. To remedy this need, parents in Family 5 were given two strategies. The first strategy was to maintain eye contact while their son was speaking and the

second to demonstrate the correct pronunciation of words in phrases. Data indicate these strategies were used. For example, when the Father was fixing meals, he had son repeat the names of food items, ensuring they were correct. Father reported that the strategies allowed him to communicate with his child and feel confident in doing so. Use of the strategies relate to the assertion because the strategy was used to help the child with pronunciations. Father in Family 5 expressed his thankfulness for the strategy because it helped him to communicate with his son and teach him words.

In sum, the parents in this study used the language strategies provided in an attempt to improve communication with their child and this caused them to be aware of the needs of their children (time) and aware of their own needs and abilities as their children's teachers. They were willing to try the strategies, but realized it was going to take time to improve their child's communication abilities. Interestingly the strategies helped parents feel more confident in working with their child and more aware of their own language abilities.

The strategies offered included maintaining eye contact and demonstrating the correct pronunciation of words by saying the word for their child. In addition, parents used real objects to teach their child new vocabulary. In this study use of the strategy helped improve children's language skills and ultimately communication with their parents.

Relational trust. *Assertion 2: Parents and teacher practiced relational trust.*

Parents and teachers show relational trust when they respect each other, display personal regard, show competence, take on responsibilities, and display personal integrity. Respect is shown through genuine listening, and personal regard is

demonstrated through openness and transparency towards one another. Parents and teachers show competence in roles and responsibilities when they know what needs to be done to achieve a goal. Personal integrity is shown by following through on what is said to help achieve the goal (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

The parents in this study and I showed respect for one another as we listened and talked. Parents listened as I shared language strategies that could help their children better communicate at home. In my research journal, I noted that parents opened up about matters important to their family, and that when this occurred, I listened as they discussed their interests and the strengths and needs of their children, their family FoK activities and rituals, and the values they hoped to instill in their children. Parents also expressed their concerns and frustrations noting the challenges in their children's communication abilities and behaviors. An example of a family opening up and sharing thoughts important to them was Family 5. The Mother in this family expressed a different view because she was frustrated with her son's communication skills as he had difficulty understanding the meaning of the words spoken and following through on directions at home, such as picking up his toys and straightening out his bed covers.

Personal regard was demonstrated between the parents and myself through openness and transparency towards one another (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Data show there was personal regard between the parents and me at the all-parent meeting, the home visits, and the in-class presentation. For example, the Mother in Family 4 noted that I displayed personal regard toward her when I personally spoke with her at the all-parent meeting and the home visit. Her journal indicated that my openness made her happy and satisfied with me as her child's teacher. She thought I was confident and welcoming

because I offered opportunities for parents to come into my classroom. The mother in Family 2 noted a similar feeling. In the transcripts, she revealed that she felt welcomed in my classroom and because of this, she expressed her willingness to participate in future projects at school.

Competence in our roles as parent and teacher were demonstrated at the home and classroom visits. At the home visits, parents displayed competence as they discussed how their children learn best and demonstrated how they teach their children new things. The Mother in Family 6 showed me how she teaches her children the religious ritual of the sign of the cross and explained how they practice it every time they board the car for travel. This Mother demonstrated competence as she showed me how she holds their hands to make the sign of the cross on her children. Likewise, the Father in Family 7 was competent as he described how he taught his daughter traditional holiday games from his native country. He motioned the movement of the game that entails a package of wrapped chocolate passed around a circle of people. The winner is the one who has the package when the music stops and must perform a task as a layer of wrapping is undone.

At the classroom visits, parents displayed competence in their demonstration of FoK activities. The Mother in Family 2 competently demonstrated how she made figurines with pipe cleaners and beads. She then confidently helped the children make them. Her son helped other children as well, showing competence as he demonstrated how to thread the beads. In other words, competence was contagious and was felt by the parent and the child.

Parents also felt I was competent in teaching the language strategies. They noted that I confidently stated their purpose and showed them how to use them through

scaffolding. I presented ideas in understandable steps and asked parents to repeat what I had done. Parents then attempted the strategy with their child. After this parents were at ease and willing to try the strategy throughout the week.

Personal integrity was displayed in the relational trust parents and I demonstrated towards each other. I observed the integrity the parents displayed in their actions. They were responsible and tried the strategies, participated in the home visit interviews, and kept a journal to document their thoughts and feelings. At the home visits, I taught the parents how to use language strategies, and they followed through. At school, parents presented a FoK activity and showed pride and trust. They opened up in focus group at the end of the study. In sum, I was able to see the integrity the parents displayed through their time commitment and participation in the innovation.

In Assertion 2, the parents and I practiced relational trust through our actions and words that displayed respect, personal regard, competence, responsibility, and integrity. The interactions between parents and myself included listening, offering information, openness, and actively engaging in FoK activities to implement the language strategies.

Sharing of knowledge. *Assertion 3: Families shared knowledge and interests with their children and others in the home and in the classroom.* At home visits, parents shared their knowledge and interests as they told me about the FoK activities of value to their family. Many parents discussed details their FoK including of how they learned them and how they still use them in adulthood. The parents discussed their desire for future generations to have the same experiences and continue the traditions and customs they had learned through hands-on activities. For example, the Mother in Family 2 learned to make tamales from her mother and she now sells them to earn money. Just as

she learned how to make tamales from her mother, she is helping her children learn how to cook traditional dishes. She gives them tasks in the kitchen such as chopping vegetables and stirring pots of food. As she cooks, the Mother tells her boys of the ingredients she uses and how she is preparing the dishes. She lovingly passes down knowledge but also wants her sons to love cooking as much as she does. She wants them to be competent cooks when they are grown and married. Aside from learning to cook traditional dishes, families shared knowledge about how to live a healthy life. The Father in Family 5 spoke of his sharing of healthy habits. He tells his children about the value of regular exercise, clean eating, and helping others. This Father practiced these activities with his children as he prepared meals rich in fruits and vegetables. His family and he also regularly exercise at the local park, ride bikes, and play soccer. It is unlikely this Father would have opened up to me without the context of his FoK.

Other families shared their FoK about religious rituals. When they came into the classroom, the parents in Family 4 focused on the Día de los Muertos altar building tradition. They told the children how this tradition evolved and how they created altars when they were children. To pass this on to his children the parents involve them in preparing the food offerings for the altar. They have them wash the fruit, because the spirits will "eat" the offerings. When they came into the classroom, the parents in Family 4 treated the children as their own. They took pride as they explained their tradition to a new generation, "…es para nosotros algo nuevo, pero si es muy bueno y interesante y sobretodo saber respetar las diferentes conocimientos de cultura" (…for us it is something new, but it is good and interesting and above all, to know to respect the different cultures, Journal). The Father also emphasized the importance of celebrating

both American and Mexican holidays and traditions. He expressed the importance of learning about the American culture since they now live in the United States and his girls are growing up here. It is important to him and his wife that their children learn local customs, celebrate holidays, and travel around the state to see the landscape.

For other families, the teaching of traditions focused on dancing. At the home visit the Mother in Family 3 demonstrated how she taught her children Folkloric dances, such as the Dance for Virgin of Guadalupe. The Mother shared that she enjoyed these dances because she learned them in school as a child in Mexico. She also noted that she passed down this love to her children. She took time to show her children childhood photos of her dancing and doing other traditional activities. She noted that her children often question her as to why the family does certain traditions, and the Mother explained the traditions are related to the family's religious beliefs. The Mother shared that it was important for her children to have awareness of their culture, customs, and habits and that she intentionally taught her family dances and rituals she learned in her childhood.

Just as the Mother in Family 3 took pride in dancing, others took pride in crafts. At the home visit the Mother in Family 1 shared how she taught her children to make the Mexican flag like she did in her childhood. Mother explained, "…ellos cortaban papeles en blanco y los pintaban una rojo, el otro lo dejaban blanco no más les hacían como circulo y luego en un palo los pegaban" (…the children cut white paper, and paint one red while the other is left white, then they made a circle and glue them to a stick).

At the classroom visits, parents shared their FoK with their children, the students in the classroom, and me. Parents demonstrated dances, food preparation, and arts/crafts. Sharing in the classroom made the parents feel welcome. The Mother in Family 1 noted

that it was good to participate in activities with small children and expressed her desire to come back to school and present on “El Grito de Mexico” (The Cry of Mexico), the Fifteenth of September, a Mexican Independence Day.

At school, the Mother in Family 3 and her children shared a dance with the children. I observed as Mother prepared her children with costumes typical of the dance. The daughter arrived with her hair styled and her face made-up. The son wore a white shirt and was fitted with a bandana around his neck and one tucked in his back pocket. As Mother helped the son with his bandana, he began to cry and covered his face. He told his Mother that he did not want to dance. Mother and sister performed the dance for the children and the son stood nearby with his face in his hands, occasionally looking through his fingers at his Mother. She later told me that her son felt embarrassed because this this was the first time her son danced in front of people other than his family. After the performance, the son was calm and smiling as his Mother shared a fruit salad typical of the festival related to the dance. He helped distribute cups of fruit to the children in the class. In a follow-up conversation the next day, the Mother told me that her son said he was “happy for his family to dance at school and that they had done a good job.”

Data show that the families in this study shared knowledge and interests with their children and others in the home and in the classroom. In their journals and interviews, parents discussed how they taught their children traditions by doing them with hands-on instruction at home and demonstrated during the FoK class presentation.

Emotions. *Assertion 4: Parents experienced varied/conflicting emotions when sharing their FoK activities with their child and others.* In journals and interviews, parents wrote and discussed the emotions they experienced in preparation of their

presentations and how they felt on the day of their visit to school. As parents prepared, they felt happy, content, satisfied, and nervous. In the classroom, they felt relaxed, happy to be at school, and grateful for the time they had to share their culture and traditions. The Mother in Family 2 felt comfortable at the all-parent meeting, but was nervous with excitement when she came to school. Likewise, the Mother in Family 3 felt satisfied that both she and her child were able to present their FoK dance. She was happy to share activities and teach cultural customs. The Father in Family 4 was emotional and nervous at the same time, but very happy to share his FoK.

Data show parents experienced varied/conflicting emotions when sharing their FoK activities with their child and others. The emotions felt were happy, content, satisfied, excited, and nervous. All the parents expressed gratitude for the opportunity to share on what mattered to them, their family's FoK.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purposes of this innovation was to foster parental involvement in my classroom, encourage parent empowerment, and understand if FoK could be used as context to improve communication with their children. Given these goals, I present a discussion of the findings aimed at understanding:

- Research Question 1: How, and to what extent, will use of FoK as a context, and in that context, teach parents language skills, build trust between parents and myself, and improve communication skills between the parent and child?
- Research Question 2: How will my view of parents grow and change?
- Research Question 3: How am I developing and changing?

The findings led to four assertions: 1.) Parents used the language strategies provided in an attempt to improve communication with their child and this caused them to be aware of the needs of their children (time) and aware of their own needs and abilities as their children's teachers; 2.) The parents and I showed relational trust; 3.) Families shared knowledge and interests with their children and others in the home and in the classroom; and 4.) Parents experienced varied/conflicting emotions when presenting their FoK activities with their child and others. In this final chapter, these assertions from the qualitative data are converged with the quantitative findings. I also provide lessons learned, implications for practice, and implications for further research. This chapter ends with concluding thoughts.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

A concurrent triangulation mixed methods approach was used to answer the research questions because this design encouraged me to use analysis and inference techniques so I could provide a comprehensive overview of my findings (Greene, 2007; Johnson et al., 2007). Data were gathered and collected concurrently and analyzed separately (Creswell, 2009). The validity strategies used in this study included: triangulation, member checking, thick description, and presenting negative or discrepant information (Creswell, 2009).

Research Question 1

Data led to three assertions that allow me to answer Research Question 1. My first assertion was that parents used the language strategies provided in an attempt to improve communication with their children and this caused them to be aware of the needs of their children (time) and aware of their own needs and abilities as their children's teachers. Parents listened as I shared language strategies that could help their children better communicate at home. I listened as they discussed the strengths and needs of their children and then provided them with strategies to remediate their child's needs. These conversations helped parents build the confidence they needed to use the language strategies. Interestingly, they even improved them as they used them within the context of their FoK. Price-Mitchell (2009) explains how critical conversations like these are to generate new knowledge, which in this case included language strategies parents could use. The literature supports my finding because it notes knowledge-developing conversations between parents of special needs preschoolers and teachers are essential to determine what needs are present (Angell et al., 2009; Price-Mitchell, 2009). However, as they used the strategies, the parents realized it was going to take time to improve their

child's communication abilities. Interestingly the strategies I gave to parents helped them feel more confident in working with their child and more aware of their own language abilities. One father made the point to note that he used the language strategies to maintain eye contact while his son was speaking and demonstrate the correct pronunciation of words in phrases. When fixing meals, he had his son repeat the names of food items, ensuring they were correct. This father reported that the strategies allowed him to communicate with his child and feel confident in doing so. Parents also improved the offered strategies and instead of just saying the names of objects, they used real objects to teach their children new vocabulary.

My second assertion was that the parents and I showed relational trust through actions and words. We showed respect, personal regard, competence, responsibility, and integrity. I demonstrated trust when I reached out to families at the home visits and listened to their stories, their child's strengths, and their concerns with their child's language development. Listening helped me understand their concerns and allowed me to provide information and language strategies. Parents demonstrated trust in me when they talked about their concerns, listened to the strategies I suggested, and were willing to try them when engaged in their FoK activities. Parents also trusted me when they came into the classroom. They knew I was interested in their culture and FoK activities. When they came into the classroom to share their talents and interests with the other children, they knew they were stepping into a safe and welcoming environment. The literature supports the importance of this finding because Bryk and Schneider (2002) say that trust requires action on the part of the teacher. They note the importance of reaching out to families through conversations and welcoming them on the school campus. Trust is an

important factor when discussing a child's personal needs, especially as they relate to their families and the schools. To triangulate this finding, data from the Trust Survey shows that in general the parents in my classroom strongly agree/agree that they feel I show competence and care, respect for them and their culture, display a high amount personal regard, and was personal, fair, and ethical. Relational trust is built when parents feel authentic, genuine care from teachers and because of this communicate more and become more active at school (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). This was the case in this study.

My third assertion was that the families in this study shared knowledge and interests with their children and others. The parents taught their children traditions at home by doing hands-on instruction and demonstrated the same competence in teaching during the FoK class presentation. They even extended this with the learned language strategies. The literature supports the importance of this finding because integrating the FoK of the child and family into a classroom creates personal significance and shows that a teacher honors the child's home culture, interests, skills, and talents (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Gonzalez et al., 2005).

Research Question 2

Data gathered led to two assertions to help to answer Research Question 2. The first assertion was that the families in this study not only shared knowledge and interests with their children and others in the home and in the classroom, but they did these in unique ways. At home, parents taught their children traditions by doing them with hands-on instruction. At school, parents demonstrated FoK using everyday materials along with the learned language strategies. These findings show that the bridge between home and

school can be crossed. A student's life, interactions, and traditions can be brought into the classroom and enrich everyone's lives. This prospect is new and exciting to me.

My view of parents has grown and changed since the beginning of this innovation. I now have a deeper understanding of cultures and traditions, how important these are to parents, and how important it is that parents pass these on to their children. After this innovation, I see the benefit of taking the time to talk with families about what matters to them and consider how I as a teacher can integrate these topics into the classroom. The work of Angell et al. (2009), Blue-Banning et al. (2004), and Gonzalez et al. (2005) support the importance of this finding because they have noted that honoring and valuing the culture, skills, talents, and knowledge parents possess and forming partnerships based on transparency and receptiveness are important.

My view of parents changed early on in home visits and continued to change when parents came to school to share the cultural experiences that mattered to them. At school, I observed the parents to be nervous yet excited and prepared with materials. After a presentation one father said he was scared to present because he was not sure how the students would respond. After a pause he also noted how excited he was because it was an opportunity he had to present his culture at school. This dad was prepared with the fruits and vegetables and involved the children to decorate the Día de los Muertos altar. The emotions parents displayed were happy, content, satisfied, excited, and nervous. Displaying these emotions led me to conclude that parents coming into the classroom to share their FoK activities was an emotional experience (Assertion 2).

At the end of the innovation, each one of the parents involved expressed gratitude for the opportunity I had given them to share what mattered most to them, their family's

FoK. My view of parents grew and changed as they demonstrated courage. This was especially true in the home setting as some parents became emotional when they shared their child's strengths and the concerns they had about their language abilities. The work of Blue-Banning et al. (2004) reveals the importance of this finding because of the commitment displayed by both the parents and myself. Commitment entailed ensuring that all parties were dedicated, devoted, and invested in pursuing goals for the well-being of the child and family. Indicators of commitment on my part included being flexible, accessible, consistent, and sensitive to their emotions and regarding families as more than a number or another case.

Research Question 3

Data helped me understand that as a teacher I developed and changed. Prior to this innovation, I had parents visit my classroom for short periods to help with large group activities, but I never used their cultural knowledge or FoK. On the surface I appeared to be a good teacher, but down deep I knew I could do better.

Leading this innovation made me nervous because I knew that when I opened my classroom to parents I might hear negative opinions or criticisms of my style of teaching or classroom management. In the past, I was more than willing to interact with parents, listen to them, and speak to with them in their home-space as opposed to mine. I knew I had to let go, change my mindset, and allow the parents to invade my space and become equal partners in the education of their child and all the other children in the classroom. Letting go helped me understand the tremendous amount of talent and knowledge parents have, and I will continue to welcome them into my classroom in the future. The literature supports the importance of teacher change. Inviting interactions make parents feel

comfortable with other parents, teachers, and administrators, and helps them realize that the school staff truly cares and wants what is best for their child. In other words, it fosters a sense of equity between a teacher and parents. Parents feel empowered to make decisions and feel influential in terms of helping their child. This equality happened when I was able to let go (Blue-Banning et al., 2004).

Conclusion

Lessons Learned

The two lessons I learned through my journey with the participants in my study focus on the empowerment parents can feel when presenting their FoK and the tremendous value parents bring to a classroom. González et al. (1995) discussed shared traditions as Funds of Knowledge (FoK). Ethnographic research studies on FoK (González & Amanti 1997; González et al., 1995; Moll et al., 1992) with minority families capture the premise that people possess skills, talents, and abilities learned in their life experiences and share these with others. The families that shared their talents and strengths in my classroom did so with pride and excitement. Parents said this was the first time they had been asked to come to school and be actively involved in teaching their child and the children in a classroom. Parents felt honored to contribute to the education of their child and the other children in the class.

In turn, I was fortunate to learn the value of enhancing the school curriculum with experiences my students encountered at home. Parental involvement brought rich cultural experiences into my classroom. My students were involved in making crafts. They made Mexican flags and colorful flowers from tissue paper. They also tasted traditional dishes

made with exotic fruits from Mexico. My students heard music and learned dances, all to commemorate festivals that I never would have provided. The mindset of valuing parents is now firmly rooted into my belief system because I have lived the experience and observed the benefits first-hand. I will now seek parental involvement in activities in all areas of my program, ask their opinions about cultural traditions they would like to see shared in the curriculum, and value their responses, as they are the experts of their children. Even though I have pedagogical knowledge, I know that together parents and I are a stronger force in enhancing their child's educational experience at school.

Using action research to investigate FoK goes beyond what I knew before and what I read in the professional literature. Viewing FoK as a context parents could use to facilitate their child's language had never been tested and was a gap in both practice and the literature. Through reaching my own practice I had an opportunity to offer my students hands-on learning opportunities and experiences to learn with their parents as more knowledgeable others. Vygotsky (1978) believed shared activities, experiences, and language facilitate the internalization of new knowledge and shared memories.

The other thing I learned was that not all families had a FoK to share. Two of the seven families, the youngest of all the parents, did not have a specific FoK they were taught. The first family referred to themselves as 'rebels' and were starting their own traditions and ways of doing things as a family. In the second family, the mother was not taught traditions, and the father only knew of a few traditional games to play. However, this family was interested in other cultures. They had traveled throughout Europe to learn traditions and make their own.

Limitations

This action research study had four limitations. The first was the brevity of the study, and the second limitation was the small sample size. The time frame of the study was only 15 weeks. With a longer time frame I could have collected more data by including more parents as participants. With a larger sample, I could have collected more data and seen more variability. Delving deeper with more individuals may have shown more contrasts.

A third limitation was the Hawthorne effect**,** as participants may have acted differently because they felt special and important. In my case, my participants may have been responding to the attention I gave them as opposed to the intentions I thought.

The fourth limitation was the novelty effect which occurs when the subjects responded to the study and experiment because of the newness or novelty of the experience, not the innovation. To maximize validity I introduced the strategies to the parents individually so they were familiar with them, and the innovation was not new to parents.

Implications for Practice

The Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program in my district addresses the needs of students demonstrating delays in their vocabulary and language development. My program serves the needs of a growing Hispanic population with 90% of my ECSE students coming from native Spanish households. Despite this, I believe that they are being educated in an ethnocentric and English-focused curriculum. They are struggling to not only learn English but also with the customs and traditions in a new country that is often very different from their own. Too often students are not using their native language or home talents when involved in classroom-based activities. This study

shows that integrating a family's FoK in the school curriculum can add richness to the vocabulary development of the students, can bring pride to parents, and can help teachers change. The experience of conducting this action research study has helped me understand the value of parents as equal partners and I suggest other early childhood teachers seek opportunities to involve parents in their classrooms with an innovation similar to the one described in this study.

As an educational leader, I have learned the value of empowering others to rise up and use their skills and talents to be leaders within their own context. This has been my experience with teachers in the past to become school leaders from the vantage point of their classroom. This is also true for parents because they too can become leaders. Parents can contribute to the climate of a classroom with their culture. Their FoK can become part of the curriculum. However, for this to become a reality, teachers need to see parents as equals. This leads to another lesson learned as an educational leader. In the past I valued parents for their assistance in class for special projects and for the information they contributed about their child. My experience in this action research study has helped me grow in my view of parents as equals in the educational process. Key to this is realizing how important parents are and building equal power between parents and professionals. Furthermore, this process has helped me learn to trust parents. Teachers need to reach out and initiate actions that help parents feel comfortable in the school setting. Parents who feel authentic, genuine care from teachers develop high levels of trust, and in doing so, communicate more and become more active at school (Kummerer, 2012; Bryk & Schneider, 2002). This is a winning situation for everyone involved.

Implications for Research

Future research on FOK is recommended with other parents and at other sites. The purpose of this innovation was to generate opportunities for parents and myself to understand what parents knew and valued and how to bring this knowledge into my classroom. Others may want to try this innovation and research it with similar but different data collection methods. Collecting different and new types of data from other parents and families would allow my findings to be confirmed, disconfirmed, and extended.

Closing Thoughts

The implementation of this innovation with entering the family home, bringing parents into my classroom, and building relationships with families has been the most gratifying year in my teaching career of twenty-two years. As an educational leader, I support the efforts of every educator, regardless of the grade or subject they teach, to do at least one thing to promote parental involvement. I encourage every teacher to get to know the parents of their students and open their minds and hearts to the possibility of seeing parents just as valuable in the classroom as the teacher is to their students.

References

Angell, M.E., Stoner, J.B., & Sheldon, D.L. (2009). Trust in education professionals. Perspectives of mothers of children with disabilities. *Remedial and Special Education, 30*(3), 160-176. doi:10.1177/0741932508315648

Barnett, W.S., Carolan, M.E., Fitzgerald, J., & Squires, J.H. (2012). The state of preschool 2012: State preschool yearbook. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

Blue-Banning, M., Summers, J.A., Frankland, H.C., Lord Nelson, L., & Beegle, G. (2004). Dimensions of family and professional partnerships: Constructive guidelines for collaboration. *Council for Exceptional Children, 70*(2), 167-184.

Bodrova, E., & Leong, D. J. (2007). *Tools of the mind: The Vygotskian approach to early childhood education.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Bryk, A.S., & Schneider, B. (2002). *Trust in schools*. New York, NY: Russell Sage.

Catts, H. W. (2003). Language basis of reading disabilities and implications for early identification and remediation. *Reading Psychology, 24*(3-4), 223-246. doi:10.1080/02702710390227314

Chomsky, N. (1968). *Language and mind.* New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

de Fur, S. (2012). Parents as collaborators: Building partnerships: Building partnerships with school- and community-based providers. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 44*(3), 58-67.

De Gaetano, Y. (2007). The role of culture in engaging Latino parents' involvement in school. *Urban Education, 42*(2), 145-162. doi:10.1177/0042085906296536

Espinosa, L.M. (2005). Curriculum and assessment considerations for young children from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds. *Psychology in the Schools, 42*(8), 837-853. doi: 10.1002/pits.20115

Franke, R. H., & Kaul, J. D. (1978). The Hawthorne experiments: First statistical interpretation. *American Sociological Review*, 43, 623-643.

Gibbs, G. R. (2007). Analyzing qualitative data. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The Sage qualitative research kit.* London: Sage.

Girolametto, L., & Weitzman, E. (2009). Working with families of young children with communication and language impairments: Intervention. In N.W. Pappas, & S.McLeod, *Working with families in speech-language pathology* (pp. 131-170). San Diego, CA: Plural Publishing.

Gonzalez, N., & Amanti, C. (1997). Teaching anthropological methods to teachers: The transformation of knowledge. In C. Kottak, J. White, R. Furlow, & P. Rice (Eds.), *The teaching of anthropology: Problems, issues, and decisions* (pp. 353-359). Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.

Gonzalez, N., Moll, L., & Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Gonzalez, N., Moll, L. C., Tenery, M. F., Rivera, A., Rendon, P., Gonzales, R., & Amanti, C. (1995). Funds of knowledge for teaching in Latino households. *Urban Education*, *29*(4), 443-470.

Greene, J.C. (2007). *Mixed methods in social inquiry.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Gutiérrez-Clellen, V. F., Simon-Cereijido, G., & Sweet, M. (2012). Predictors of Second Language Acquisition in Latino Children with Specific Language Impairment. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, *21*, 64-77. doi:10.1044/1058-0360(2011/10-0090)

Harkness, S., & Super, C. M. (2002). Culture and parenting. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (Vol. 2, pp. 253-280). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Harry, B. (2008). Collaboration with culturally and linguistically diverse families: Ideal versus reality. *Exceptional Children, 74*(3), 372-388.

Hoff, E. (2013). Interpreting the early language trajectories of children from low-SES and language minority homes: Implications for closing achievement gaps. *Developmental psychology, 49*(1), 4.doi: 10.1037/a0027238

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Pub. L. No. 101-476, 104 Stat. 1142

Johnson, R.B., Onwuegbuzie, A.J., & Turner, L.A. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1*(2), 112-133. doi:10.1177/1558689806298224

Kaiser, A. P. & Roberts, M. Y. (2011). Advances in early communication and language intervention. *Journal of Early Intervention, 33*(4), 298-309. doi: 10.1177/1053815111429968

Kaiser, A. P., Yoder, P. J., & Keetz, A. (1992). The efficacy of milieu teaching. In S. F. Warren & J. Reichle (Eds.), *Causes and effects in communication and language intervention.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Kayser, H. (2008). *Educating Latino preschool children.* San Diego, CA: Plural.

Kummerer, S.E. (2012). Promising strategies for collaborating with Hispanic parents during family-centered speech-language intervention. *Communication Disorders Quarterly, 33*(2), 84-95. doi:10.1177/1525740109358453

Lahey, M. (1988). *Language disorders and language development.* New York, NY: MacMillan

Landa, R. J., Holman, K. C., O'Neill, A. H., & Stuart, E. A. (2011). Intervention targeting development of socially synchronous engagement in toddlers with autism spectrum disorder: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 52,* 13-21. doi:10.1097/CCM.0b013e31825457b8

McCormack, J., McLeod, S., McAllister, L., & Harrison, L.J., (2010). My speech problem, your listening problem, and my frustration: The experience of living with childhood speech impairment. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 41*(4), 379-392. doi:10.1044/0161-1461

McDevitt, T.M., & Ormrod, J.E. (2010). *Child development and education* (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

Moll, L.C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach for connecting homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice,* 21(2), 132-141.

Moore, H. W., Barton, E. E., & Chironis, M. (2014). A program for improving toddler communication through parent coaching. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 33*(4), 212-224. doi:10.1177/0271121413497520

Moyle, J., Stokes, S. F., & Klee, T. (2011). Early language delay and specific language impairment. *Developmental disabilities research reviews*, *17*(2), 160-169. doi: 10.1002/ddrr.1110

Munn-Joseph, M.S., & Gavin-Evans, K., (2008). Urban parents of children with special needs advocating for their children through social networks. *Urban Press, 43*(3), 378-393. doi:10.1177/0042085907311803

O'Donnell, J., Kirkner, S.L., & Meyer-Adams, N. (2008). Low-income, urban consumers' perceptions of community school outreach practices, desired services, and outcomes. *The School Community Journal, 18*(2), 147-165.

Owens, K. B. (2002). *Child & adolescent development: An integrated approach*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Petersen, D. B., & Gillam, R. B. (2013). Accurately predicting future reading difficulty for bilingual Latino children at risk for language impairment. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 28*(3), 113-128. doi: 10.1111/ldrp.12014

Plano-Clark, V., & Creswell, J. (2010). *Understanding research: A consumer's guide*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

Price-Mitchell, M. (2009). Boundary dynamics: Implications for building parent-school partnerships. *The School Community Journal, 19*(2), 9-36.

Riel, M. (2010). *Understanding action research.* Los Angeles, CA: Center for Collaborative Action Research, Pepperdine University.

Roberts, M. Y., & Kaiser, A. P. (2011). The effectiveness of parent-implemented language interventions: A meta-analysis. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology, 20*(3), 180-199.

Rodriguez, G.M. (2013). Power and agency in education: Exploring the pedagogical dimensions of funds of knowledge. *Review of Research in Education, 37*(1), 87-120. doi: 10.3102/0091732X12462686

Rodriguez, N., Bingham Mira, C., Paez, N. D., Myers, H. F. (2007). Exploring the complexities of familism and acculturation: Central constructs for people of Mexican origin. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 39*(1-2), 61–77

Sanders, M. (1996). Building family partnerships that last. *Educational Leadership,* 54, 61-66.

Sanders, M. (2000). Creating successful school-based partnership programs with families of special needs students. *The School Community Journal, 10*(2), 37-56.

Sanders, M. G. (2001). The role of "community" in comprehensive school, family, and community partnership programs. *The Elementary School Journal, 102*(1), 19-34.

Sanders, M. G. (2008). How parent liaisons can help bridge the home-school gap. *The Journal of Educational Research, 101*(5), 287-298.

Schertz, H. H., & Odom, S. L. (2007). Promoting joint attention in toddlers with autism: A parent-mediated approach. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 37*(8), 1562-1575.

Skinner, B.F. (1972). *Cumulative Record: A selection of papers* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Appleton

Stringer, E. T. (2004). *Action research in education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Stringer, E.T. (2007). *Action Research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

U.S. Department of Education. (2007). *History twenty-five years of progress in educating children with disabilities through IDEA*. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/leg/idea/history.html

Vélez-Ibáñez, C.G., & Greenberg, J.B., (1992). Schooling processes among US Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans: a comparative, distributive, and case study approach. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 23*(4), 313–335.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R. & Snyder, W.M. (2002). *Cultivating communities of practice: A guide to managing knowledge.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Wetherby, A. M., & Woods, J. J. (2006). Early social interaction project for children with autism spectrum disorders beginning in the second year of life: A preliminary study. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 26*(2), 67-82. doi:10.1177/02711214060260020201

Zuniga, M. E. (2004). Families with Latino roots. In E. W. Lynch & M. J. Hanson (Eds.), *Developing cross-cultural competence: A guide for working with children and their families* (3rd ed., pp. 179-212). Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

APPENDIX A

PRE/POST TRUST SURVEY

Please note the town/city where you were born, and the month/day you were born:

(Ex: Houston-September 19) _____

Have you ever worked with me before? ***YES*** ***or*** ***NO***

How long do we know each other? ____***years*** _____***months*** _____***weeks***

Participant Gender: ____***male*** _____***female***

1. Respect for Parents

I believe…

a. my child's teacher takes time for me.	SA	A	D	SD
b. my child's teacher listens to my worries.	SA	A	D	SD
c. my child's teacher understand my needs.	SA	A	D	SD
d. my child's teacher and I appreciate each other's views.	SA	A	D	SD
e. I can disagree respectfully with my child's teacher.	SA	A	D	SD
f. my child's teacher values my culture.	SA	A	D	SD

2. Respect for Family Culture/Traditions/Celebrations/Customs

I believe…

a. my child's teacher is interested in learning about our Culture/Traditions/Celebrations/Customs	SA	A	D	SD
b. my child's teacher honors our Culture/Traditions/Celebrations/Customs	SA	A	D	SD
c. my child's teacher values our Culture/Traditions/Celebrations/Customs.	SA	A	D	SD
d. my child's teacher integrates our Culture/Traditions/Celebrations/Customs in school.	SA	A	D	SD
e. my child's teacher wants our Culture/Traditions/Celebrations/Customs in school.	SA	A	D	SD

3. Personal Regard

I believe…

a. my child's teacher really cares about my child.	SA	A	D	SD
b. my child's teacher is open.	SA	A	D	SD
c. my child's teacher is welcoming.	SA	A	D	SD
d. my child's teacher creates a positive climate.	SA	A	D	SD
e. my child's teacher is interested in my child's language development.	SA	A	D	SD
f. my child's teacher is interested in my parenting skills.	SA	A	D	SD
g. my child's teacher is willing to reach out to my family.	SA	A	D	SD

4. Competence in Role as Teacher

I believe…

a. my child's teacher is competent.	SA	A	D	SD
b. my child's teacher is professional.	SA	A	D	SD
c. my child's teacher is fair (ethical).	SA	A	D	SD
d. my child's teacher understands the educational needs of my child.	SA	A	D	SD
e. my child's teacher helps me understand my child's educational needs.	SA	A	D	SD

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW

Semi-Structured Interview at Home Visit

What are your family's strengths?

What are your child's strengths and needs?

What activities, traditions, celebrations and customs do you value?

What are your feelings about theses traditions /customs being used in school?

What do you do well that you'd like to share in the classroom?

Exit Interview

What did they learn from this experience?

How will this change what you do with your child as far as language/teaching?

Focus Group

How did you benefit from in this experience?

How will this change what you do with your child as far as language/teaching?

Did you feel valued/honored when you presented the FoK in the classroom?

APPENDIX C

PARENT JOURNAL

Parent Journal

At the Volunteer Meeting

What will I offer as a FoK?

How do I feel about the meeting?

At the Home Visit

What did you think about the FoK activity?

How did you feel when teaching the FoK activity?

How do you they think this might be used at school?

What did I learn about language skills and interacting with my child?

How does this make me feel?

APPENDIX D

FIELD NOTES/MY JOURNAL

Field Notes

Prompt: What changes have occurred in the context that may influence the study?

My Journal

Observation of parent at the home visit:

What FoK will parents demonstrate?

Will they show pride when they do this?

How will they involve their child in the activity?

What language skills will they use?

How will they teach their child?

How do the parents/families display trust?

How do the parents use the skills modeled?

How do I promote LS and DAI?

How do I esteem the parents?

Observation of parent in the classroom:

How will this go?

Will parents use what they learn?

What will I learn from the parents?

APPENDIX E

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Observation Protocol

Date/Time:

Place:

Duration of Observation (indicate start/end times):

Setting:

Individual Observed:

Observation #: (first observation, second, etc.)

Observer involvement:

Descriptive Notes	**Reflective Notes**
Detailed, chronological notes about what the observer sees, hears, the physical setting)	Concurrent notes about the observer's personal reactions, experiences)

Photos

Photos will be taken to generate an artifact, a class book of the parent presentations on FoK.

Video

For use with protocol to assist transfer and coding.

Protocol used for counting number of times LS and DAI used in the FoK presentation

Date: **Time start:** **Time end:**

Location:

Marker noted for minutes (:00); Marker for speech unheard (xxxxx)

Research Question:

Descriptive Notes Detailed, chronological notes about what the observer sees, hears, the physical setting	**Counter** Number of times LS used	**Counter** Number of times DAI used	**Recorder** Time Mark	**Reflective Notes** Concurrent notes about the observer's personal reactions, experiences

APPENDIX F

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE ON CHILD'S USE OF LANGUAGE

Parent Questionnaire on Child's Use of Language (Modified from survey developed by Nicole Domzalski-Bush, M.S.-CCC, SLP)

(Please choose the one that best describes your child's language at this time)

1. How does your child understand language?

Occasionally watches people speak

Points to objects named by adults

Answers simple yes/no questions (ex: Do you want milk?)

Answers "what", "who" and/or "where" questions

2. Does your child follow directions?

No, my child does not follow directions

One-step directions (ex. "put your shoes on")

Two-step directions (ex. "put your shoes on and get your backpack")

Multi-step directions (ex. "put your shoes on, get your backpack, and get in the car")

3. Describe how your child's uses their vocabulary:

Uses gestures (points at what they want)

Names a few objects (up to 10 objects)

Names many objects (up to 50 objects)

Can describe how to use objects (what do we do with a stove/refrigerator?)

4. When my child speaks they…

Are understood by most familiar listeners and family members

Are understood by most people

5. How many words does your child use in one sentence?

0-1 words

2-3 words

3-4 words

4-6 words

6. Does your child look at whoever is speaking to them?

Never

Sometimes

Often

Most of the time

APPENDIX G

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS/FOCUS GROUP/JOURNAL ENTRIES

Semi-Structured Interview at Home Visit

What are your family's strengths?

What are your child's strengths and needs?

What activities, traditions, celebrations and customs do you value?

What are your feelings about theses traditions /customs being used in school?

What do you do well that you'd like to share in the classroom?

Exit Interview

What did they learn from this experience?

How will this change what you do with your child as far as language/teaching?

Focus Group

How did you benefit from in this experience?

How will this change what you do with your child as far as language/teaching?

Did you feel valued/honored when you presented the FoK in the classroom?

Parent Journal

At the Volunteer Meeting

What will I offer as a FoK?

How do I feel about the meeting?

At the Home Visit

What did you think about the FoK activity?

How did you feel when teaching the FoK activity?

How do you they this might be used at school?

What did I learn about language skills and interacting with my child?

How does this make me feel?

Field Notes

Prompt: What changes have occurred in the context that may influence the study?

My Journal

Observation of parent at the home visit:

What FoK will parents demonstrate?

Will they show pride when they do this?

How will they involve their child in the activity?

What language skills will they use?

How will they teach their child?

How do the parents/families display trust?

How do the parents use the skills modeled?

How do I promote LS and DAI?

How do I esteem the parents?

Observation of parent in the classroom:

How will this go?

Will parents use what they learn?

What will I learn from the parents?

APPENDIX H

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To:	Debby Zambo 4701 West
From:	Mark Roosa, Chair Soc Beh IRB
Date:	07/17/2013
Committee Action:	**Exemption Granted**
IRB Action Date:	07/17/2013
IRB Protocol #:	1306009370
Study Title:	Funds of Knowledge as Context for Teaching Parents Language Strategies and Developmentally Appropriate Ways to Work with their Language-Delayed Preschoolers

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(2) .

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the informati obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.