(RE)CONSTRUCTING TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND LITERACY TEACHING PRACTICES TO INCORPORATE STRIVING STUDENTS' FAMILY LITERACY PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY OF A NOVICE SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

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ABSTRACT

(RE)CONSTRUCTING TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND LITERACY TEACHING
PRACTICES TO INCORPORATE STRIVING STUDENTS' FAMILY LITERACY
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One contemporary tension in literacy instruction centers on if teachers should employ a skills-based or a social practices approach to teach special education students reading and writing. Prior research has demonstrated that there are affordances and limitations to each of these approaches (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004; Street, 2013). The purpose of this dissertation is to engage special education scholars and teachers in considering how explicit literacy instruction might incorporate skills and strategies as well as the social practices in which these are situated. I suggest one potential avenue for blending these approaches is for special education teachers to (re)construct knowledge of their special education students' family literacy practices so that they can enact literacy instruction that supports students to draw on their full repertoires of literacy practices.

In this dissertation, I used a case study design (Yin, 2014) to examine how one novice special education teacher enacted teaching practices around her (re)constructed professional knowledge of her special education students' family literacy practices. To inform the study's methods and analysis, I applied sociocultural and social-constructivist theories of literacy, teacher knowledge, and teaching practices. Data sources included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, analysis of documents, a demographics and perception questionnaire, and a situational judgment test. To analyze the data, I employed inductive and deductive coding and discourse analysis.

Findings indicate potential intersections between teachers' (re)constructed knowledge of their special education students' family literacy practices and enacted teaching practices that incorporate family literacy practices. Additionally, teachers can use conversations as sites for developing knowledge of students' family literacy practices. During literacy instruction, teachers can use questioning to draw in striving students' family literacy practices. Ultimately, I argue that special education teachers can (re)construct their knowledge and literacy teaching practices to blend explicit skills and strategy instruction with opportunities for special education students to leverage their family literacy practices.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

ELL   English Language Learner

IEP   Individualized Education Plan

IRE   Initiate-Response-Evaluate

IRE/F   Initiate-Respond-Evaluate/Feedback

IRF   Initiate-Respond-Feedback

MTSS   Multi-Tiered System of Supports

RTI   Response To Intervention

OVERVIEW

In this dissertation, I examine how one novice special education teacher enacted teaching practices around her (re)constructed knowledge of the family literacy practices of her special education students who received supports in reading and writing (hereafter referred to as *striving students*)[1]. The focus for this dissertation arose from my experiences as a former elementary special education teacher. I recall assessing my striving students' literacy abilities in order to identify in which areas of reading and writing—specifically the skills and strategies—students needed further explicit instruction. My students' individualized education plan (IEP) goals included both code-based reading skills (e.g., decoding single syllable words, developing fluency) and strategies for making meaning of texts (e.g., discussing themes of narrative texts). Consequently, my instruction predominantly focused on teaching literacy skills and strategies rather than developing understandings of the literacy practices students used to construct situated understandings of the text.

During my first two years of teaching, I did not question why my striving students disproportionately represented marginalized student populations. Beginning in my third year of teaching, I participated in a professional community of practice (Wenger, 1998) that critically examined equity in education. I came to question what I knew about my striving students' literacy practices, realizing that I constructed knowledge only of my students' school-based literacies. I then considered how my limited knowledge of my striving students' literacy lives outside of school intersected with the types of literacy teaching practices I enacted. These personal ponderings have led me to study how other special education teachers (re)construct

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[1] I follow other scholars (e.g., Fink, 2006; Hedin & Conderman, 2010; Husband, 2017) who refer to students who receive special education supports in reading and writing as *striving students* rather than *struggling students*.

knowledge of their striving students' literacy practices and how this knowledge intersects with their literacy teaching practices.

Many special education teachers, similar to myself, have learned that many striving students benefit from additional explicit instruction in reading skills and strategies (e.g., decoding, phonological awareness, and fluency) (Bentum, 2003; Swanson & Vaughn, 2010; Tatum, 2016). Special education teachers may also be aware of current research that problematizes this portrayal of striving students' literacy needs. This research has shown that striving students also need explicit instruction that integrates the social practices in which the reading skills and strategies are situated (Englert et al., 2020; Mariage et al., 2020; Purcell-Gates et al., 2004).

It is not my intention to debate the affordances and limitations of using skills-based or social practices approaches to literacy instruction for striving students in this dissertation. Other scholars have spoken to the affordances of each approach (e.g., Ehri, 2006; Gee, 2013; Klingner et al., 2016; Purcell-Gates et al., 2004). Rather, my purpose is to join other literacy scholars (e.g., Kamil et al., 2011; Purcell-Gates et al., 2004, 2016) who are putting forth conceptualizations of literacy development and instruction that bridge these two approaches. With this dissertation, I want to engage special education scholars and teachers in considering how literacy instruction might blend explicit instruction in skills and strategies as well as the social practices in which they are situated.

Purcell-Gates and colleagues (2004, 2016) have presented a model of print literacy development that conceptually brings together the two perspectives: skills and strategy instruction and social practices. Central to the model, Purcell-Gates and colleagues (2004) defined *print literacy development* as

the acquisition, improvement, elaboration, and extension of the abilities and strategies necessary to comprehend and produce written language for communicative purposes within sociocultural contexts. This includes understanding the social meanings of literate activity and mastering the pragmatics and semiotics of literacy activity. (p. 6)

At the center of the model is a student's development of reading abilities. According to the model, students develop reading skills and strategies across contexts and times. Instruction occurs both within the formal spaces of schools, as well as informal community and home spaces. Importantly, the developmental process is not linear, but fluidly moves across and within all sociocultural contexts and forms of instruction. Special education teachers and scholars can draw on this model to conceptualize how school-based literacy instruction can and does involve both explicit instruction in reading skills and strategies as well as their situated social practices.

This model of print literacy development aligns with the perspective of family literacy that frames this dissertation. Drawing on the work of other family literacy scholars, I define *family literacies* as socially-situated practices that involve a child and more knowledgeable family member (e.g., older sibling, caregiver, relative) meaningfully interacting with written language (Morrow, 1995; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). Both the definitions of print literacy development and family literacy emphasize socially-constructed meanings of written language that occur outside of school-based instruction. Striving students' first teachers of literacy are their families and caregivers, as literacy learning begins far in advance of students arriving at the doorsteps of schools. Thus, I contend that special education teachers need to construct knowledge of their striving students' family literacy practices to enact literacy instruction that incorporates these literacy practices. This type of literacy instruction has the potential to support striving students to draw upon their full repertoires of literacy practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003) as they develop literacy abilities in the more formalized instructional spaces of classrooms.

Notably, most theories about teacher knowledge include knowledge of students, subject matter and pedagogy (e.g., Ball et al., 2008; Gess-Newsome, 2015; Shulman, 1986). There is consensus in the field of teacher education that teachers need to construct deep knowledge of their students, subject matter, and pedagogy in order to create meaningful learning opportunities for their students (e.g., Darling-Hammond et al., 2019; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Howard & Aleman, 2008). On account of how school-based literacy instruction and learning is situated within the broader sociocultural contexts in which striving students engage (Bloome et al., 2018; Purcell-Gates et al., 2016), it is reasonable to assume that how a special education teacher enacts literacy instruction intersects with the teacher's knowledge about literacy, literacy pedagogy, and their students.

In reviewing the research from the fields of family literacy, home literacy environments, funds of knowledge, and home-school discontinuity, there is limited literature examining how teachers construct knowledge—subject-matter, pedagogical, and of their learners—in relation to family literacy practices (e.g., Comber & Kamler, 2004; Dunsmore et al., 2013; Edwards & Peltier, 2016; Hamel et al., 2013; Reyes et al., 2016). Of the literature that did address family literacy practices, most scholars approached teachers' construction of knowledge from a funds of knowledge perspective rather than family literacy (e.g., Cremin et al., 2012; DaSilva Iddings, 2009; Reyes et al., 2016). There is consensus that teachers can construct knowledge of family literacy practices from observing or visiting students' homes, participating in joint activities (e.g., literacy nights), exploring their own literacy experiences, or having conversations with the family or students (e.g., Cremin et al., 2012; Dunsmore et al., 2013; Galindo, 2000; Reyes et al., 2016). Transferring teachers' constructed knowledge of family literacy practices into curriculum changes has been difficult (Cremin et al., 2012; Edwards & Peltier, 2016; Reyes et al., 2016). As Comber and Kamler (2004) concluded teachers need to have a deep understanding of their

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pedagogy and significantly reposition students in ways that value their knowledge and abilities to produce and comprehend written language. Due to the dearth of research, there is a need for additional scholarship on how teachers (re)construct knowledge of students' family literacy practices and then use this knowledge to enact teaching practices that build upon students' family literacy practices.

In my review of the literature, I attempted to locate research that studied how special education teachers (re)constructed knowledge and enacted teaching practices around their striving students' family literacy practices. I was unable to locate any published studies that addressed this topic. Therefore, I seek to better understand how novice special education teachers can (re)construct their knowledge and teaching practices about striving students' family literacy practices. The main question guiding this dissertation is: How does one novice special education teacher (re)construct and enact understandings of her striving students' family literacy practices? Additionally, I seek to answer the following subquestions:

1. What types of knowledge does a novice special education teacher (re)construct about striving students' family literacy practices?

2. How does she enact teaching practices, skills-based and/or social practices, around her (re)constructed knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices?

3. How does one novice special education teacher use questioning to teach literacy skills and strategies while connecting to her striving students' family literacy practices?

Close examination of a novice special education teacher's understandings and teaching practices around her striving students' family literacy practices may provide opportunities to witness teacher professional growth (Shulman, 1987; Snow et al., 2005). As Shulman (1987) noted, "their (novice teachers) development from students to teachers...exposes and highlights the complex bodies of knowledge and skill needed to function effectively as a teacher" (p. 4).

Indeed, educational research needs to examine the emerging knowledges and teaching practices of novice as well as experienced teachers.

Summary of Study Design

In this qualitative study, I employed a case study design (Yin, 2014) to learn about the complex social phenomenon of how Liz[2], a novice special education teacher, (re)constructed her knowledge and enacted teaching practices about her striving students' family literacy practices within the real-life contexts of the school. My dissertation research was the pilot for a broader case study that examined how elementary teachers defined, used, and valued students' family literacies within their classroom contexts. While conducting the study, I assumed a role of *observer as participant* (Glesne, 2011), meaning that I primarily observed Liz's experiences with her striving students. Throughout the study, I did have some interactions with Liz and her striving students, particularly during instances when the students asked me questions or Liz sought my feedback about her teaching.

I collected data across five months. During the first two months, I conducted one classroom-based observation and two semi-structured interviews. Liz also completed a demographic and perception questionnaire about her striving students. From these data sources, I gained insight into how Liz constructed her knowledge and teaching practices with regards to her striving students, and their families during the initial stages of the research study.

During the next two months, I reviewed the data along with my co-researcher so as to inform the design of the broader case study. I did not connect with Liz, meaning she was free to engage in her day-to-day teaching as she preferred. I reconnected with Liz during the fifth month of the study. At this time, I conducted two additional interviews and two observations. Liz also completed an online situational judgment test. I analyzed these new data sources in relation to

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2   All names are pseudonyms.

the initial data sources in order to understand how Liz (re)constructed her knowledge and teaching practices about her striving students over the course of the entire research study. The multiple data sources I collected during the study supported triangulation of the data and increased the study's construct validity (Yin, 2014).

Synopsis

Three stand-alone articles comprise this dissertation. The first two articles are empirical pieces, reporting findings based on interviews, observations, document analysis, a questionnaire, and a situational judgment test. The third article is a practitioner piece written for special education and elementary education teachers (e.g., Reading Teacher) since both groups of teachers work with striving students. I use some of the same language in the introduction for each article, otherwise the language is unique among the three articles. A synopsis of each article follows.

Article One: (Re)constructing Teacher Knowledge and Teaching Practices: Incorporating Family Literacy Practices Into Literacy Skills-Based Instruction

In the first article, I examine how Liz (re)constructed her knowledge and enacted teaching practices about striving students' family literacy practices through sociocultural (Cole, 1998; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1993) and social-constructivist (Greeno et al., 1996; Shulman, 1987; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) theoretical frameworks. Knowledge of teaching includes, but is not limited to knowledge of learners, subject matter, and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987). Teachers develop knowledge of teaching and then enact this knowledge through *teaching practices* (Lampert, 2010). Findings reveal that Liz was a novice special education teacher who identified areas for growing professionally based on her striving students' needs. Also, as Liz developed deeper knowledge of her striving students' repertoires of literacy practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003) she enacted, in limited ways, literacy teaching practices

that drew on these repertoires. Based on these findings, I suggest that when special education teachers (re)construct knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices, they are able to enact teaching practices that incorporate the students' family literacy practices.

Article Two: Teacher-Led Questions: Sites for Integrating Family Literacy Practices

I look at the discourses Liz used across the three observations, particularly the three times Liz engaged her striving students in interactive read-aloud instruction. I drew upon conceptualizations of family literacy (Rodriguez-Brown, 2011) and print literacy development (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004, 2016) to analyze the types of questions Liz asked. Findings reveal that Liz's questioning pattern followed an initiate-respond-evaluate/feedback (IRE/F) monologic discourse pattern. Across all three interactive read-alouds, she most frequently asked inauthentic questions about decoding, letter:sound correspondence, understanding main ideas and details, or characters and plot. These questions incorporated the striving students' school-based literacy practices rather than their family literacy practices. A second significant finding was that Liz asked authentic questions prompting students to connect the instruction to their personal lived histories. These questions tended to be in the feedback portion of the IRF exchange. Drawing on prior research that indicates it is challenging for teachers to change their teaching practices to incorporate students' repertoires of literacy practices (e.g., Comber & Kamler, 2004; Cremin et al., 2012; Reyes et al., 2016), I argue that Liz's questions prompting students to make personal connections with the instruction might be an indicator of her progression towards incorporating students' family literacy practices more fully into her questioning patterns. Based on these findings, I suggest that examination of teachers' questioning patterns might be an avenue for developing enriched understandings of how teachers use their (re)constructed knowledge about students' family literacy practices to inform how they incorporate family practices into their teaching practices.

Article Three: Enhancing High-Leverage Teaching Practices in Literacy: Leveraging Family Literacy Practices

In the third article, I address how teachers can leverage striving students' family literacies as a way to enhance their high-leverage teaching practices during literacy instruction. I explore how teachers might build upon their students' family literacy practices when enacting the high-leverage practices of explicit literacy instruction or eliciting student thinking. Research examining how teaching within students' zones of proximal development can counter lower learning expectations (e.g., Portes & Salas, 2009; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2015) informed my thinking. I suggest that teachers can use Vygtosky's (1978) theory of zones of proximal development as a tool to inform how they might adapt their high-leverage teaching practices in ways that leverage striving students' family literacy practices.

I share two literacy instructional episodes in which my participant, Liz, engaged her striving students. I offer suggestions for how Liz might extend her high-leverage teaching practices to incorporate ways that leverage her students' family literacy practices. I propose that teachers will need to intentionally learn about students' family literacy practices and then critically reflect how these literacy practices (mis)align with school-based literacy practices. With deeper understandings of their striving students' family literacy practices, teachers can more fully understand students' diverse literacy practices and zones of proximal literacy development. Ultimately, I assert that enacting high-leverage teaching practices that support striving students to leverage their family literacy practices to learn literacy skills and strategies has the potential to positively impact their education.

Overall Significance

Taken together, the three articles have the purpose of examining how a novice special education teacher (re)constructed her understandings and teaching practices of striving students'

family literacy practices. This body of research makes significant contributions to the fields of family literacy and special education in two ways. First, the findings of this dissertation are noteworthy due to the limited research pertaining to how teachers (re)construct their knowledge and teaching practices around striving students' family literacy practices in the fields of special education and family literacy (e.g., Dunsmore et al., 2013; Galindo, 2000; Hamel, 2003; Hamel et al., 2013). Collectively, the dissertation findings speak to potential intersections between teachers' (re)constructed knowledge about their striving students' family literacy practices and enacted teaching practices that incorporate these family literacy practices. Additional research is needed to further understand these intersections, as well as the relationship that this type of instruction has on striving students' learning.

The second significant contribution is that my research addresses the need for expanded research paradigms in special education since I utilize sociocultural and social-constructivist perspectives as a framework. According to Klinger and colleagues (2016), there is a need for qualitative research that draws on different epistemological and theoretical perspectives such as sociocultural and social-constructivist. They contend that these broadened approaches to research have the potential to develop richer and more nuanced understandings of striving students, special education teachers, and special education instruction. I suggest that these broadened approaches to research are particularly important for literacy research given the longstanding tension between skills-based and social practice approaches (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004; Street, 2013).

In my research, I attempt to provide insights into how special education teachers might have expanded conceptualizations of school-based literacy instruction—conceptualizations that include both literacy skills and strategies instruction and the social practices in which the skills and strategies are situated. Through further study of how special education teachers understand

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striving students' family literacy practices and then build upon these practices in their literacy instruction, special education scholars and teachers can engage in productive discussions about how bridging family literacy practices with school-based practices might contribute to improve school-based literacy instruction.

Considering the consensus in educational research that all learners vary (Carter & Darling-Hammond, 2016; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005), it seems particularly important to study how special education teachers (re)construct knowledge of their striving students and how this knowledge then intersects with their teaching practices. Special education teachers learn about their striving students through a myriad of avenues which can include individualized education plans, multidisciplinary evaluation team reports, and parent contributions in special education meetings. But I encourage special education teachers to pause and contemplate—what do you know about your striving students' literacy abilities and practices? How does your knowledge of your striving students' literacies intersect and/or inform your literacy teaching practices? After contemplating these questions, then special education teachers can make intentional connections (e.g., conversations with family, shared activities, invited home visits) with the families of their striving students so that they can learn about the family literacy practices they enact. Lastly, teachers can then participate in professional learning communities that explore how they might use their (re)constructed knowledge of the students' family literacy practices to inform their school-based literacy instruction. In the safe, conversational spaces of the professional learning community, teachers could identify avenues (e.g., questioning patterns during literacy instruction) for incorporating family literacy practices in productive ways that support increased student learning.

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ARTICLE ONE: (RE)CONSTRUCTING TEACHER KNOWLEDGE AND TEACHING PRACTICES: INCORPORATING FAMILY LITERACY PRACTICES INTO LITERACY SKILLS-BASED INSTRUCTION

Introduction

Historically, the teaching of reading and writing in school-based contexts has been rife with tension. One contemporary tension centers on whether literacy instruction should focus on the mechanics and skills of reading (e.g., word recognition, fluency) or situated meaning-making processes (Street, 2013). These differing foci for literacy instruction respectively reflect a skills-based or social practices approach to literacy. A skills-based approach to literacy breaks literacy into components (i.e., skills and strategies) that can be taught for mastery (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004). A social practices approach emphasizes that students' meaning-making processes and interactions with a text are socially and contextually situated practices (Bloome & Green, 2015; Street, 1995).

The tension between approaching literacy instruction from a skills-based or a social practice approach is often presented in research and practice as being a dichotomy. Within the field of special education, the predominant view is that special education students benefit from explicit skills-based instruction (Klingner et al., 2016). There is consensus that systematic, explicit skills-based instruction facilitates positive learning outcomes for special education students (e.g., Edmonds et al., 2009; Fien et al., 2015; Weiser & Mathes, 2011). Some scholars counter that teaching literacy skills can not be separated from the contexts in which they are situated (e.g., Dudley-Marling, 2011; Englert & Mariage, 2013; Klingner & Edwards, 2006). For instance, as teachers and students learn the skills to decode single syllable words, particular ways of knowing, valuing, and talking are being emphasized (Bloome et al., 2018). By recognizing

how context and culture shape what is emphasized in these social interactions, special education teachers may gain insight into how to better support special education students' literacy development. Thus, these two approaches to literacy instruction could be viewed as a continuum rather than a dichotomy.

How then can special education scholars move beyond this tension to create opportunities for thoughtful discussions about how to transform literacy instruction? In a recent review of the literature, Klingner and colleagues (2016) advocated for productive dialogue concerning how differing epistemological and theoretical frameworks can contribute to robust understandings of how to improve special education instruction. This present study is a response to that call as that it draws on sociocultural and social-constructivist perspectives of literacy, teaching, and learning to expand conversations about how special education teachers may (re)conceptualize school-based literacy instruction to include both skills-based and social practices approaches. This study is a case of one novice special education teacher as she navigated (re)constructing literacy teaching practices that incorporated skills-based and social practices approaches. As Shulman (1987) noted, "Their (novice teachers) development from students to teachers...exposes and highlights the complex bodies of knowledge and skill needed to function effectively as a teacher" (p. 4). Close examination of a novice special education teacher's navigation may provide insights into the knowledge and teaching practices that promote the incorporation of striving students' family literacy practices into skills-based literacy instruction.

Purcell-Gates and colleagues (2004) have developed a model for how formal reading and writing instruction is situated in socially-constructed literacy practices (e.g., family literacy practices). Drawing on this model, I suggest that one way for special education teachers, both novice and experienced, to incorporate a social practices approach alongside a skills-based approach is to construct knowledge and enact teaching practices around special education

students' family literacy practices. Currently, there is limited evidence on how special education teachers (a) (re)construct knowledge about special education students' family literacy practices, and (b) enact teaching practices that incorporate the family literacy practices of their special education students. In this article, I address the research questions: What types of knowledge does a novice special education teacher (re)construct about striving students' family literacy practices? How does she enact teaching practices, skills-based and/or social practices, around her (re)constructed knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices?

Before discussing the conceptual framework for the study, I want to note that in this study I follow other scholars (e.g., Fink, 2006; Hedin & Conderman, 2010; Husband, 2017) who refer to students who receive special education supports in reading and writing as *striving students* rather than *struggling students*. I use this term to intentionally shift away from deficit perspectives traditionally associated with the field of special education (Baglieri & Shapiro, 2012). Deficit thinking attributes experiential differences to deficits situated within the child or family (e.g., pathological or sociocultural deficits). I do not include students who are English Language Learners (ELL) since previous research reviews have found that scholars often conflate ELL populations with special education populations under categories of "special populations" or "diverse learners" (Dutro & Collins, 2011).

Conceptual Framework

To frame this study, I drew upon the theories and conceptualizations of family literacies (Rodriguez-Brown, 2011), print literacy development (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004, 2016) and teacher knowledge (Ball et al., 2008; Shulman, 1987). Since these conceptual frameworks are significantly different from each other, I have elected to present them separately rather than attempting to integrate them into one model. I briefly discuss the conception of family literacies I reference throughout this paper prior to a focused discussion on print literacy development and

teacher knowledge. During my discussion, I share how I have extended the theories and conceptualizations addressing print literacy development and teacher knowledge to include the concept of family literacies.

Family Literacies

I draw on the definition of family literacies that aligns with a sociocultural perspective of literacy and is used by other scholars (e.g., Morrow, 1995; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). According to Morrow, Paratore, and Tracey (1994) (as cited in Morrow, 1995):

> Family literacy encompasses the ways parents, children, and extended family members use literacy at home and in their community. Sometimes, family literacy occurs naturally during the routines of daily living and helps adults and children "get things done." These events might include using drawings or writing to share ideas; composing notes or letters to communicate messages; making lists; reading and following directions; or sharing stories and ideas through conversations, reading, and writing. Family literacy may be initiated purposefully by a parent or may occur spontaneously as parents and children go about the business of their daily lives. Family literacy activities may also reflect the ethnic, racial, or cultural heritage of the families involved. (p. 7-8)

It is important to note that this definition of family literacies reflects the perspective that literacy is not a single, unitary skill such as reading, writing, or speaking. Rather, literacy is a social practice that is culturally, historically, and spatially situated in the daily lives of children and their families (Rodriguez-Brown, 2011).

Print Literacy Development

For this dissertation, I have adapted Purcell-Gates and colleagues' (2004) model of print literacy development. The scholars define *print literacy* as "reading and writing of some form of print for communicative purposes inherent in peoples' lives. Thus, it involves decoding and

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encoding of a linguistically based symbol system and is driven by social processes that rely upon communication and meaning" (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004, p. 26). Similar to the aforementioned definition of family literacies, print literacy involves interacting with written language and the social processes in which the interactions are situated.

In their model of print literacy development, Purcell-Gates and colleagues (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004, 2016) integrate the skills-based approach to formal reading instruction with the sociocultural contexts of classrooms and schools. These scholars have defined print literacy development as "the acquisitions, improvement, elaboration, and extension of the abilities and strategies necessary to comprehend and produce written language for communicative purposes within sociocultural contexts. This includes understanding the social meanings of literate activity and mastering the pragmatics and semiotics of literacy activity" (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004, p. 26). This conceptualization of literacy development is particularly useful for the field of special education since it blends the two approaches, skills-based and social practices, rather than positioning the approaches as a dichotomy.

I adapted Purcell-Gates et al.'s (2004) model of print literacy development to address the role that family literacy practices plays in the development of reading and writing abilities (see Figure 2.1). I agree with Purcell-Gates and colleagues that literacy development is nested within sociocultural contexts. That is, students learn literacy skills and strategies as they participate in the social contexts of their classrooms, homes, or communities. However, I do approach the development of print literacy from sociocultural and social-constructivist perspectives rather than sociocultural and constructivist perspectives like Purcell-Gates and colleagues. Informed by sociocultural and social-constructivist theories, teachers and students make context-specific decisions of how and what knowledge or practices to draw on during interactions with written text. They can use prior knowledge and experiences developed in one context to to support the

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co-construction and reconstruction of new reading and writing abilities in a different context

(Greeno et al., 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, I do not perceive literacy development to progress

according to a defined pathway across the nested contexts.

Figure 2.1

Role of Family Literacy Practices in Literacy Development
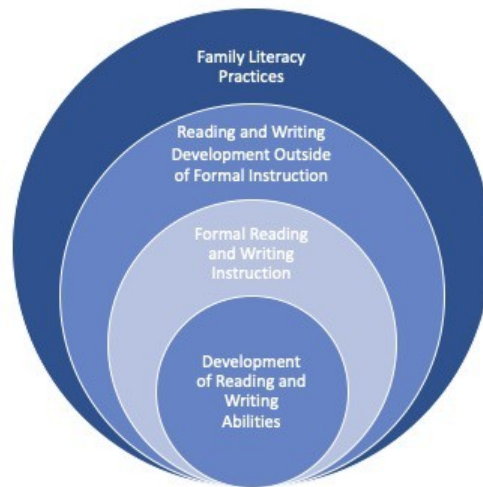
In the center of the model is the development of reading and writing abilities, that is the

ability to produce and comprehend written language within situated sociocultural contexts. The

development of reading and writing abilities is embedded within formal reading and writing

instruction, which predominantly occurs in classroom and school contexts. Surrounding that is

reading and writing development outside of formal instruction. This type of informal instruction

could include non-instructional activities and experiences that support reading and writing

development (e.g., shared reading experiences with family members, participating in summer

library reading programs, engagement in community-based family writing workshops). The outer

context of the model is family literacy practices. These literacy practices are socially-constructed

when a family member and child meaningfully engage and interact with written language.

In summary, this adapted model portrays a widened lens for how the skills and strategies associated with reading and writing development are situated within socially-constructed literacy practices, including family literacy practices. All literacy practices are interwoven with the social practices of thinking, believing, valuing, talking, and socializing—all of which are mediated by an individual's (e.g., special education teacher, striving student) race, social class, culture, and linguistic background (Gee, 1991; Street, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978). Family literacy practices is one category of socially-constructed literacy practices that could be depicted in this outer context (Bloome et al., 2018; Gallego & Hollingsworth, 2000).

Teacher Knowledge

I draw on sociocultural and social-constructivist conceptualizations of teacher's knowledge (Greeno et al., 1996; Russ et al., 2016; Shulman, 1987). I want to highlight two important points from these perspectives. First, teachers are active participants in the construction of new professional teacher knowledge, building new knowledge upon prior knowledge (Russ et al., 2016; Vygotsky, 1978). Second, social, cultural, and historical contextual factors shape how teachers construct their professional teacher knowledge (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978).

This study is informed by the conceptual models of teacher knowledge put forth by Shulman (1987) and Ball and colleagues (2008). Shulman (1987) defined teacher knowledge as consisting of the following seven categories: (a) knowledge of learners, (b) knowledge of educational contexts, (c) knowledge of educational situated purposes, histories, and values, (d) general pedagogical knowledge, (e) content knowledge, (f) curriculum knowledge, and (g) pedagogical content knowledge. Since Shulman initially published this definition, education scholars have sought to extend his work to develop a practice-based theory of content knowledge, specifically focusing on the three categories of content knowledge, curriculum

knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge (Ball et al., 2008; Gess-Newsome, 2015).

Within education, scholars in the fields of science and mathematics have advanced models for

how to conceptualize knowledge for teaching within their particular subject area. Since the field

of literacy has yet to advance a model conceptualizing the domains of literacy knowledge for

teaching, I have adapted Ball and colleagues' (2008) model for mathematical knowledge for

teaching (see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2

Domains of Literacy Teacher Knowledge
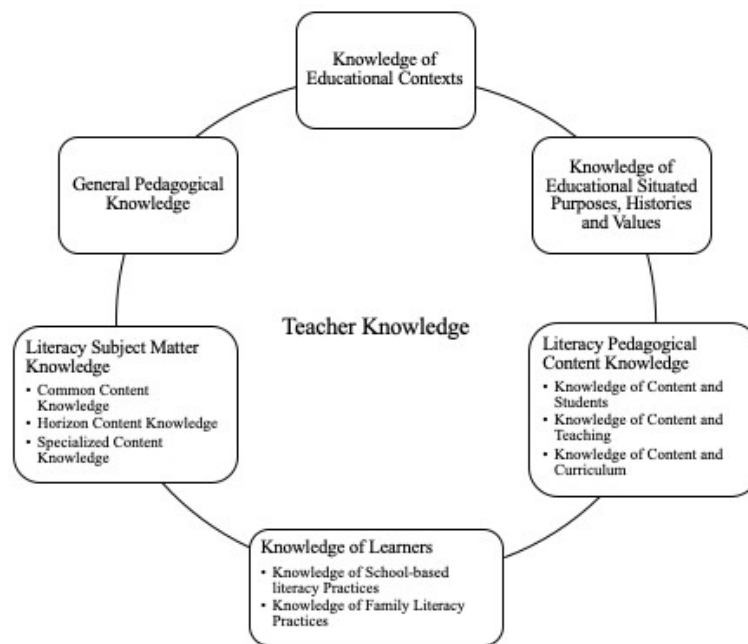
In this model, literacy subject matter knowledge has been divided into three components:

(a) common content knowledge or knowledge that is commonly known among the general

public, (b) specialized content knowledge or knowledge that is unique to the teaching profession,

and (c) horizon content knowledge or knowledge of how particular literacy skills, strategies, and

social practices intersect or contribute to more advanced skills, strategies, and social practices.

Pedagogical content knowledge is also divided into three components: (a) knowledge of content

and students (e.g., knowledge of what content aspects students may find difficult), (b) knowledge of content and teaching (e.g., knowing how to adapt teaching practices in response to the content), and (c) knowledge of content and the curriculum (e.g., knowing how to finesse curriculum materials to better align with the literacy content).

I elaborate further on three distinct points regarding how this model of teacher knowledge intersects with my conceptualization of family literacy. First, other scholars (Ball et al., 2008; Grossman et al., 1989) have argued that subject matter knowledge includes not just knowledge of the subject, but also organizing principles and structures for the field. Extending this argument, it is reasonable to theorize literacy subject matter knowledge includes theoretical knowledge related to the field of family literacy. Knowledge of family literacy theories could support teachers to understand what family literacy practices are and how they differ from other types of literacy practices or educational concepts (e.g., funds of knowledge, home literacy practices, out-of-school literacy practices).

Second, Shulman (1987) included teachers developing knowledge of students and their characteristics in his model of teacher knowledge. Applying this perspective to literacy, knowledge of learners could include knowing students' abilities to use particular literacy skills and strategies, informal and formal reading/writing instructional experiences, and literacy practices (Bransford et al., 2005; Shulman, 1987). Developing knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices could amplify teachers' knowledge about students' approaches to literacy. Teachers could come to understand how students' family literacy practices (mis)align with the teaching and learning enacted in school-based contexts.

Lastly, within the field of literacy, there is recognition that pedagogical content knowledge involves knowledge of text, language, and reading processes and how these intersect when teaching decoding and comprehension of a text (Clark et al., 2017; Jordan et al., 2018;

Phelps, 2009). Drawing on Purcell-Gates and colleagues' (2004) model of print literacy development, I suggest that teachers draw on their pedagogical content knowledge during formal reading and writing instruction. Teachers could use their knowledge of family literacy theory or their striving students' family literacy practices to inform their pedagogical practices and decisions about how to teach literacy skills and strategies. Together, the conceptualizations of family literacies, print literacy development, and teacher knowledge provide a framework for consideration of how special education teachers might draw on students' family literacy practices while teaching literacy skills and strategies.

Review of the Literature

This article draws on literature in the areas of family literacies, teacher knowledge, and literacy teaching practices. In what follows, I begin with an overview of family literacies to help ground the subsequent discussion of teacher knowledge and literacy teaching practices. I then review the literature examining teacher knowledge of family literacy practices and literacy teaching practices that incorporate students' family literacy practices. Due to the limited number of studies that address the intersections between family literacies, teacher knowledge, and literacy teaching practices, I also include literature that use theories other than family literacy as a theoretical framework. Specifically, I searched literature that drew on conceptualizations and theories of home literacy environments, funds of knowledge, and home-school discontinuity to locate (un)expected findings addressing teachers' knowledge or literacy teaching practices in relation to family literacy practices.

Family Literacy Practices

Within the past twenty years, family literacy has come to be considered an educational construct, meaning that educational scholars, policymakers, and teachers foreground and emphasize the literacy practices of families in educational theories, policies, and research

(Purcell-Gates, 2000; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). During this time, there have been three main lines of family literacy research. These lines of research include the following: (a) describing the home literacy context and the types of family literacy practices enacted within the home context (e.g., Krijnen et al., 2020; Moore, 2016), (b) examining the (dis)continuity between family literacy practices and school literacy practices by foregrounding discourses or cultural models (e.g., Jackson, 2016; Purcell-Gates, 2013; Volk & de Acosta, 2001), and (c) studying family literacy programs and interventions (e.g., Hindin & Paratore, 2007; Senechal & Young, 2008; Teale et al., 2020). This study most closely aligns with the body of research on programs and interventions, since the focus is to examine how one novice special education teacher (a) (re)constructed knowledge of her striving students' family literacy practices and (b) enacted teaching practices around her (re)constructed knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices.

Pertaining to family literacy practices, special education scholars have predominantly examined programs and interventions that transfer literacy skills and strategies taught at school (e.g., shared book reading, skill practice aligning with Applied Behavioral Analysis principles) into the home context (e.g., Colmar, 2014; Floyd & Vernon-Dotson, 2009; Waldbart et al., 2006). For example, Logan and colleagues (2019) taught caregivers[3] of early childhood special education students how to use print-referencing strategies typically taught in schools. Caregivers used the print-referencing strategies to alert their child to various features and functions in storybooks. Interestingly, Logan and colleagues did not address how the intervention (mis)aligned with the families' current literacy practices. The research team found that the

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3   Throughout the dissertation, I use the term caregiver to refer to any individual who is actively involved in raising and educating the child. I intentionally use caregiver rather than parents as a way to convey the diversity of students' home situations.

majority of caregivers did not sustain use of the intervention for the entirety of the study (N=30 weeks). I suggest that this finding points to the need for additional research examining why the caregivers did not sustain the use of the intervention and possibly identify ways that the intervention could be altered to incorporate the families' current literacy practices.

In my review of the literature, I intentionally searched for research addressing caregiver involvement in individualized education plan (IEP) meetings. Caregivers are invited to participate in these meetings, often sharing about the child's strengths and areas of need. It is reasonable to theorize that this caregiver input could include information about family literacy practices. If so, educators could use caregiver input to inform the development of IEP goals and objectives. Unfortunately, I did not locate any published research discussing how the IEP meeting created spaces to (re)construct understandings of family literacy practices, or incorporate aspects of family literacy practices into the IEP.

Teacher Knowledge of Family Literacy Practices

I reviewed the literature regarding how teachers, both general and special education, (re)construct knowledge—subject-matter, pedagogical, and of their learners—in relation to family literacy practices (e.g., Comber & Kamler, 2004; Dunsmore et al., 2013; Edwards & Peltier, 2016; Hamel et al., 2013; Reyes et al., 2016). Of the literature that did address family literacy practices, many scholars approached teachers' construction of knowledge from a funds of knowledge perspective (Gonzalez et al., 2005) rather than family literacy (e.g., Cremin et al., 2012; DaSilva Iddings, 2009; Reyes et al., 2016). The findings and conclusions of the reviewed literature addressed three topics: (a) how teachers (re)construct knowledge of theories and conceptualizations of family literacy, (b) how teachers (re)construct knowledge of their students' family literacy practices, and (c) how they make sense of the knowledge they are (re)constructing.

Research has examined how professional learning communities may be one avenue to support teachers with (re)constructing knowledge of the theories and conceptualizations of family literacy. Some scholars (e.g., Cremin et al., 2012; Dunsmore et al., 2013; Edwards & Peltier, 2016; Galindo, 2000) concluded that professional learning communities and communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) may support practicing teachers to develop expansive understandings of literacy practices and acknowledge how school-based literacies typically do not recognize marginalized literacy practices. Illustratively, Galindo (2000) engaged Chicana/o bilingual teachers in writing autobiographical essays exploring their own family literacy practices as a way to develop theoretical and conceptual understandings of family literacy. Galindo concluded that the acts of reflecting and writing created spaces for the teachers to think about how literacy practices and experiences can vary. Teachers extended this knowledge about their personal family literacies to consider how their students' family literacies (dis)connected with their teaching practices. The teachers concluded that their students' family literacy experiences varied and may not be fully recognized within their current teaching practices.

Previous research has also demonstrated the benefits of sustained engagement in researcher-led professional development (e.g., Comber & Kamler, 2004; Cremin et al., 2012; Edwards & Peltier, 2016; Kamler & Comber, 2005). Comber and Kamler (2004; 2005) designed professional development to provide explicit support to their teacher participants. The researchers guided their participants to adopt a researcher stance to learn about students' literacy practices and critically examine the effects of their literacy teaching practices on their students' learning. In their study, Cremin and colleagues (2012) engaged their teacher participants in a year-long professional development opportunity. In the context of the professional development, the researchers explicitly supported the teachers with the following: (a) learning about their own literacy lives and the literacy lives of their students, (b) conducting home visits to observe

enacted family literacy practices and then analyzing these observations, (c) determining how to build upon their (re)constructed knowledge in their teaching practices, and home-school relations. Cremin and colleagues (2012) concluded, "Considerable time, space, and sustained support is needed in order for teachers to examine their habits and assumptions, investigate children's everyday literacy practices, and begin to create 'pedagogies of re-connection' (Comber & Kamler, 2004)" (p. 112). Across these studies, it seems that researcher-led professional development may create a space where teachers can safely, yet critically examine their present knowledge of student literacies, and how they might (re)construct their knowledge and (re)design their teaching practices to incorporate student family literacies.

Research indicates that teachers can develop knowledge of their students' family literacy practices in a variety of ways. Hamel (2003) found that the teacher participants in her study learned about students' family literacy practices through conversations with students during literacy activities (e.g., literature discussion, guided reading lessons, read-alouds, writing conferences). Teachers can also converse with caregivers or other family members as a way to learn about family literacy practices (Edwards et al., 1999, 2018; Purcell-Gates, 2013). Beyond directly engaging with students and their families, teachers might gain perspective through observing caregiver-child interactions during literacy events (Purcell-Gates, 2013) or engaging in community mapping activities (e.g., conducting home visits, visiting community sites to observe how families engage in literacy practices) (Dunsmore et al., 2013).

How teachers make sense of students' family literacy practices appears to vary. For example, Hamel (2003) found that her teacher participants described what is "lacking" from students' home literacy experiences. In contrast, Purcell-Gates and colleagues (2013) found that teachers were able to interrogate personal and institutional cultural-biases of literacy practices when they were mindful of caregivers' racial and ethnic identities. This led teachers to

understand why caregivers and students engaged in particular literacy practices that were discontinuous with school-based literacy practices.

Interestingly, there were fewer studies about how teacher candidates learn about family literacy practices during their teacher preparation (e.g., Reyes et al., 2016). This reflects other scholars' conclusions that few teacher preparation programs adequately prepare candidates to work collaboratively with caregivers in ways that promote children's educational success (e.g., Edwards et al., 2019; Edwards & Peltier, 2016; Epstein & Sanders, 2006). Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that teachers predominantly construct knowledge of family literacy practices after formally entering the profession.

Collectively, these studies indicate that teachers can (re)construct knowledge of family literacy practices from observing or visiting students' homes, participating in joint activities (e.g., literacy nights), engaging in professional development, or having conversations with the family (e.g., Cremin et al., 2012; Dunsmore et al., 2013; Galindo, 2000; Reyes et al., 2016). Of note, Hamel (2003) suggested that the extent a teacher (re)constructs their knowledge of students' family literacy practices may vary. Specifically, Hamel concluded that teachers' (re)constructed knowledge of family literacy practices ranged from very general (e.g., awareness that students have access to books) to specific (e.g., schedules of families). This conclusion can inform research of teacher knowledge of family literacy practices, but also research of literacy teaching practices given the intersections between teacher knowledge and teaching practices. I now shift to discussion of the literature that examines teaching practices that incorporate family literacy practices.

Teaching Practices Incorporating Family Literacy Practices

Teachers develop knowledge of teaching and then enact this knowledge through *teaching practices* (Lampert, 2010). Windschitl and Calabrese Barton (2016) defined teaching practices as

"recurring professional work devoted to planning, enacting, and reflecting on instruction" (p. 1100). Transferring teachers' constructed knowledge of family literacy practices into curriculum changes has been difficult (Cremin et al., 2012; Edwards & Peltier, 2016; Reyes et al., 2016). As Comber and Kamler (2004) concluded teachers need to have a deep understanding of their pedagogy and significantly reposition students in ways that value their knowledge and abilities to produce and comprehend written language and texts in order for students to use their family literacy practices.

One approach for enacting literacy teaching practices that build upon students' family literacy practices is for teachers to design instruction that incorporates artifacts of written text from students' home. For example, Dunsmore and colleagues (2013) found that Herrera, both a co-author and the teacher participant in the study, asked students to bring in a poem that was significant to the family. Herrera then positioned himself as a facilitator, supporting the students as they wrote about where the poem was kept in the home and why this poem was significant. Similar to Herrera's incorporation of family poems, DaSilva Iddings (2009) bridged her participants' home and school contexts by having the families bring authentic texts such as recipes to the school's family involvement center. DaSilva Iddings supported the caregivers and children to create bilingual (Spanish and English) written texts using these artifacts (e.g., cookbooks, personal narratives for emergent readers).

Comber and Kamler (2004) examined a second approach involving teachers working with other teachers and literacy researchers to examine their current literacy teaching practices. Together, the teachers and researchers analyzed how the teachers currently taught literacy skills and strategies in relation to students' family literacy practices. The teachers then worked with a colleague to conduct a literacy audit—identifying the literacy practices teachers made "available" to students and noting which "available" literacy practices the students actually used.

Next, the teachers selected one striving student and used the information from the literacy audit to determine how to enhance the connections between their instruction and the child's literacy practices. The teachers and researchers monitored the impact of any pedagogical changes by collecting and analyzing student work, teacher reflection journals, and researcher-conducted classroom observations. Comber and Kamler concluded that their research project created a safe space for the teachers to critically examine their current literacy teaching practices, identify pedagogical changes that bridged the literacy curriculum with students' family literacy practices, and monitor efforts to change their pedagogical practices.

To recount, there is limited research exploring the following: (a) how teachers (re)construct knowledge—theoretical and pedagogical—about striving students' family literacy practices; and (b) how teachers can enact literacy teaching practices that incorporate students' family literacy practices into skills-based instruction. In the most recent review of family literacies research, Rodriguez-Brown (2011) concluded that there was a need for qualitative research examining how schools and teachers might "learn, understand, and recognize the contributions of culturally and linguistically different families to their children's learning in order to find function and applications of this knowledge in their curricula and methodologies" (p. 748). The findings of this study contribute to this gap in the research by examining how a novice special education teacher (re)constructed knowledge about family literacy practices and how she enacted literacy teaching practices that taught literacy skills and strategies while drawing on striving students' family literacy practices.

Methodology

This study was the pilot for a broader study (Edwards & Peltier, 2016) that examined how elementary teachers defined, used, and valued striving students' family literacies within their classroom contexts. For both research studies, I drew upon a case study design. Yin (2014)

proposed using case study as a research methodology when the aim is to understand a complex

social phenomenon and how it is situated within the real-word context. In addition, Yin noted

that it is appropriate to use case study when the researcher requires no control over the events

that are being studied, and when contemporary events are the focus of the research. A case study

approach enabled me to focus on the particular phenomenon of a novice special education

teacher's knowledge and teaching practices of striving students' family literacy practices within

real-life contexts.

A second affordance of using a case study design is the reliance on the convergence of

multiple data sources to identify findings (Yin, 2014). For this study, I collected a range of data

—observations, interviews, fieldnotes, situational judgment test, demographics and perceptions

questionnaire, and document analysis—to support in-depth analysis and triangulation. While the

findings of this study are not generalizable, the in-depth examination of a single novice special

education teacher provides the opportunity to build theory about the knowledge and teaching

practices of novice special education teachers. Similarly, the educational community can use the

case of this novice teacher to understand how novice special education teachers (re)construct

their knowledge and teaching practices around their students' family literacies during the initial

stages of their teaching career.

Context

I conducted the study at Logan Academy[4], a public K-12 charter school located in one of

the urban communities surrounding a Midwestern metropolitan center. As documented by the

State Department of Education (Midwestern State's Center for Educational Performance and

Information, 2015), approximately 450 elementary students attended Logan Academy during the

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4   All names of people and entities (e.g., school, businesses) are pseudonyms. To maintain

    anonymity, I used pseudonyms for references with identifiable information.

2014-2015 school year. At that time, student demographics were as follows: 65% African American, 23% Hispanic, 8% Caucasian, 2% Asian American, and 2% Hawaiian or Native American or Multi-Ethnic. Logan Academy was a school-wide Title-1 school with 100% of the students receiving free lunches.

From July 2013 through January 2017, the State Department of Education designated Logan Academy's elementary school as a "Priority School," meaning that academic achievement and growth for third-fifth graders fell within the lowest 5% of all elementary schools in the state (Midwestern State Department of Education, 2014). Following designation as a priority school, the principal and 54% of the elementary staff had either been released or reassigned by fall 2013 (Logan Academy, 2014b). There was further staff turnover prior to fall 2014 with the assignment of another new elementary principal and the promotion or removal of 52% of the instructional staff (Logan Academy, 2014a). By the 2014-2015 school year, Logan Academy's elementary student enrollment had dropped by 34%. Administration attributed this enrollment decline to the school's designation as a priority school and high staff turnovers.

As part of the school's reform efforts, Logan Academy contracted with a private consulting firm, Special Education Ventures, to oversee special education services and staff, provide professional development, and support the implementation of a school-wide multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). As shown in Figure 2.3, Logan Academy utilized a four-tier MTSS model (Logan Academy, 2014b). For Tier 1, general education teachers differentiated the universal curriculum within the general education classroom context. For Tier 2, general education teachers provided evidence-based interventions to small groups of students within the general education classroom. For students needing additional support, an interventionist provided more intensive supports to individual students or small groups at the Tier 3 level. The interventionist typically "pulled out" students from the general education classroom to receive

these Tier 3 supports. In addition, staff referred students receiving Tier 3 supports to the "Student Achievement Team," who monitored progress and determined if a special education referral was appropriate. The Student Achievement Team could consist of an administrator, academic coach, interventionist, teachers, and the school social worker (Logan Academy, 2014b). If students did not respond to Tier 3 supports within six weeks, the Student Achievement Team could refer them for a special education evaluation and if found eligible the student received Tier 4 supports.

Figure 2.3

Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Model for Logan Academy
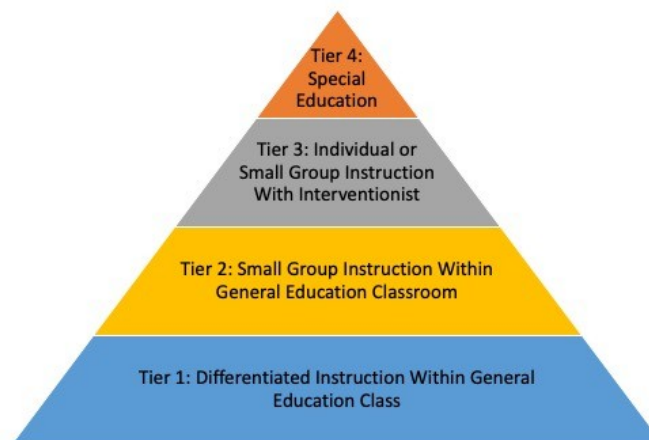
According to the school's improvement and turn around plans, staff and administration at Logan Academy identified three reasons they felt contributed to low student academic growth. First, the school personnel asserted that students did not have consistent access to academic instruction due to high levels of absenteeism. For example, 64% of students had ten or more absences during the 2013-2014 school year (Logan Academy, 2014a). Second, teachers made frequent referrals for student misbehavior or other "infractions," which led to either in or out of school suspensions. During 2012-2013, each teacher averaged 2.3 referrals for misbehavior or other "infractions" per month (Logan Academy, 2014b). Third, staff identified external challenges that affected their student population such as lower socioeconomic status or status as

an English Language Learner (Logan Academy, 2014a). To note, all these explanations appear to center the blame for low academic achievement with the students and/or their families rather than institutional factors.

To connect with caregivers, the staff at Logan Academy primarily organized formal events. These events consisted of a curriculum night, parent-teacher conferences, and workshops (e.g., literacy night, math night, dinner prior to state standardized testing). Beyond these formal events, the school provided the Power of 7 Parenting University to their parents. According to the school, this was an "online life management tool designed to help parents shift their attention to the educational needs of their children" (Logan Academy, 2014b, p. 28). In addition, the school employed a Home School Liaison who conducted parent workshops, provided transportation for homeless students, and led staff professional development highlighting the unique needs of homeless students. Logan Academy also worked with outside agencies to monitor and communicate with caregivers about chronic student absenteeism. Lastly, if students were eligible to receive special education services, caregivers were invited to participate in any meetings related to the provision of these services (e.g., Individualized Education Plan meetings).

Participants

I purposefully selected a school that had adopted a MTSS model as these models have the potential to encompass features that combat the longstanding equity issues present within the education of striving students (Artiles et al., 2010). For example, striving students have access to high quality universal instruction through Tier 1 (i.e., general education context) as well as individualized academic and behavioral supports in other tiers (Berkeley et al., 2020). Importantly, the MTSS model shifts the focus away from a physical location of where specialized educational supports are provided to how these types of supports are provided

school-wide to all students who need them (Sailor, 2017). Thus, administrators and teachers involved in implementing MTSS models may be more likely to consciously shift their mindsets and practices to revised definitions of ability and acknowledge that multiple factors shape learning (e.g., contextual, cultural, individual, and semiotic).

My focal teacher, Liz, self-selected to participate in the study. I met Liz shortly after she began teaching at Logan Academy in the fall 2014. Liz is a native English-speaking, European American woman in her late twenties. She received her provisional teaching certificate in special education with an endorsement in cognitive impairment in spring 2012. Following graduation, she taught on the East Coast at an urban elementary school as a special education teacher. Upon returning to this Midwestern state in 2014, Liz briefly taught at a charter school located in the metropolitan center. In August 2014, Logan Academy and Special Education Ventures hired Liz as a kindergarten-second grade resource room teacher. During my time with Liz, she shared that both she and her spouse were gainfully employed and lived in a middle-class, rural town that was located approximately 60 miles away from Logan Academy.

During the 2014-2015 school year, Liz supported 11 special education students with varying eligibilities (e.g., speech and language impairment, specific learning disabilities). The demographics of these students were as follows: 8 African American students, 1 Hispanic student, 1 Multiracial student, and 1 Caucasian student. None of the students spoke languages other than English. Liz also expressed that many of her students most likely lived in lower socio-economic households with limited resources, and the students' caregivers had limited educational backgrounds. Liz shared her perception that some of her students might have few books at home, and the students might talk with caregivers about some school topics. I did not collect individual student demographic data beyond race since the study focused on Liz's knowledge and teaching practices.

For this study, Liz selected to focus on teaching her striving second grade students, whom I call Dante, Elijah, and Travis. Administration had assigned these three male second grade students to the same general education classroom. During interviews, Liz shared that these students received three to five hours per week of resource room support from her. Liz routinely *pulled-out* her students from their general education classroom for 50 minutes, one day per week for small group reading instruction. Liz provided *push-in* support for the students within their general education classroom for the remainder of their service time. Liz used this service model since she felt it was least restrictive and provided more time for her students to be in the general education classroom. According to Liz, examples of current IEP goals for the students included the following: (a) produce each letter sound in a simple one-syllable word, (b) blend single-syllable words, (c) improve receptive and expressive language skills by answering wh- questions in complete sentences.

Data Collection

I collected data from November 2014-March 2015 to learn how Liz (re)constructed her knowledge about her striving students' family literacy practices and enacted literacy teaching practices around this (re)constructed knowledge (Peltier, 2015). The multiple data sources I collected support triangulation of the data and increased the study's construct validity (Yin, 2014). In Table 2.1, I outline the primary, secondary, and tertiary data sources that I triangulated.

During November and December 2014, I conducted one classroom-based observation and two semi-structured interviews. Liz also completed a survey about her perceptions of her striving students. During January and February 2015, I reviewed Liz's data with my co-researcher, Dr. Patricia A. Edwards, for the broader study (Edwards & Peltier, 2015). While reviewing the data, I did not connect with Liz so that she was free to engage in her day-to-day teaching as she preferred. When I reconnected with Liz in March 2015, I conducted two

additional interviews and two observations. Liz also completed an online situational judgment test. I now describe each data source in greater detail.

Table 2.1

Data Sources

Category	Data Source
Primary Sources	4 Semi-structured Interviews
	3 Classroom Observations
	Demographics and Perceptions Questionnaire
	Situational Judgment Test
Secondary Sources	Fieldnotes From Interviews and Observations
	Document Analysis for Items Connected With Interviews or Observations
	Informal Communication With Liz
Tertiary Sources	Document Analysis for Items Connected With School, District, or State Department of Education

Semi-structured Interviews

I conducted three interviews lasting between 50 and 60 minutes, while the fourth interview lasted approximately 20 minutes. I video recorded and transcribed each interview in its entirety to support analysis and interpretation across multiple data sources. During the first semi-structured interview (see Appendix A), Liz discussed her teaching background, the literacy instructional practices she typically enacted with her striving students, and her current level of knowledge about culturally relevant teaching and the incorporation of students' family literacies.

For the second interview (see Appendix B), I clarified Liz's knowledge of constructs related to the study (e.g., struggling reader, literacy practices, and culturally relevant teaching). I

included these questions as a way to member-check my interpretation of Liz's responses from the first interview and the first classroom-based observation. We also discussed the types of literacy practices that striving students enacted within their school, home, and community contexts.

In the third interview (see Appendix C), Liz and I discussed the teaching practices she used to teach the general education curricula and the students' IEP goals during the second observation. Through my questioning, I sought to learn how Liz used her knowledge and teaching practices to draw upon students' family literacies. During the final interview (see Appendix D), I clarified my interpretations of the teaching practices and knowledge that I observed Liz enact or draw upon during the third observation. I also sought to learn how Liz viewed the design of the lesson tasks and the degree that these contributed to student learning.

Classroom-based Observations

I conducted three classroom-based observations that lasted between 30 minutes and 1 hour. Each observation occurred during a time Liz identified that she was teaching literacy (e.g., reading, writing, spelling, phonics). Since Liz predominantly provided services in the second-grade general education classroom, I conducted two of my observations in this context. The other observation occurred when Liz pulled the second grade students out to her resource room for small group reading instruction. I again video recorded and transcribed each observation to support analysis and interpretation

Fieldnotes

As previously mentioned, I took fieldnotes when I conducted the semi-structured interviews and classroom-based observations. During the interviews, I jotted down my noticings pertaining to Liz's descriptions of students' home contexts, family and other out-of-school literacy practices, and school-based literacy learning. My fieldnotes of the classroom-based

41

observations focused on the specific teaching practices and talk that Liz enacted during her instruction and interactions with the students. I typically reviewed these fieldnotes after I completed the interview or observation, and I crafted analytic memos conveying any impressions or thoughts that arose during this rereading (Emerson et al., 2011).

Demographics and Perceptions Questionnaire

Liz completed a questionnaire addressing her professional teaching experience and perceptions of current students (See Appendix E). Dr. Edwards and I designed the questionnaire to collect the following information about Liz: (a) demographic information, (b) perceptions about students and their families, and (c) beliefs about her ability to teach students, especially striving students. The demographic questions gathered generic information (e.g., age, language preferences, ethnicity) as well as information about professional experience, teaching credentials, and demographics of current caseload students. Questions addressing perceptions of students and families focused on demographic information such as living arrangements, household income, and educational experiences. The last section asked Liz to use a 5-point Likert scale to rank how confident she was to teach diverse students, particularly if she felt they possessed the necessary knowledge and teaching practices to teach diverse students. Liz completed the questionnaire online using the computer program Qualtrics.

Dr. Edwards and I designed the survey for use across multiple study sites. For this reason, we incorporated language that was universal rather than regionally based. For example, the descriptors of race and ethnicity came from the United States Census. We also used the term *parent* throughout the survey rather than caregiver, since many of the research sites tended to refer to the caregivers of students as parents on their school websites. Lastly, we used similar descriptors for how teacher participants described themselves and their students' caregivers. For

example, we used the same descriptors for the highest level of education knowing that the option of a High School/ GED or some college would not be applicable to the teacher participants.

Situational Judgment Test

Edwards and colleagues (2014) designed a situational judgment test to measure teachers' degree of knowledge about culturally relevant teaching principles. Practicing teachers read fictitious situations they could encounter as elementary educators. For each situation, teachers select from four options the choice that most resembles how they might respond. Responses are scored according to how closely they reflect the principles of culturally relevant teaching. I have included select examples of the test questions in Appendix F.

Informal Communication

Over the course of the study, Liz and I exchanged approximately 20 informal email communications. These emails predominantly addressed the logistics of the research study. Seven of the exchanges involved Liz's role at Logan Academy, or clarification about something I had observed or Liz had mentioned during an interview.

Document Analysis

The final data source was various documents from Liz's classroom, the 2nd grade general education classroom, Logan Academy, and the community in which the school was situated. In particular, I photographed literacy artifacts present within the classroom context (e.g., anchor charts, literacy center charts), examples of student work, and artifacts referenced during the interviews. I obtained documents describing Logan Academy's administration protocols, school improvement plans, turnaround plans, and other educational policies (e.g., parent handbook, truancy policy, special education referral process). These documents were publicly available on the school's website. Lastly, I located publicly available data about the community and the

school from the State Department of Education. I also retrieved the State Department of Education's policies pertaining to priority schools.

Data Analysis

My analytic methods consisted of five coding phases with each phase building upon the previous. Prior to analyzing the data, I removed all data (i.e., verbal comments or descriptions of actions) for the student who did not provide assent for the study. As Glesne (2011) reminded qualitative researchers, "Social interaction does not occur in neat, isolated units" (p. 192). Thus, I employed *simultaneous* coding (Saldaña, 2016) across all five phases of coding. Simultaneous coding permits two or more codes to be applied to a single unit of data.

Following Anfara and colleagues (2002) recommendations for how qualitative researchers might improve the rigor of their analysis, I provide an overview of my coding process in Figure 2.4. This overview provides a consolidated picture of how my coding phases unfolded during analysis. During each phase of analysis, I applied constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), comparing all codes within each phase and across phases. I now turn to explaining the five phases of my analysis.

Figure 2.4

Overview of Coding Process
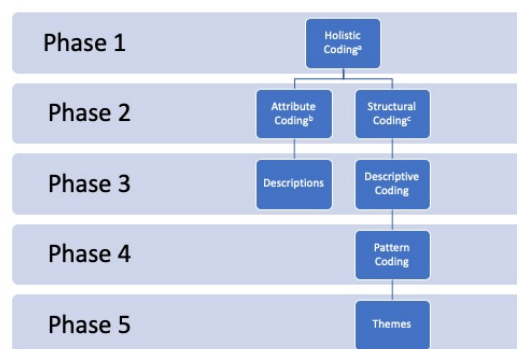
Note. [a] All primary and secondary data sources were included in this phase of coding. [b] Data describing the study's context and/or participants were coded with attribute codes. [c] Data addressing professional knowledge and/ or teaching practices were coded with structural codes.

Phase 1

The first phase was to apply *holistic* codes (Saldaña, 2016) to all primary and secondary data at the paragraph level (see Table 2.2). Holistic codes are a preparatory approach to detailed coding, supporting the categorization of the data. These codes arose from the constructs in my research questions or related to information necessary to describe the study's context and participants.

Table 2.2

Phase 1: Holistic Codes

Holistic Code	Example
Context or Participants D: Descriptive information about study's context or participants.	We kinda have an RTI (Response to Intervention) model at our school.
Professional Knowledge or Teaching Practices D: Relating to the understanding or the professional work of teaching	Ok so those words you have to sound out. Those are your spelling words. (Liz supports students as they complete their spelling assignment)

Note. D = Definition

Phase 2

The second phase of analysis was to apply *attribute* or *structural* codes (Miles et al., 2020; Saldaña, 2016). I applied both types of codes at the paragraph level for documents or speaker turn level for transcripts. As shown in Figure 2.3, I used attribute coding for each datum that was previously coded with the holistic code of *context or participants*. The attribute codes, *context description* and *participant demographics*, emerged from my readings of the data. As Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020) noted, attribute coding is most appropriate for gleaning basic descriptive information of a study (e.g., study's context, participant characteristics). As

indicated in Table 2.3, I developed attribute codes relating to the context (i.e., school and caregivers) and the participants (i.e., Liz and her striving students).

Table 2.3

Phase 2: Attribute Codes

Attribute Code	Attribute Subcode	Example
Context Description D: Descriptive information about study's context	School D: Descriptive information about the school, staff, or student body (e.g., curricular materials, professional development, special education delivery models)	They have meetings about the curriculum and things that we are doing at the school, but I haven't really had like in-services or other things that go above and beyond the things we could be doing to try and improve that.
	Caregivers D: Descriptive information about caregivers of students	We are not a bussing district. Parents do mostly pick up. Then most of them stay outside and call in.
Participant Demographics D: Descriptive information about participants	Liz D: Descriptive information pertaining to Liz	From the time I was in middle school, I had always wanted to work with autism or other special needs.
	Striving Students D: Descriptive information pertaining to Liz's striving students	They are in second grade and they both have IEPs.

Note. D = Definition

Also in Phase 2, I employed structural coding (Saldaña, 2016) for all data that were previously coded with the holistic code of *professional knowledge or teaching practices*. According to Saldaña (2016), structural coding can be used to segment data that relates to the research question from the larger corpus of data. Following the partitioning of the data, more

detailed coding approaches can be employed. The structural codes I applied are listed in Table 2.4 and were based on my research questions.

Table 2.4

Phase 2: Structural Codes

Structural Code	Example
Professional Knowledge for Teaching Literacy D: Understandings of teaching literacy that are situated within contexts and social interactions (Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008; Kelly, 2006; Shulman, 1987)	But for kids who don't read, those words are just meaningless words and then until those words have meaning to them which is what I was trying to give them.
Literacy Teaching Practices D: Professional work devoted to planning, enacting, and reflecting on literacy instruction (Windschitl & Calabrese Barton, 2016)	I'm going to read and then I'm going to let you guys choose which cool facts you want to include in our graphic organizer.

Phase 3

During Phase 3, I continued my two-pronged analytic approach. First, I read and reread all data that had been coded with *attribute* codes in Phase 2. Then, working with one data source at a time, I wrote descriptions of the data that had been coded with each *attribute* code. Lastly, I read and reread the descriptions for each code, across the data sources. I created a final description for each code that captured the information across the data sources. I did not engage in further analysis of these data since the purpose of the attribute coding was to summarize information essential to understanding the study's context and participants.

As part of Phase 3, I engaged in further analysis of the data that had been coded with *structural* codes during Phase 2. For this more detailed analysis, I used *descriptive* coding (Saldaña, 2016). Descriptive coding summarizes the basic topic of a passage of data, not the

content of it. I used my tertiary data sources during this phase to assist with triangulation of the

data and the development of descriptive codes. Due to the number of descriptive codes, I present

my descriptive coding along with examples from the data in Appendix G.

Notably, some descriptive codes also have descriptive subcodes. When coding during this

phase of analysis, I initially applied the descriptive code. If there was a descriptive subcode

associated with the descriptive code, I then considered if the descriptive subcode also applied to

the datum. If the descriptive subcode did apply, I additionally coded the datum with this

descriptive subcode. For example, if I initially coded the datum as *knowledge of learners'*

school-based abilities, I then considered if the descriptive subcode of *knowledge of school-based*

literacies also applied. There were occasions when this descriptive subcode was not applicable

and thus, I did not use it.

Phase 4

Phase 4 analysis focused on the data coded with descriptive codes during Phase 3. I

clustered similar descriptive codes together to create *pattern* codes (Miles et al., 2020; Saldaña,

2016). To do this, I read and reread my coded data, looking for patterns and commonalities

across the descriptive codes. After identifying emerging patterns in my coding, I related these

patterns to educational theories and research, particularly about high-leverage teaching practices

(Ball et al., 2009; Ball & Forzani, 2009), core-teaching practices (Grossman et al., 2009), and

teacher knowledge (Russ et al., 2016; Shulman, 1986, 1987). Connecting coding patterns to

contemporary educational scholarship helped me to refine my coding scheme. For example, I

refined my pattern codes to distinguish between the phases of planning, enacting, and reflecting

upon teaching practices. I present my pattern codes with explicit connections to the descriptive

codes from which they emerged in Appendix G.

Phase 5

When reading and rereading the data during Phase 5, I noted particular codes that appeared more frequently than others. For example, *knowledge of learners* and *knowledge of self* were more prominent than other pattern codes related to *professional knowledge for teaching literacy*. These observations pointed me to the three themes that I address below.

Role of the Researcher

While conducting the study, I assumed the role of an *observer as participant* (Glesne, 2011), meaning that I primarily observed Liz's experiences without actively engaging her or her students. Even though my preference was to maintain this type of role, there were instances when Liz initiated my engagement, either through making eye contact, or verbally requesting feedback about how the lesson was proceeding. Due to the nature of these interactions, I surmised that my insider status as a former special education teacher may have created a propensity for Liz to seek my evaluation of her teaching. Nevertheless, I have attempted to represent Liz's knowledge and teaching practices through her own words and actions, always interrogating my interpretations of her conceptualization of her striving students' family literacy practices and teaching practices.

<div align="center">

Findings

</div>

The purpose of this study was to determine how one novice special education teacher (re)constructed her knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices and enacted teaching practices around these (re)constructed understandings. The following three themes emerged from data analysis: (a) recognizing areas for professional growth, (b) broadening knowledge about striving students, and (c) exploring additional literacy teaching practices. I discuss each theme, providing detailed examples and analysis. To note, I provide the "ideal text" version of Liz and her striving students' communication (Gee, 1991), stripped of all verbal fillers

and repetitions. I provide this type of text in an effort to clearly present the intended messages of Liz and her students.

Recognizing Areas for Professional Growth

Liz identified as a teacher who wanted to grow professionally. Across the interviews, she emphasized improving how she (re)constructed her understandings of differentiating her teaching to better support her striving students. Liz shared in the first interview,

I have a student, one of my first-grade students. We're just seeing some things that I am just at a loss actually and I'm trying to figure out ways to help him with just very basic stuff. He will be—it is hot and cold. He will be on it one day and the next day everything that he was on the previous day is all gone. I've just been wracking my brain to figure out what works and what would help him.

In this case, Liz recognized that she was unable to meet the needs of this particular student with her current knowledge of teaching. Liz needed to extend what she currently understood about teaching striving students to support this student's learning.

During the second interview, Liz further explained her views around growing as a teacher. She expressed,

I am always trying to figure out if something is not working for a kid, what can I do? I am always racking my brain. I am always talking to other professionals or looking stuff up online... I am always because what might have worked for me in the past, it's not gonna work for me in the future. I am open to trying anything and I try to be optimistic about things. I'm always trying to ever learn. It is always a learning experience. I always feel like I want to get as much information as I can so that I can help these kids to the best of my abilities. So stuff like this that we are doing, I am really happy to be included

in this study that you are doing because I am always looking for ways to improve myself

as a professional.

Liz's comments indicate that she viewed her striving students as individuals who might need

different approaches for teaching and learning. Drawing from Liz's own words, teaching

practices that she had used with other students might not necessarily work for her current

students. Thus, Liz felt that she needed to "figure out" or (re)construct knowledge of how to best

support these different approaches—language acknowledging an area for professional growth.

When speaking about her desire to develop her understandings of teaching striving

students, Liz's language seems to indicate that she not only recognized areas of professional

growth, but she also actively sought out resources that might support her development. For

example, in the previous quote Liz indicated that she used information from online sources or

relied on her knowledgeable colleagues. Towards the end of the quote, Liz mentioned her

perspective that participating in this particular research study was an avenue for professional

growth. When asked to further explain her views about the intersection between participating in

the study and her process of (re)constructing knowledge of teaching striving students, Liz

expressed,

> There were some things that we talked about that made me really think about and really
>
> made me.. like we talked about this and I would like to next time I am working with my
>
> kids, I would like to try that. Like the example that we talked about of different language
>
> that we use or a different dialect that we use that might be different than what these
>
> students are learning in their homes.

Beginning with the second interview, Liz articulated that she was ruminating about

conversations related to the study and how she might use these to transform her teaching, namely

her understandings of students' abilities and literacy practices, and then considering how she might connect these understandings to her school-based literacy instruction.

Deepening Knowledge of Striving Students

At the beginning of the study, Liz shared her conceptualization of literacy and how this intersected with her knowledge of her striving students. Liz thought, "Literacy or being literate is being able to read or write" and that individuals developed specific skills in a set progression. Liz outlined the acquisition of literacy skills in the following way:

> First it begins with the sounds. So do they (striving students) know all the sounds of all
>
> the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make? Do they know all of them? Are
>
> they able to identify the letters to begin with? And then once you get past that if they
>
> (striving students) are struggling with blending the sounds. So they might know the
>
> sounds in isolation, next would be blending them together. So understanding that the "th"
>
> says /th/ or the "sh" says /sh/. Those kinds of foundation skills that they need in order to
>
> build on their reading abilities.

As Liz explained, this discrete skillset is "the basic, the groundwork that you need in order to even start to read or write." This conceptualization appears to emphasize a skills-based approach to literacy instruction (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004).

Liz typically described her 2nd grade striving students' abilities and literacy practices in relation to her conceptualization of literacy. Liz seemed to have deep knowledge of her students' school-based literacy practices, articulating the skills her students were presently striving to learn. For example, she perceived her students as "non-readers" since their IEP goals focused on the foundational skills of letter:sound correspondence and blending single syllable words. Since the students focused on decoding, Liz believed that they may also need her support to figure out the characters, setting, and plot of a story. Liz knew that her students were very literal in their

writing. Liz shared that having her striving students copy definitions was not as meaningful as if she discussed the words with them and asked them questions. Liz explained, "Those words are just meaningless words until those words have meaning to them, which is what I was trying to give them." From Liz's perspective, talking with her students supported them to develop meaningful understandings of the vocabulary words.

Liz also appeared to draw on her knowledge of her students to plan and enact accommodations for her literacy instruction. For instance, Liz explained how she used her knowledge of the students to plan accommodations for a shared reading lesson about king penguins.

> I highlighted the section to make it visually easier to follow along. Because without the extra support from me, they (striving students) might not be able to do it...And I had pre-highlighted the different sections so that when we were going to the different sections then they (striving students) would realize oh ok this is the next section because it is highlighted.

Liz hoped that by having the opportunity to practice using this accommodation that the students would then be able to use the same highlighting strategy in their general education classrooms when she was not available to support them.

Pertaining to her striving students' family literacy practices, Liz initially articulated her knowledge as a conjecture or perception. For example, Liz shared her perception that "most of the students are not receiving the same kind of literacy experiences at home that they are receiving at school." Liz further explained,

> I would say that the majority of where their information is coming from is a broader, less specific way of them learning. I mean, you learn everyday on a daily basis from the

things that you see and do, so I am not saying that there is not learning going on. I'm just

saying that the most beneficial learning is not going on.

To be clear, Liz perceived that literacy experiences might vary across contexts (e.g., home,

school), but she was unsure of actual family literacy practices or experiences. Importantly, Liz

did not initially acknowledge that striving students could use literacy practices across contexts

and that she could craft literacy instruction incorporating students' family literacy practices.

Rather, she positioned school-based literacy practices as literacy practices that students needed to

learn.

Towards the conclusion of the study, Liz's knowledge of her striving students' family

literacy practices seemed to broaden. In the later interviews and observations, Liz's language

shifted to describing interactions with students during which she learned about their family

literacy practices. An example from the third observation was Liz describing that while reading a

variation of *Little Red Riding Hood*, one of her students shared that he knew it because "his sister

read it to him." From the interview data, Liz recounted two instances when students shared how

a school-based literacy practice confused them since they did or said things differently with their

families. Together, Liz's description of these interactions revealed that she was (re)constructing

understandings of striving students' family literacy practices around lived experiences with her

students rather than her perceptions of what those practices might be.

Exploring Literacy Teaching Practices

Even though Liz predominantly constructed her understandings of literacy teaching

around a skills-based approach, Liz expressed early in the study that she thought that literacy

experiences might vary between the school and home contexts. During the first interview, Liz

described how she noticed that there were instances when her striving students were confused by

a school-based literacy practice. She attributed the students' confusion to experiencing conflicting ways of saying or doing literacy. As Liz explained,

> So, there are conflicting ways of saying things or doing things. And when they (literacy practices) are done at home and then they (striving students) come here and they (literacy practices) are done a little differently that confuses the students sometimes.

At this point in the study, Liz shared that within her literacy teaching she did not explicitly acknowledge when students experienced these differences and that oftentimes she did not realize these differences until after the completion of the lesson.

Recall that Liz viewed this research study as a place for professional growth. In particular, I shared Liz's reflection that she continued to ponder aspects of the first interview conversation and how she might adapt her teaching practices. During the second interview, Liz recounted an instructional episode when she enacted this teaching practice.

> We were working on the letter "u." And one of the words, one of the little pictures that went along with it, was a picture of underwear. And when I said the word underwear to her, she looked at me and said "you mean drawers right?" And that right there was the perfect example. I was like, "Yes." I was like, "Exactly. You might call them drawers and we might call them underwear. People call them different things." That was a perfect example right there, so she understands what I am talking about, but she is just using a different term or a different word but it means the same thing. But just letting the kids know, it's not always this way or that it is not the only word we can use. Sometimes, they are called this, or sometimes we can do this.

Liz linked her reflection to a specific change in her literacy teaching practices—explicitly acknowledging the differences students experienced between their literacy practices and school-based literacy practices.

Analysis of the second and third observations indicated additional ways that Liz broadened her literacy teaching practices. During these later observations, Liz probed and/or revoiced students' connections between the text and their out-of-school lived experiences. For instance, Liz asked the students to share about their experiences seeing a goose, and losing something important, topics that related to the interactive-read aloud about a goose losing its leg. These connecting teaching practices contrasted with the first observation when Liz did not probe for students' connections with the text, but asked for the students to name letters and their corresponding letter sounds.

Interestingly, Liz described the intersection between her additional teaching practices and her broadened knowledge of the striving students. She shared during an observation how recently she had engaged her striving students in connecting variations of fables with the well-known version during a reading assessment. Liz explained what she learned about one of her students, Elijah, from this experience and how she planned to use this to inform her future teaching.

> He (Elijah) said that he knew the Little Red Riding Hood one. And his sister read it to
> him and stuff. There was that really big connection. So now that I know that with him
> when I am working on him with reading stuff. If I am reading (to) him about something I
> can ask him questions...With him I know that I can make the connection.

Liz related developing deeper knowledge of her striving students, especially their literacy experiences and practices, with her ability to support students to make connections with future texts.

Discussion

In this study, I examined how one novice special education teacher integrated a skills-based and social practice approach to literacy instruction through (re)constructing her understandings about her striving students' family literacy practices and enacting literacy

teaching practices around her (re)constructed understandings. Findings from this study revealed that Liz approached teaching with a mindset that she could continue to grow professionally and that participation in this study was an opportunity to foster this growth (Snow et al., 2005). Findings also provided evidence that Liz deepened her knowledge of her students' out of school lives and literacy practices (Ball et al., 2008; Shulman, 1987). Liz enacted literacy practices that reflected both skills-based and social practices approaches (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004; Street, 2013).

I look across these three findings to make sense of how Liz's approach to professional growth intersected with how she (re)constructed knowledge about her striving students' family literacy practices and enacted literacy teaching practices around this (re)constructed knowledge. In what follows, I discuss two main points. First, teachers can develop knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices from conversations with striving students. Second, it seems reasonable that a teacher's knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices intersects with their abilities to enact teaching practices that draw on both skills-based and social practices approaches to literacy instruction.

Developing Knowledge of Striving Students' Family Literacy Practices

There is a long-established emphasis for teachers to know their students (Carter & Darling-Hammond, 2016; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Shulman, 1987). In my application of Shulman's (1987) model of teacher knowledge, I theorized that knowledge of learners could include knowing their particular literacy skills and strategies, informal and formal instructional experiences, and literacy practices. Previous research suggests that teachers can (re)construct knowledge about students' family literacy practices through varied approaches such as conversations, observations, and interactions with families (e.g., Cremin et al., 2012; DaSilva Iddings, 2009; Reyes et al., 2016). Findings from this study contribute to the research,

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specifically special education teachers can have conversations with students or families to deepen their knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices. In this study, Liz learned about family literacy practices from conversations with the students themselves. This complements Hamel's (2003) research where the teacher participants used conversations during literature discussions, guided reading lessons, and read-alouds to learn about students' family literacy practices.

I suggest that this finding also has implications for researchers who examine how teachers can use home visits or observations to learn about family literacy practices (e.g., Cremin et al., 2012; Kamler & Comber, 2005). In these reviewed studies, teacher participants engaged caregivers in conversation about family literacy practices while conducting home visits or observations. I wonder, what additional knowledge might the teachers (re)construct if they also conversed with students during these visits? I propose that if teachers engage students in conversations they might co-identify specific ways that they can bridge the students' practices with school-based literacy skill and strategy instruction. These conversations could then be carried into the classroom contexts as the teacher and students continue the work of bridging family literacy practices with formal literacy instruction.

In discussing the approaches for how teachers might (re)construct their knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices, we need to also look beyond the teachers' actions for "how to collect" information. Informed by previous research (e.g., Comber & Kamler, 2004; Dunsmore et al., 2013; Edwards & Peltier, 2016; Galindo, 2000), I argue that special education teachers may benefit from explicit support addressing how to deepen their knowledge of striving students' family literacy practices and then use this (re)constructed knowledge to inform literacy teaching practices. Previous research found that participating in formal professional learning communities or researcher-directed professional development supported teachers to develop

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knowledge of their students' family literacy practices and then intentionally alter their literacy teaching practices (Comber & Kamler, 2004; Cremin et al., 2012; Dunsmore et al., 2013).

I propose that informal professional learning communities could also be spaces to extend the formalized supports provided by professional development opportunities. Liz identified her participation in this research study and her informal interactions with me as spaces where she could (re)construct knowledge about her striving students' literacy practices. Thus, I encourage scholars and educational stakeholders to design professional learning communities to also include ways that capitalize on informal interactions. Incorporation of these informal interactions into formalized professional development may support sustained engagement in (re)constructing teacher knowledge and linking this knowledge to meaningful changes in literacy teaching practices.

Blending Skills-Based and Social Practices Approaches

Teachers draw on constructed knowledge to enact teaching practices (Lampert, 2010). Findings from this study provide evidence supporting the hypothesis that special education teachers who have knowledge of their striving students' family literacy practices are able to enact literacy teaching practices that draw in these family literacy practices. In the beginning of the study Liz indicated that she did not know what her striving students did around literacy with their families. At that time, she enacted teaching practices that predominantly drew on skills-based approaches to literacy (Klingner et al., 2016; Street, 1995). Liz's enactment of literacy practices from a skills-based approach is not surprising given the consensus of special education research that striving students benefit from explicit skills-based instruction (Edmonds et al., 2009; Weiser & Mathes, 2011).

Over the course of the study, Liz reported on how she perceived her knowledge of her striving students and ways of approaching literacy instruction were changing. Recall the example

from the third observation when Liz highlighted how she had learned about Elijah's reading of *Little Red Riding Hood* with his sister and how she intended to use that knowledge to shape future literacy instruction. While Liz does not specify how this knowledge will shape her instruction, Liz may support Elijah to use his literacy practices and experiences to make connections with her literacy teaching. This approach would be similar to how Liz described using her deepened knowledge of students to inform her literacy teaching (e.g., explicitly discussing the differences in vocabulary and oral language). I suggest that Liz's exploration and use of different teaching practices reflect an expanded conceptualization of how to approach literacy instruction for her striving students. This expanded conceptualization was one that merged skills-based and social practices approaches (Bloome et al., 2018; Purcell-Gates et al., 2004; Street, 2013).

When we use Purcell-Gates and colleagues' (2004) model for print literacy development as a framework for how to conceptualize special education instruction, we see that it is possible to bring together skills-based and social practice approaches to literacy instruction. Based upon the findings of this study, I argue that special education teachers who develop deep knowledge of their striving students' family literacy practices can enact teaching practices that incorporate striving students' family literacy practices alongside explicit literacy skills and strategy instruction. When striving students can draw on their family literacy practices, they are able to use their full repertoires of literacy practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003) to make-meaning of school-based texts rather than being restricted to certain types of literacy practices (e.g., school-based literacies).

Conclusions and Implications

The aim of the present research was to examine how one novice special education teacher drew on skills-based and social practice approaches to literacy instruction through

(re)constructing her literacy professional knowledge and literacy teaching practices about her striving students' family literacy practices. By drawing on sociocultural and social-constructivist theoretical perspectives, this study's findings revealed how one novice special education teacher was receptive to and engaged in deepening her knowledge of her striving students and exploring different literacy teaching practices. At the conclusion of the study, Liz enacted teaching practices that drew on both skills-based and social practices approaches when enacting literacy instruction for her striving students (Bloome & Green, 2015; Purcell-Gates et al., 2004). These findings may help novice special education teachers and scholars to envision expanded conceptualizations of literacy instruction—a conceptualization that includes both approaches to teaching literacy.

These findings raise intriguing questions regarding the nature and extent that teachers' literacy professional knowledge intersects with their literacy teaching practices. I suggest that through additional research the field of special education might better understand how literacy professional knowledge and teaching practices intersect, particularly as they relate to students' family literacy practices. Enriched understandings of the intersection between teacher knowledge and teaching practices can contribute to productive dialogue about how, why, and under what conditions might special education teachers use a skills-based, a social practices, or a blended approach (i.e., both skills-based and social practices) to literacy instruction.

Additional questions linger regarding what affordances continued research of family literacy practices have for the field of special education. How might understanding the ways that striving students engage in family literacy practices to learn skills and strategies for decoding and making-meaning of texts contribute to shifting the field away from seeing these approaches as dichotomies? Could the field of family literacy provide a path for critical examination of literacy teaching that blends skills-based and social practice approaches? What must special education

teachers understand about their striving students' family literacy practices in order to draw these

in during classroom-based instruction? Collectively, these questions shift how special education

teachers view their striving students. Rather than focusing on what the students need to support

their literacy development, teachers may more closely consider what assets striving students

bring with them to literacy learning. A shift that capitalizes on the differences striving students

bring to our nation's classrooms in order to promote the educational success of all students.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Semi-structured Interview 1

Overview

This interview protocol will be used during stage 1 of our study. This interview will consist of one 60 minute semi-structured interview. After analyzing the surveys, we will develop open-ended interview questions and prompts to use in our semi-structured interviews. During the semi-structured interviews, teachers will answer questions about knowledge of home language and literacy experiences as they pertain to the students in their class.

Directions (read to interviewee)

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about your students' learning. Do I have your permission to video-record this interview?

Thank you. Do you have any questions before we begin?

The purpose of this interview is to explore your thinking about how your students are learning reading, writing and speaking in your classroom as well as the type of literacy learning that happens in the student's homes. I will begin first by asking you some questions about your background and interests and then I will ask you more specific questions about what you think your students are learning about literacy.

Interview Prompts

[Interviews will follow a semi-scripted approach. Our ongoing data collection and analysis will inform the development of the interview protocols. Specifically, the data collected during the observations, survey and situational judgment test will inform the selection and use of these potential prompts. We will use some of the questions below as potential prompts to being the interview and subsequent questions will build upon the teacher's responses.]

Background & Knowledge of Literacy Instruction

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself—for example, where you are from and how you came to be a special education teacher?

2. I would like for you to tell me about your classroom. I am going to ask about how you teach various skills connected to literacy development. Can you start by describing how you teach reading? Writing? Speaking & Listening?

3. What do you like most about teaching a) reading, b) writing, c) speaking/ oral language skills?

4. You know that others critique our work to teach students from diverse populations. Do you critique your own teaching? Is there something about your literacy teaching that you are still thinking about/ critiquing/ wishing was different?

Knowledge of Culturally Relevant Teaching

1. What types of professional development opportunities around the topics of equity and the racial achievement gap have you participated in?

2. What are some ideas that you already knew about before you participated in this professional development?

Knowledge of Home & Community Literacy Practices

1. What has been your experience with the idea of student's home literacy experiences not being the same as the types of literacy experiences that occur in the school setting?

2. How would you describe the "fit/ continuity" between the literacy experiences in the home & those at school for students who are from mainstream students [i.e. upper & middle class families]? From non-mainstream students [i.e. working-class or lower class families, families who identify as minorities or English language learners]?

3. Can you tell me about the types of things you do to help non-mainstream students grow in their abilities to read, write & speak? Do any of these things specifically draw in/ incorporate what you know students are doing around literacy in the home?

[In addition to particular prompts, the interviewer will follow-up on initial responses and ask pressing questions using questions, such as:]

• What do you mean by...?
• How did you do...?
• Tell me more about...
• Is there anything else you'd like to add that we have yet to discuss?

APPENDIX B: Semi-structured Interview 2

Overview

This interview protocol continues with the previous protocol and builds upon responses in survey, and first observation.

Directions (read to interviewee)

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about your students' learning. Do I have your permission to video-record this interview?

Thank you. Do you have any questions before we begin?

The purpose of this interview is to explore your thinking about how your students are learning reading, writing and speaking in your classroom as well as the type of literacy learning that happens in the student's homes. I will begin first by asking you some questions about your background and interests and then I will ask you more specific questions about what you think your students are learning about literacy.

Interview Prompts

[Interviews will follow a semi-scripted approach. Our ongoing data collection and analysis will inform the development of the interview protocols. Specifically, the data collected during the observations, survey and situational judgment test will inform the selection and use of these potential prompts. We will use some of the questions below as potential prompts to being the interview and subsequent questions will build upon the teacher's responses.]

Interview 1 Follow-up Questions

1. How do you define a student as a struggling reader?

Knowledge of Culturally Relevant Teaching

1. What does the term "racial achievement gap" mean to you?

2. What does culturally relevant teaching mean to you? Where/ when have you encountered this term?

3. What does "diverse students or student body" mean to you? What does mainstream learners mean to you?

Knowledge of Home & Community Literacy Practices

1. How do you define literacy practices?

2. If you were to observe a struggling reader engaging in literacy within the home and within the school, would you observe similar or different types of things?

Follow-up for Demographics and Perceptions Survey

1. In the survey, you responded to questions about the demographics of your students' families. What information did you use to assist you in answering those questions? (e.g. school records, personal conversations, perceptions, conversations with teachers).

2. You responded that you were somewhat confident that you knew and understand what was happening in student's homes. What information did you use to assist you in responding to these questions?

3. You also noted that you were somewhat confident in knowing how to connect what was going on in the home with what was happening in the school. What information did you use to assist these questions? (What has helped you to feel confident? What could improve your level of confidence?)

4. You noted a difference in your level of confidence in helping students achieve end of year expectations. You noted "quite confident" you could help all student, but only "somewhat confident" that you could help non-mainstream students. What information did you use to respond to these questions? What did you feel differently about these two groups of students?

[In addition to particular prompts, the interviewer will follow-up on initial responses and ask pressing questions using questions, such as:]

• What do you mean by...?
• How did you do...?
• Tell me more about...
• Is there anything else you'd like to add that we have yet to discuss?

APPENDIX C: Semi-structured Interview 3

Overview

This interview protocol continues with the previous protocol and builds upon responses in survey, and second observation.

Directions (read to interviewee)

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about your students' learning. Do I have your permission to video-record this interview?

Thank you. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Prompts

[Interviews will follow a semi-scripted approach. Our ongoing data collection and analysis will inform the development of the interview protocols. Specifically, the data collected during the observations, survey and situational judgment test will inform the selection and use of these potential prompts. We will use some of the questions below as potential prompts to being the interview and subsequent questions will build upon the teacher's responses.]

School Related Questions

1. Does a certain amount of content need to be covered each lesson?

2. Do you submit lesson plans? To Whom?

3. What are each of the student's current reading related IEP goals?

4. How much service time do they have? What portion is related to their reading goals?

Follow-Up Observations

1. You did a lesson on penguins. Can you share the process you used to think about and plan this lesson?

2. Where did you get the worksheet?

3. How does the lesson connect to what the students are currently learning within the General Education Classroom?

4. How does this connect to their IEP goals?

5. You ended the lesson when the students had completed the graphic organizer. What did you do with the graphic organizer?

6. Why read the document?—above reading skills.

7. Is highlighting something they do usually? If you asked the students what the purpose of highlighting was/ is, what might they say?

Knowledge of Home & Community Literacy Practices

1. As you were going through the document, some students knew some of the vocabulary (habitat, predators). Where do you think they learned this information?

2. A student also knew about other types of penguins. Where do you think he learned this information?

3. How would you describe the "fit/ continuity" between this school-related literacy experiences what students are doing in their home around literacy?

4. Can you tell me about the types of things you do to help struggling readers grow in their abilities to read, write & speak? Do any of these things specifically draw in/ incorporate what you know students are doing around literacy in the home?

Ending Comments:

[In addition to particular prompts, the interviewer will follow-up on initial responses and ask pressing questions using questions, such as:]

• What do you mean by...?
• How did you do...?
• Tell me more about...
• Is there anything else you'd like to add that we have yet to discuss?

Overview

This interview protocol continues with the previous protocol and builds upon responses in survey, and third observation.

Directions (read to interviewee)

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about your students' learning. Do I have your permission to video-record this interview?

Thank you. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Prompts

[Interviews will follow a semi-scripted approach. Our ongoing data collection and analysis will inform the development of the interview protocols. Specifically, the data collected during the observations, survey and situational judgment test will inform the selection and use of these potential prompts. We will use some of the questions below as potential prompts to being the interview and subsequent questions will build upon the teacher's responses.]

Follow-Up Observations

1. We previously talked about assessments. I noticed the DRA assessments in your classroom. Do you have receive training on the DRA?

2. For the push-in service, the students participate in the general education instruction. They have tasks to complete and you support with that task completion. How do you think the completion your support of task completion contributes to if the students are learning the content?

3. How do the students know if they are learning the content?

4. What do you think the students would say if we asked them what's the purpose of the task? Or if we asked why they were doing the task?

5. The students were working on finding definitions, writing sentences and then drawing a picture for the selected words. Which of those activities do you think helps them learn to use the definition or word in their daily language? Do you think all the tasks helps or one in particular for the students to actually use the word in a different situation?

6. What do you think from today's push-in services applied to the students' IEP goals? Did anything apply or was it more driven by the general education curriculum and what the general education teacher planned?

Ending Comments:

 [In addition to particular prompts, the interviewer will follow-up on initial responses and ask pressing questions using questions, such as:]

• What do you mean by...?
• How did you do...?
• Tell me more about...
• Is there anything else you'd like to add that we have yet to discuss?

APPENDIX E: Demographic and Perceptions Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in the Connecting Home and School Literacies in the Classroom Project. We are honored that you have invited us into your classrooms this year. We ask that you take a few minutes of your time to tell us about your professional experience, and current classroom practices. We also ask that you share with us your current knowledge of students' language and literacy practices both within the school setting and outside of the school setting.   By doing so, you will help us to better understand the data we will collect in your classroom.

The information you share will be kept confidential, and will only be used for this research project. Information identifying individuals will not be shared with anyone outside of the Connecting Home and School Literacies in the Classroom research team. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you as a result of participation. You will receive no direct benefit from participation in this study. However, you will be given an honorarium at the conclusion of this study in recognition of your contribution to this research.

You have previously indicated your voluntarily consent to participate in this research study by completing and returning the signed consent form. You will be free to cease participation at any time. If you decide not to participate or later withdraw from participation, you will not be subject to any penalty.

If this explanation leaves you with any unanswered questions, please ask and obtain answers before signing below. If you have questions later, please call Dr. Patricia A. Edwards, Teacher Education Department, 304 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824, or (517) 432-0858 or by email at edwards6@msu.edu. We thank you for your willingness to participate in this research.

By selecting the "I agree" button below I am indicating that I understand that my responses will be kept confidential and that I am free to decline to answer any of the questions that are asked in this survey.
___ I agree to continue participating
___ I wish to discontinue my participation.

Part I: Teacher Background

1. What is your gender?
   • Female
   • Male
   • Choose not to respond

2. In what year were you born?
   19_____

3. Check **all** the categories that best describe your race or ethnicity.
   • African American/ Black
   • Arab American
   • Asian
   • Caucasian/ White
   • Hispanic/ Latino(a)
   • Multiracial

- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- Other—please specify: _____
- Choose not to respond

4. Is English your first language?
- Yes
- No—If no, what is your first language? _____
- Choose not to respond

Part 2: Professional Experience

1. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Check only one.)
- Less Than High School
- High School/ GED
- Some College
- 2-Year College Degree
- 4-Year College Degree
- Masters Degree
- Doctoral Degree
- Professional Degree (JD, MD)
- Choose not to respond

2. For each education degree that you hold, please provide the following information:

Degree Level (e.g. BA, MA)	Name of Institution Attended	Year of Graduation	Major/ Concentration (e.g., English, Elementary Education)	If this included coursework for a credential/ certification please list the credential.

3. Which teaching certification do you currently have? (Check only one.)
- Provisional Certificate (Initial Teaching License)
- Professional Education Certificate (Advanced Teaching License)
- Temporary Teacher Employment Authorization (One Year non-renewable authorization issued to candidates with valid out-of-state teaching certificates)
- Other: _____
- Choose not to respond

4. Which of the following underlined endorsements do you have? (Check all that apply.)
- Special Education Consultant
- Special Education
- English as a Second Language
- Early Childhood Education

- National Board Certification
- Reading
- Reading Specialist
- Other Endorsement: _____
- None

5. About how many years have you worked as a teacher, at this location or other schools?
- Less than 1
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-6
- 7-8
- 9-10
- More than 10. Please indicate the number of years: _____

6. Think about the total number of years you have worked as a teacher at this school or other schools. About how many years have you worked at the following grade levels?

Grade	Number of Years Taught
Kindergarten	
1st Grade	
2nd Grade	
3rd Grade	
4th Grade	
5th Grade	
Special Education	
Intervention Teacher (other than special education)	

7. How long have you worked at your current location?
_____ Years

8. What is your current teaching assignment?
_____

Part 3: Setting Description

1. Think about your class for this 2014-2015 school year. How many children are in your class?
_____ students

2. How many of the children in your class belong to each of the following racial or ethnic groups?
___African American/ Black
___Arab American
___Asian

___Caucasian/ White
___Hispanic/ Latino(a)
___Multiracial
___Pacific Islander
___Other race or ethnicity

3. How many of the children in your class have a document special need?
___Number of children with Individualized Education Plans
___Number of children with 504 Plans

4. How many children in your class are English Language Learners (i.e., learning English as a second language)?
___Number of English Language Learners

Part 4: Students' Family Demographics

1. What is the typical age range of your students' parents?
___19 and under
___20 to 29 years old
___30 to 39 years old
___40 years and older
___Unknown. The majority of my students do not live with their parents (e.g., students live in foster care or with guardians).

2. What is the highest level of education that your students' parents have typically completed?
___Less Than High School
___High School/ GED
___Some College
___2-year College Degree
___4-year College Degree
___Masters Degree
___Doctoral Degree
___Professional Degree (JD, MD)
___Unknown since the majority of my students do not live with their parents (e.g., students live in foster care or with guardians).

3. What is the typical annual income level for your students' families?
___Less than $20,000
___$20,000-$29,999
___$30,000-$39,999
___$40,000-$49,999
___$50,000-$59,999
___$60,000-$69,999
___$70,000-$79,999
___$80,000-$89,999
___$90,000-$99,999
___$100,000-$109,999

___$110,000-$119,999
___More Than $120,000

4. How would you describe the type of home setting in which your students typically live?
___Homeless
___Single-Family Apartment
___Multi-Family Apartment (i.e., several families living in the same apartment)
___Single-Family Home or Condominium
___Multi-Family Home or Condominium (i.e., several families living in the same home or condominium)
___Unknown

5. How would you describe the typical family structure for your students/ families?
___In a married-couple family
___In a family with female householder and partner or boyfriend present
___In a family with a male householder and partner or girlfriend present
___In a family with female householder and no spouse, partner, or boyfriend present
___In a family with male householder and no spouse, partner, or girlfriend present
___In a group of unrelated subfamilies
___Unrelated individuals
___Unknown

Part 5: Personal Beliefs About Teaching
For the remainder of the questionnaire, you will be asked to think about all of your students and to also think about a specific subgroup of your students.

Some of the questions will ask you to think about your <u>non-mainstream students</u>. For the purpose of this survey, **non-mainstream students are students who primarily speak a language other than English, are from a lower-class or working-class family, or identify as non-Caucasian.**

For each question, please mark a single response that best represents your beliefs about **your own knowledge** of the following characteristics.

Please use the scale below to answer the following questions.
1- Not at all confident
2- A little bit confident
3- Somewhat confident
4- Quite a bit confident
5- Very confident

Questions	1	2	3	4	5
1. How confident are you in your own knowledge of <u>all</u> students' home oral language practices?					
2. How confident are you in your own knowledge of					

non-mainstream students' home oral language practices?					
3. How confident are you in your own knowledge of <u>all</u> students' home reading practices?					
4. How confident are you in your own knowledge of <u>non-mainstream</u> students' home reading practices?					
5. How confident are you in your own knowledge of <u>all</u> students' home writing practices?					
6. How confident are you in your own knowledge of <u>non-mainstream</u> students' home writing practices?					

For each question, please mark a single response that best represents your beliefs about **<u>your own knowledge of teaching</u>** the following skills.

Please use the scale below to answer the following questions.
1- Not at all confident
2- A little bit confident
3- Somewhat confident
4- Quite a bit confident
5- Very confident

Questions	1	2	3	4	5
7. How confident are you in your own knowledge of teaching oral language skills (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) to <u>all</u> students?					
8. How confident are you in your own knowledge of teaching oral language skills (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) to <u>non-mainstream</u> students?					
9. How confident are you in your own knowledge of teaching reading to <u>all</u> students?					
10. How confident are you in your own knowledge of teaching reading to <u>non-mainstream</u> students?					
11. How confident are you in your own knowledge of teaching writing to <u>all</u> students?					
12. How confident are you in your own knowledge of					

teaching writing to <u>non-mainstream</u> students?					

For each question, please mark a single response that best represents your beliefs about **your own ability to support students to achieve end-of-year grade level expectations in** the following skills.

Please use the scale below to answer the following questions.
1- Not at all confident
2- A little bit confident
3- Somewhat confident
4- Quite a bit confident
5- Very confident

Questions	1	2	3	4	5
13. How confident are you in your ability to support <u>all</u> students to achieve end-of-year grade level expectations in their oral language development?					
14. How confident are you in your ability to support to <u>non-mainstream</u> students to achieve end-of-year grade level expectations in their oral language development?					
15. How confident are you in your ability to support <u>all</u> students to achieve end-of-year grade level expectations in their reading development?					
16. How confident are you in your ability to support to <u>non-mainstream</u> students to achieve end-of-year grade level expectations in their reading development?					
17. How confident are you in your ability to support <u>all</u> students to achieve end-of-year grade level expectations in their writing development?					
18. How confident are you in your ability to support to <u>non-mainstream</u> students to achieve end-of-year grade level expectations in their writing development?					

For each question, please mark a single response that best represents your beliefs about **your own ability to connect students' home based literacy practices with school based literacy practices.**

Please use the scale below to answer the following questions.
1- Not at all confident

2- A little bit confident
3- Somewhat confident
4- Quite a bit confident
5- Very confident

Questions	1	2	3	4	5
19. How confident are you in your ability to connect the home based oral language practices with the school-based oral language practices for <u>all</u> students?					
20. How confident are you in your ability to connect the home based oral language practices with the school-based oral language practices for <u>non-mainstream</u> students?					
21. How confident are you in your ability to connect the home based reading practices with the school-based reading practices for <u>all</u> students?					
22. How confident are you in your ability to connect the home based reading practices with the school-based reading practices for <u>non-mainstream</u> students?					
23. How confident are you in your ability to connect the home based writing practices with the school-based writing practices for <u>all</u> students?					
24. How confident are you in your ability to connect the home based writing practices with the school-based writing practices for <u>non-mainstream</u> students?					

Directions

The Situational Judgment Test (SJT) is a measure that assists us to know how you might respond to a fictitious situation. Each proposed situation is one that you could potentially encounter as an educator of elementary-aged students.

You will be presented with a scenario and then a situation. Each situation has 4 response choices. Please select the <u>response choice</u> that most closely matches how you might respond to the proposed situation. Select only one response choice.

Selected Assessment Questions

<u>Scenario C</u>
The students in the district in which you teach are from low-income families and the majority of parents are not educated beyond high school. The percentage of children who receive free and reduced lunch is 95%.

<u>Situation 1</u>
Several students in your class have parents who do not have full time jobs or work at all. In the past, when you have hosted Career Day in your classroom, you have invited individuals who are lawyers, police officers, firefighters, and similar professions. However, you are aware of many stay-at-home parents who have creative and worthwhile hobbies and passions. Considering that most of your students' parents do not have the aforementioned types of jobs, what could you do to illustrate an appreciation for the varying kinds of interests and jobs that can contribute to your classroom's diverse culture?

A) Send a newsletter home welcoming parents to share their interests and experiences.
B) While talking to parents at dismissal, remind them that you desire for them to visit the class. Indicate to them that they are welcome to read a story, assist with centers, help with planning field trips, etc.
C) Offer incentives to your students for asking their parents to visit the class and share their hobbies, jobs, and interests with the students.
D) All of the above.

<u>Scenario D</u>
You are teaching fifth grade English Language Art at an elementary school. The school is comprised of various student racial/ethnic/socioeconomic backgrounds. Most of the students' parents have little proficiency in English, and they communicate primarily in their native language with their children.

<u>Situation 1</u>
During your small group reading instruction you are focusing the lesson on grammar. A student participates in the lesson, but he/she continues to speak in his/her home English language (i.e. African American English, Chinese English, Singapore English, Indian English etc.) which says

the same thing, but in a different way. In what way will you work with the student to understand the differences between the home English language and English used in school.

A) Acknowledge the student's answer. After completing the reading, complete a mini lesson using we say, they say. Create a T chart and allow the students to share how the students say similar statements at home.
B) Acknowledge the student's answer and correct them by telling them the correct way of saying the language of the text. At the conclusion of the lesson, repeat the correct way of saying the language and instruct the student to practice the correct way to say the text.
C) Make a note to yourself as the student says his/her answer during the lesson. After the reading period is over have a mini lesson with the student about grammar and have them practice saying and writing the English used in schools.

Table G.1

Professional Knowledge of Teaching Literacy Descriptive and Pattern Codes

Pattern Code	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
General Pedagogy Knowledge D: Understandings of pedagogical practices that are not specific to a content area	General Pedagogy Knowledge D: Understandings of pedagogical practices that are not specific to a content area		So I would be differentiating my teaching in order to meet their needs to the best of my ability and with the knowledge that I know and have gathered and learned about those students' cultures.
Knowledge of Educational Contexts and Systems D: Understandings of schools' and classrooms' operations and contexts	Knowledge of Educational Contexts and Systems D: Understandings of schools' and classrooms' operations and contexts		It is always about what can the teachers do differently. We are always changing what the teachers are doing. Ok, well if that is not working let's not do it. That's not doing it that's not the way we should do it. We should do it differently. What are you doing, always teacher accountability. And I never hear anything about student accountability or parent accountability.

Table G.1 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
Knowledge of Self D: Understandings of oneself as a teacher (self-concept), beliefs about self-efficacy, and personal teaching journey	Knowledge of Self D: Understandings of oneself as a teacher (self-concept), beliefs about self-efficacy, and personal teaching journey		From the time I was in middle school, I had always wanted to work with autism or other special needs.
		Present Knowledge D: Understandings of one's present level of professional knowledge of teaching	With him (Elijah) I know that I can make the connection. With Dante it is a little bit harder, but I can still do it.
		Areas of Growth D: Understandings of areas of growth for professional knowledge of teaching	I am always trying to figure out if something is not working for a kid, what can I do? I am always wracking my brain.
Knowledge of Learners D: Understandings about students, their needs, abilities and lives (Shulman, 1987)	Knowledge of Learner's School-Based Abilities D: Understandings of abilities including necessary accommodations or modifications that a student enacts in school contexts		We are having some issues with..he's (a student) started to put things in his mouth that are non food items. So we are trying to get him away from doing that.

Table G.1 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
		Knowledge of School-Based Literacies D: Understandings of school-based literacies that a student enacts	But like, even the writing, Just doing it all, it's all repetitive. They need the repetition. They always need it, they need so much repetition.
	Knowledge of Learner's Lives Beyond School Contexts D: Understandings of a student's life outside of the school context, including demographics		All of my students are coming from different families, different backgrounds. They are not all of my children are receiving the same help at home from their parents. They might not all have the same resources.
		Knowledge of Out-of-School Literacies D: Understanding of a student's out-of school literacy practices, including family literacy practices	A student of mine you were, we were working on the letter "u". And one of the words, one of the little pictures that went along with it was a picture of underwear. And when I said the word underwear to her, she she looked at me and said you mean drawers right.

Table G.1 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
Literacy Subject Matter Knowledge D: Understandings about the theories and content related to literacy instruction	Horizon Content Knowledge D: Understandings of how literacy skills, strategies, and practices intersect with more advanced literacy skills, strategies and practices		First it begins with the sounds-so do they know all the sounds of all the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make. Do they know all of them? Are they able to identify the letters to begin with. And then once you get past that if they are struggling blending the sounds. So they might know the sounds in isolation, next would be blending them together.
	Specialized Literacy Content Knowledge D: Understanding unique to teaching literacy		So if they even don't have the prior knowledge, we can build on it and then we can talk about so we don't know about them, but now that we know that we are going to learn about penguins, what do we want to know about them and then we can talk about what we learned?

Table G.1 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
Literacy Pedagogical Content Knowledge (L-PCK) D: Understandings about literacy content and teaching literacy	L-PCK Content & Curriculum D: Intersection of literacy content knowledge and knowledge about curricular materials		*All coded data came from the situational judgement test.
	L-PCK Content & Students D: Intersection of literacy content knowledge and knowledge about students		I mean the definitions I think that it is important for kids to learn how to copy stuff, learn how to look in a glossary and find a word and then write down the definition of that word. I think that those are skills that they all need to know. But for kids who don't read, those words are just meaningless words and then until those words have meaning to them which is what I was trying to give them. I was trying to give them meaning behind the words.

Pattern Code	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
	L-PCK Content & Teaching D: Use of literacy subject matter knowledge to design and enact literacy instruction		So like during that portion of the day she might be able to have a reading group or me too. I could even be involved in it or I might work on something like the reading part and Ms. O would work on the words and the sight words and another teacher would work on spelling and stuff like that...I think that we if they maybe tried to adopt something like that here that would be really cool because it would be more intensive reading program because we do have a lot of nonreaders here.

Note. D = Definition

Table G.2

Literacy Teaching Practices Descriptive and Pattern Codes

Pattern Code	Pattern Subcode	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
Planning of Literacy Teaching Practices D: Professional work devoted to planning literacy instruction (Windschitl & Calabrese Barton, 2016)		Planning Goals for Instruction D: Designing short or long term goals for student learning (e.g., IEP goals, grade level standards, lesson objectives)		So I might pull from first grade or pull a couple of objectives from first maybe.
		Planning Accommodations or Modifications D: Selecting and designing accommodations and modifications to be used during instruction		But if you noticed I highlighted before they even started. I highlighted the section to make it visually easier to follow along.

Table G.2 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Pattern Subcode	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
Enacting Literacy Teaching Practices D: Professional work devoted to enacted (i.e., observed) literacy instruction (Windschitl & Calabrese Barton, 2016)	Explicit Instruction D: Orienting, explaining, or modeling content, practices, or strategies	Orienting D: Orient students to instruction or expectations		Ok. Let's read. It is called *Alphabet Hospital*.
		Explaining D: Explaining content, practices, skills, or strategies as part of explicit instruction		Yes, their (King Penguins) main enemies are leopard seals and orcas.
			Connecting to School-Based Literacies[a] D: Connect instruction to a student's school-based literacy practices	Like how Mrs. M was talking about earlier how she wanted to go to the beach. So in her mind, she was thinking about going to the beach, right?

Table G.2 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Pattern Subcode	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
			Connecting to Out-of-School Lives[a] D: Connect instruction to a student's life outside of school, including family literacy practices	Could you imagine what that might be like? What do you think, Travis? Have you ever lost something?
		Modeling D: Modeling task in the manner that students will need to perform it		So we do a little bullet point and we say tail (Liz writes on the whiteboard while the students record what she has written on the graphic organizer.)
	Adjusting Instruction D: Adjusting instruction to support learning	Providing Accommodation or Modification D: Provide an accommodation or modification so a student can access instruction		It says King Penguin, King Penguin up there. I'm going to read this to you. (Liz believed the text was beyond the striving students' current reading abilities.)

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Table G.2 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Pattern Subcode	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
		Prompt/ Cue D: Instruction, gesture, demonstration, or touch that hints at or leads the student to the correct response, action, or answer		M-O-N-STER trucks. Mon-ster trucks. (Liz verbally stretches out a word that a student is attempting to write.)
	Eliciting Student Thinking D: Teachers poses task or questions to provoke/ create space for a student to share his/her thinking or understandings	Asking Questions D: Asking questions related to content, practices, or strategies		
			Authentic Question D: Question that has multiple possible answers or is open to many interpretations	Can you tell me one thing about recess?
			Inauthentic Question D: Question that has a limited number of possible responses	So who are their (King Penguins) enemies?

Table G.2 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Pattern Subcode	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
		Seeking Clarification D: Asking for repetition or clarification of learner's thinking		He's what? (Liz asks after she is unable to understand what a student has said.)
	Providing Feedback D: Feedback (written, verbal, or nonverbal) is given to guide learning	Evaluative Feedback D: Provide evaluation of work, assignment or response		You were so close with over, O-V-E-R.
		Revoicing Student's Comments D: Repeating directly or indirectly the language a student has offered		The girl, the girl is talking (Liz restates what Dante has provided as a response to her question.)
	Specifying or Reinforcing Productive Behavior D: Setting, monitoring, or restating expectations for behavior	Specifying Behavior Expectations D: Setting, explaining, or restating expectations for how a student should act		Let's go over our rules in the classroom.

Table G.2 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Pattern Subcode	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
			Redirecting Behavior D: Redirecting learner behavior	Travis, you need to focus on what we are doing right now. You're not paying attention
		Reinforcing Behavior D: Actions to increase or decrease expected behaviors of students		Yep. Good job Dante.
Reflecting on Teaching Practices D: Professional work devoted to reflecting, discussing, or analyzing one's own literacy instruction, planned or enacted. (Windschitl & Calabrese Barton, 2016)		Reflecting About Instructional Goals: D: Reflecting about how instructional goals were or could be determined		The student I was reading to does have a goal related to blend sounds to produce single-syllable words and he needed practice with the letter sounds so that is why we were reading a book to help with the sounds.

Table G.2 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Pattern Subcode	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
		Reflecting about Assessment of Learning D: Reflecting about how learning was or could be assessed or evaluated		I also keep data on their goals on their IEPs and that is just kept by.. a lot of it sometimes is just teacher made assessments like I might use something I find online or I just might make something up myself.
		Reflecting About Connecting Contexts D: Reflection about how instruction was or could be connected to other contexts		So now that I know that with him, when I am working on him with like reading stuff if I am reading him about something I can ask him questions.

Table G.2 (cont'd)

Pattern Code	Pattern Subcode	Descriptive Code	Descriptive Subcode	Example
		Reflecting About Adjusting Instruction D: Reflecting about how instruction was or could be adjusted		So I could either read to them which would be an accommodation you know. Or like say they might sit at their desk during that time and just work because it take them a little bit longer.

Note. D = Definition

[a]This descriptive subcode was also applied to the descriptive code of *asking questions*. The application of the descriptive subcode was not parsed out due to the limited number of instances that it was applied to the data.

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ARTICLE TWO: TEACHER-LED QUESTIONS: SITES FOR INTEGRATING FAMILY

LITERACY PRACTICES

Introduction

Through theory and research studies, educational researchers have established that talk mediates learning (Boyd, 2015; Nystrand, 2006; Vygotsky, 1962; Wertsch, 1985). Notably, Vygotsky (1978) theorized that individuals use language to mediate higher order thinking. That is, language shapes human actions, not by making the activity easier, but by altering the organization and flow of the mental function. Thus, both teacher and student talk are central to the work of teaching and learning in classrooms.

Recently, Wegerif, Mercer, and Major (2019) elaborated on the centrality of talk to classroom teaching and learning. They asserted, "The interactive process of teaching and learning relies heavily on the use of dialogue for sharing knowledge and developing understanding; the effectiveness of classroom teaching, for example, depends to a great extent on how well teachers and students use talk to communicate" (Wegerif et al., 2019, p. 1). Boyd and colleagues (2020) recognized that how well teachers and students use talk depends on the relationship they have. Effective teacher-student relationships value each individual's contributions, and all individuals are willing to talk, listen, and explore these contributions.

Applying the positions of Boyd and colleagues (2020) and Wegerif and colleagues (2019) to literacy instruction, I argue that how well teachers and students use talk during school-based literacy instruction depends in part on what teachers know about students' repertoires of literacy practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). As Bloome and Green (2015) noted, "Literacy cannot be separated from what people are doing, how they are doing it, when, where, under what conditions, and with whom they are doing it" (p. 20). That is, how teachers and students use talk

can not be separated from the literacy practices they enact during school-based literacy instruction. I argue that since teacher-student talk is integral to literacy teaching and learning, additional research on how teachers use talk to teach literacy skills and strategies while building upon students' repertoires of literacy practices is warranted.

The purpose of this article is to examine how one novice special education teacher whom I call Liz (all names are pseudonyms) used questions to teach literacy skills and strategies while also connecting to her *striving students'* repertoires of literacy practices. In this article, I follow other scholars (e.g., Fink, 2006; Hedin & Conderman, 2010; Husband, 2017) who refer to students who receive special education supports in reading and writing as *striving students* rather than *struggling students*. I examine how Liz used teacher-led questions during interactive read-alouds, specifically analyzing the functions of the questions in relation to literacy skills, strategies, and practices. This study was guided by the following research question: How does one novice special education teacher use questioning to teach literacy skills and strategies while connecting to her striving students' family literacy practices during interactive read-alouds?

Conceptual Framework

To frame my analysis of Liz's discourses, I drew upon the theories and conceptualizations of family literacies (Morrow, 1995; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011) and print literacy development (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004, 2016). Since these conceptual frameworks are significantly different from each other, I have elected to present them separately rather than attempting to integrate them into one model. I begin by briefly sharing the conceptualization of family literacies I reference throughout the paper. I then turn to a focused discussion of print literacy development. I note how I have extended this theory to include the concept of family literacies.

Family Literacies

I draw on the definition of family literacies that aligns with a sociocultural perspective of literacy and is used by other scholars (e.g., Morrow, 1995; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). According to Morrow, Paratore, and Tracey (1994) (as cited in Morrow, 1995):

Family literacy encompasses the ways parents, children, and extended family members use literacy at home and in their community. Sometimes, family literacy occurs naturally during the routines of daily living and helps adults and children "get things done." These events might include using drawings or writing to share ideas; composing notes or letters to communicate messages; making lists; reading and following directions; or sharing stories and ideas through conversations, reading, and writing. Family literacy may be initiated purposefully by a parent or may occur spontaneously as parents and children go about the business of their daily lives. Family literacy activities may also reflect the ethnic, racial, or cultural heritage of the families involved. (p. 7-8)

This definition of family literacies reflects the perspective that literacy is a social practice that is culturally, historically, and spatially situated in the daily lives of children and their families (Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). Additionally, family literacy practices, like all literacy practices, are interwoven with the social practices of thinking, believing, valuing, talking, and socializing—all of which are mediated by an individual's (e.g., special education teacher, striving student) race, social class, culture, and linguistic background (Gee, 1991; Street, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978).

Striving students' family literacy practices are part of the students' repertoires of literacy practices. Prior family literacy research has found that there is variance across families for the types of literacy activities in which they engage, the value families attribute to literacy, and the purposes for which families use literacy (Compton-Lilly, 2003; Jackson, 2016; Purcell-Gates, 1996). Even though striving students' repertoires of literacy practices will vary, literacy scholars

have argued that these repertoires should be viewed as resources upon which learning can be built, rather than deficits that stymie academic growth (Gonzalez et al., 2005; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). As Encisco and Ryan (2011) suggested, "Learning is optimal within situations where a problem makes use of and extends the language, knowledge, motivation, and relationships already available to learners" (p. 133). That is, striving students can use their repertoires of literacy practices, including family literacy practices, to support new learning.

Print Literacy Development

Purcell-Gates and colleagues (2004) theorized how students develop *print literacy.* They defined print literacy as "the abilities and strategies necessary to comprehend and produce written language for communicative purposes within sociocultural contexts. This includes understanding the social meanings of literate activity and mastering the pragmatics and semiotics of literacy activity" (Purcell-Gates et al., 2004, p. 26). This definition is similar to the aforementioned definition of family literacies since they both emphasize that comprehending and producing written language are socially-situated practices. The theory of print literacy development differs from family literacy in that it connects socially constructed literacy practices with formal reading and writing instruction. Thus, this theory is beneficial to educational scholars who examine literacy learning across school and out-of-school contexts.

In Figure 3.1, I present an adapted model of print literacy development based on Purcell-Gates and colleagues' (2004) model. In this model I address the role that family literacies play in the development of reading and writing abilities. I agree with Purcell-Gates and colleagues that literacy development is nested within sociocultural contexts. That is, students learn literacy skills and strategies as they participate in the social contexts of their classrooms, homes, or communities. I also do not perceive development to progress according to a defined pathway

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across the nested contexts. Rather, teachers, families, and students can use knowledge and experiences developed in one context to support the co-construction and reconstruction of new reading and writing abilities in a different context. Students make context-specific decisions of how and what knowledge or practices to draw on during interactions with written text.

Figure 3.1

Role of Family Literacy Practices In Literacy Development
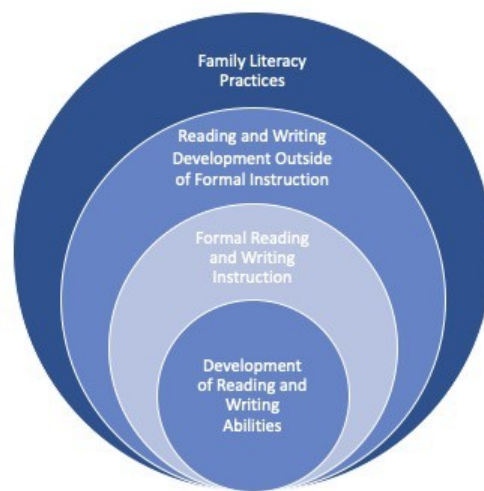
In the center of the model is the development of reading and writing abilities, that is the ability to produce and comprehend written language within situated sociocultural contexts. The development of reading and writing abilities is nested within formal reading and writing instruction, which predominantly occurs in classroom and school contexts. Formal reading and writing instruction includes teaching literacy skills and strategies, a focus of this research study. Surrounding that is reading and writing development outside of formal instruction. This type of informal instruction could include non-instructional activities and experiences that support reading and writing development (e.g., shared reading experiences with family members, participating in summer library reading programs, engagement in community-based family writing workshops). The outer context of the model is family literacy practices. These literacy

practices are socially-constructed when a family member and child meaningfully engage and interact with written language. Since family literacy practices are one of many different socially-constructed literacy practices (Bloome et al., 2018; Gallego & Hollingsworth, 2000), this outer context could be adapted to include other socially-constructed literacy practices. In summary, this adapted model portrays a widened lens for how the skills and strategies associated with reading and writing development may intersect with socially-constructed family literacy practices.

Literature Review

In their review of four decades of classroom discourse research, Howe & Abedin (2013) found that while much is known about how classroom discourse is organized, there is a need for additional research examining which types of organization are the most beneficial for student learning. Their findings complement the arguments of other scholars that how teachers use talk to promote learning is more significant than the type of talk (e.g., Caughlan, et al., 2013; Juzwik et al., 2008, 2012; Nystrand et al., 1997). Over the years, how teachers use questioning has been one focus of inquiry into classroom discourse (e.g., Alexander, 2018; Boyd, 2015; Nystrand et al., 2003; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Teacher questioning patterns shape discourse interactions to be monologic, dialogic, or a combination of the two. As Boyd (2015) proffered "how, what, when, and to whom questions are wielded indicate instructional stance, pedagogical expertise, and attentiveness to students" (p. 371). Thus, how teachers use questions can cue students as to what types of knowledge, literacy practices, and responses are valued or expected.

In what follows, I briefly provide an overview of questioning patterns in the two main approaches to classroom discourse, monologic and dialogic. I then review the literature of one prevalent questioning pattern, initiate-respond-evaluate/feedback (IRE/F) and what has been

suggested about how teachers can alter the questions they ask and the evaluation/feedback they give so that discourse promotes student thinking and construction of knowledge.

Monologic and Dialogic Discourses

Monologic discourse is the most prevalent type of classroom discourse (Alexander, 2017; Hennessy et al., 2011). When teachers use monologic discourse they tend to ask inauthentic questions to assess the extent that students can recall knowledge on cue, rather than to determine true understanding and learning of content (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019; Nystrand et al., 1997; Pontefract & Hardman, 2005). According to Nystrand and colleagues (2004; 2003), inauthentic questions have only one answer that is considered "correct." Teachers who ask inauthentic questions most likely have a predetermined answer they are seeking.

Dialogic discourse differs from monologic discourse in the forms of questions that teachers ask. In their early research on teacher questioning patterns, Nystrand and colleagues (1997) concluded that productive dialogic discourse included asking authentic questions; incorporating student responses into later questions (i.e., uptake); and asking questions that promote higher levels of thinking (e.g., analysis, evaluation, and synthesis). Nystrand and colleagues defined authentic questions as questions when the teacher does not have a predetermined answer in mind (e.g., requests for opinions, open-ended questions). Extending Nystrand and colleagues' initial findings about authentic questions, recent researchers have suggested that authentic questions are superior to inauthentic questions for fostering student talk and learning (Caughlan, et al., 2013; Nystrand, 2006; Reznitskaya & Wilkinson, 2015).

Scholars have also concluded that the function of questioning during dialogic discourse is different than during monologic exchanges. In her research, Lyle (2008) argued that teachers may use monologic discourse, including questioning, to control the goals for the classroom discourse, and that these goals may be more focused on the transmission of knowledge. That is,

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teachers use discourse and questioning patterns to predominate the discourse and to position students as respondents to the questions. This positioning can perpetuate institutionalized power structures—the teacher being the authority who controls the flow of the classroom discourse (Alexander, 2017; Lyle & Thomas-Williams, 2012).

Boyd and Markarian (2011) argued that teachers' actions are different during dialogic discourse. Specifically, teachers may listen to students' contributions, and then use questioning and discourse to bridge students' everyday knowledges and discourses with the formal knowledges and discourses of the school. In addition, teachers tend to promote students to take greater control of the discourse, resulting in student responses that extend the discourse and even contribute to further questions (Alexander, 2017).

Many leading scholars have argued that teachers should draw on a repertoire of questioning approaches (e.g., Alexander, 2018; Boyd, 2015; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). This position is warranted given that the types of questions a teacher asks reflect the role the teacher takes, how teacher-student interactions are structured, and how instruction is situated within teacher-student interactions (Nystrand et al., 1997). Kim and Williams (2019) posited that teachers who strategically employ a repertoire of questioning approaches are able to create classroom discourse spaces that support collective, reciprocal, cumulative, and purposeful teacher-student talk.

Initiate-Respond-Evaluate/Feedback

Given the prevalence of monologic discourse approaches (Alexander, 2017; Hennessy et al., 2011), I turn to a more focused discussion of the questioning patterns most common in this discourse approach. In their seminal research on classroom discourse, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) found that there were three basic types of classroom discourse. One of these types was question-answer sequences. From their analysis of question-answer sequences, Sinclair and

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Coulthard concluded that the teachers involved in their study asked questions that followed a pattern of *initiation* or asking the question, then a student *response,* followed by teacher *evaluation* or *feedback*. This classroom discourse pattern is known as initiate-respond-evaluate (IRE) or initiate-respond-feedback (IRF). The teachers who enacted IRE/F discourse patterns tended to ask questions that were inauthentic and elicited brief student responses.

Adding to Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) findings, Nystrand and colleagues (2003) found that monologic discourse was most prevalent in the middle school English and social studies classrooms they studied. In fact, their analysis of over 200 middle school lessons indicated that the teacher and students engaged in open exchange of ideas on average less than 50 seconds per class. With regards to teacher-led questioning, Nystrand and colleagues cautioned against concluding that teacher question patterns promoting monologic discourse were less favorable. They noted two important conclusions. First, authentic questions and interaction in small-group work were important, but did not categorically produce student learning. Second, the effectiveness of monologic discourse depended on how teachers expanded their IRE/F discourse exchanges so that students constructed knowledge (e.g., forming an opinion or evaluation) rather than just reported transmitted knowledge (e.g., restating a point, answering yes/no). Attention to this second point yields opportunity for future avenues of research into teacher questioning patterns. I now turn to discussing one avenue, which is how teachers who use IRE/F questioning patterns might alter their questions to support student construction of knowledge.

Altering Questions

Even if teachers use IRE/F questioning patterns, research suggests that there are ways these questioning patterns might be altered to create more open discourse spaces (e.g., Cullen, 2002; Hardman, 2008; Hardman & Hardman, 2017). This body of literature points to using more

authentic questions during the initiate phase of the IRE/F discourse approach (e.g., Rojas-Drummond et al., 2020). Alternately, teachers can also modify how they evaluate or provide feedback to student responses (e.g., Hardman, 2020; Lefstein et al., 2015; Nystrand et al., 1997).

While not the primary focus of their research, some scholars have noted how their teacher participants' questions may have unintentionally altered some of their IRE/F exchanges to allow for students' ideas, observations, or opinions (e.g., Nystrand et al., 2003; Rojas-Drummond et al., 2020). Illustratively, in their recent study, Rojas-Drummond and colleagues (2020) analyzed IRF exchanges during literacy instruction for 120 sixth-grade students from two schools. Unexpectedly, their analysis indicated that at times the questions of the teachers in their control group asked students to express opinions, elaborate, or share their reasoning. In these limited instances, students responded by providing their opinion or contributing relevant comments. These questions served to create opportunities, though limited, for students to construct knowledge. Even though some of the teacher questioning patterns elicited student thinking, Rojas-Drummond and colleagues concluded that overall teacher-student talk interactions appeared to remain more directive and grounded in transmitting knowledge. Thus, altering a limited number of initiating questions does not appear to be enough to shift teacher questioning patterns from monologic to dialogic nor to alter the approaches constructing student knowledge.

Scholars have also examined how teachers might alter their questioning during the evaluate or feedback phase of the IRE/F exchange (Hardman, 2020; Nystrand et al., 1997). Nystrand and colleagues (1997, 2003) concluded that teachers can incorporate a student's response into subsequent questions. They labeled this as *uptake.* Other researchers (e.g., Lefstein et al., 2015; Molinari et al., 2013) have suggested that when teachers pose open questions during the initiate phase, they can re-iterate these open questions to different students. Re-iterating opening questions to multiple students may support student elaboration and reasoning.

Complementing these findings, Hardman (2020) found that teachers used more talk-moves during the evaluate/feedback stage after participating in a 20-week professional development intervention on dialogic teaching talk moves. The teacher talk moves included asking students to (a) expand their or a peer's response, (b) rephrase their or a peer's contribution, (c) agree or disagree with a peer's response, (d) provide evidence supporting response, (e) respond to a counter-example the teacher offers, and (f) verify the teacher's understanding of their response. Overall, Hardman's study indicated that evaluation does not have to be a right/wrong judgement, and it could open the discourse, rather than shutting it down. Collectively, these findings indicate ways that teachers can adapt the IRE/F approach to create opportunities for student responses to include construction of knowledge rather than transmission of knowledge.

In summary, the current literature indicated that questioning patterns leading to only monologic discourse remain common-place in school classrooms. Teachers who enacted monologic discourse tended to ask inauthentic questions. The most common function of these questions was to assess students' learning or knowledge. Research further suggested that these types of questioning patterns limit student learning when compared to questioning patterns enacted in dialogic classroom discourse (Alexander, 2018; Rojas-Drummond et al., 2020). Encouragingly, teachers can alter how they initiate asking a question (e.g., ask students for opinions or to evaluate a statement) or the type of follow-up they provide after a student response (e.g., uptake, high-level evaluation). There is a need, though, for future research that examines to what extent altering questioning patterns in IRE/F exchanges can create discourse spaces supporting students to construct knowledge. This study addresses that need by examining how the questioning patterns of one novice special education teacher may have created opportunities

for students to draw on their family literacy practices to construct knowledge of literacy skills and strategies.

Methods

The data presented here came from a qualitative case study (Yin, 2014) of how one novice special education teacher enacted teaching practices around (re)constructed understandings of her striving students' family literacy practices. I now provide a detailed discussion of the research context, participants, data generation, and findings from the larger case study. I then discuss the selection and analysis of the interactive read-aloud instructional episodes, the foci for this discourse analysis.

Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at Logan Academy[5], a K-12 public charter school located in a Midwestern urban community. At the time of the study, approximately 450 elementary students attended Logan Academy (Midwestern State's Center for Educational Performance and Information, 2015). Student demographics were as follows: 65% African American, 23% Hispanic, 8% Caucasian, 2% Asian American, and 2% Hawaiian or Native American or Multi-Ethnic. Logan Academy was designated as a school-wide Title-1 building as well as a "Priority School," meaning that annual academic achievement for third-fifth graders fell within the lowest 5% of all elementary schools within the state (Midwestern State Department of Education, 2014).

I met Liz, the focal novice special education teacher, in fall 2014, shortly after she began teaching at Logan Academy. Prior to teaching at Logan Academy, Liz taught special education at

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5 All names are pseudonyms. To maintain anonymity, I used pseudonyms for references with identifiable information. For example, I used the school's pseudonym when citing the school improvement plans.

a charter school on the East coast for two years. Liz is a native English-speaking, European American woman in her late twenties. She held a provisional teaching certificate in special education with an endorsement in cognitive impairment. At the beginning of the study, Liz shared that she was unfamiliar with the construct of *family literacies*. She associated literacy with being able to read and write, grounding her thinking in her understanding of the term "illiterate.*"* Liz noted that her striving students engaged in literacy practices that differed between the home and school contexts. Liz shared her initial perception, "*I don't think their literacy environment(s) at home are as enriching as they could be."*

At Logan Academy, she was the kindergarten-second grade resource room teacher. During the 2014-2015 school year, Liz supported 11 special education students with varying eligibilities (e.g., early childhood developmental delay, specific learning disabilities). For this study, I focused on her instructional interactions with three of her second grade students whom I call Dante, Elijah, and Travis. These three boys identified as either African American or Hispanic. The boys received between three to five hours of resource room support from Liz each week with the majority of the time being provided as push-in services in their general education classroom. According to Liz, the students' individualized education plan (IEP) goals included decoding skills and expressive/receptive spoken language skills. I did not collect additional information about the students, since the study focused on Liz's knowledge and teaching practices.

Case Study Data Generation and Analysis

I conducted the case study over five months (November 2014-March 2015). The focus of the case study was to develop an enriched understanding of how Liz (re)constructed her understandings of striving students' family literacy practices and enacted teaching practices around these (re)constructed understandings of the students' family literacy practices. Data

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sources included: (a) four semi-structured interviews with Liz, (b) three classroom observations, (c) researcher field notes, (d) a questionnaire addressing Liz's professional teaching experiences and perceptions of her current striving students, (f) document artifacts such as student work, lesson plans, and curriculum materials, and (g) informal email communications with Liz.

I employed five phases of coding to analyze the data for Liz's (re)constructed knowledge and literacy teaching practices. These phases included holistic, attribute, structural, descriptive, and pattern coding to determine overall themes (Miles et al., 2020; Saldaña, 2016). During each phase, I applied constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), comparing all codes within each phase and across phrases. (For further explanation of the analysis, please see article one in this dissertation.)

Three themes emerged from the analysis of the data. First, Liz approached her professional work with a mindset that she wanted to continue growing as a teacher to better address the needs of her striving students. She then sought resources to support her professional growth. Second, Liz developed a deeper, while still limited, knowledge of her students' repertoires of literacy practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Third, Liz developed literacy teaching practices that drew on her striving students' repertoires of literacy practices in limited ways rather than solely on school-based literacy practices.

Analysis of Liz's Questioning Patterns

While the case study analysis revealed that Liz developed expanded teaching practices, I was left with many questions pertaining to how her teaching practices changed. Liz identified the purpose of the study as connecting the home and school contexts. During the last observation, Liz explained, "*Since we have been doing this (the research study), we have been talking a lot about connecting the home and the school.*" Liz went on to explain that recently she had engaged her striving students in talking about their family literacy practices around fables (e.g.,

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Little Red Hen, Red Riding Hood and the Big, Bad Wolf). Liz commented that during future instruction, "*If I am reading (with) him (Elijah) about something, I can ask him questions….With him, I know I can make the connection.*" I wondered, "Did Liz use questions as a way to connect home and school for her striving students?" I was curious to further understand how Liz's enacted teaching practices, specifically her use of questioning, might connect literacy skills and strategy instruction with striving students' family literacy practices.

I began my formal analysis of Liz's discourse by identifying that Liz engaged her students in interactive read-alouds during each of the classroom observations. I defined interactive read-alouds as literacy instruction when Liz read-aloud a text to her striving students, stopping intermittently to pose and answer questions about the text (Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Team, 2019). I partitioned the data of the interactive read-alouds from the larger data set of the three classroom observations. Since each interactive read-aloud was embedded in a classroom observation, I determined that the beginning of the interactive read-aloud instruction corresponded to when Liz launched her lesson (i.e., explaining the agenda or objective for the lesson). The instruction concluded when Liz had the students complete an exit ticket or she stopped her instruction so the students could switch literacy centers. All further analysis involved only the partitioned interactive read-aloud instruction data. Throughout the remainder of this article, I use "first interactive read-aloud" to indicate the read-aloud from the first observation. I use similar language for the interactive read-alouds from the second and third observations.

After partitioning the data, I reread the observation transcripts to identify all questions that Liz verbally posed during the interactive read-aloud instruction. Informed by Nystrand and colleagues' (2004) analysis of teachers' questioning, I excluded the following types of questions: (a) procedural (e.g., Do you have any questions?), (b) discourse management (e.g., Did we talk about that?), (c) repaired questions (i.e., questions that were stopped, repaired, or revised), (d)

rhetorical questions (e.g., So a goose is a bird right?) and (e) questions related to instructional interruptions (e.g., Who did you need to see?). To further explain two of the exclusion criteria, when Liz repaired a question, the initial question that was stopped, repaired or revised was excluded, but the repaired question was included for further analysis. Also, questions were deemed rhetorical based on the surrounding discourse. For rhetorical questions, Liz did not provide space for the students to respond to her question, nor did she repose the questions if the students did not respond.

My continued analysis of the data consisted of the three analytic phases shown in Figure 3.2. After completing the three analytic phases, I determined frequency counts for each discourse feature in phases one and two as well as the question chains in phase three (i.e., forms of teacher feedback, and functions of teacher follow-up questions). For questions addressing the literacy skill of making questions, I then used MAXQDA, computer analytic software, to determine co-occurrences amongst this code and (a) other question features, (b) the forms of teacher feedback, and (c) the functions of teacher follow-up questions.

Figure 3.2

Analytic Phases

Phase 1
- Gee's (2014) *The Doing and Not Just Saying Tool*
- Question Purpose
- Literacy Skills and Strategies
- Literacy Practices

Phase 2
- Gee's (2014) *The Doing and Not Just Saying Tool*
- Connection Type

Phase 3
- Question Chains
- Forms of Teacher Feedback (Nystrand, 2003)
- Function of Teacher Follow-Up Questions (Hardman, 2020; Nystrand, 2003)
- Identifying Student-to-Student Talk
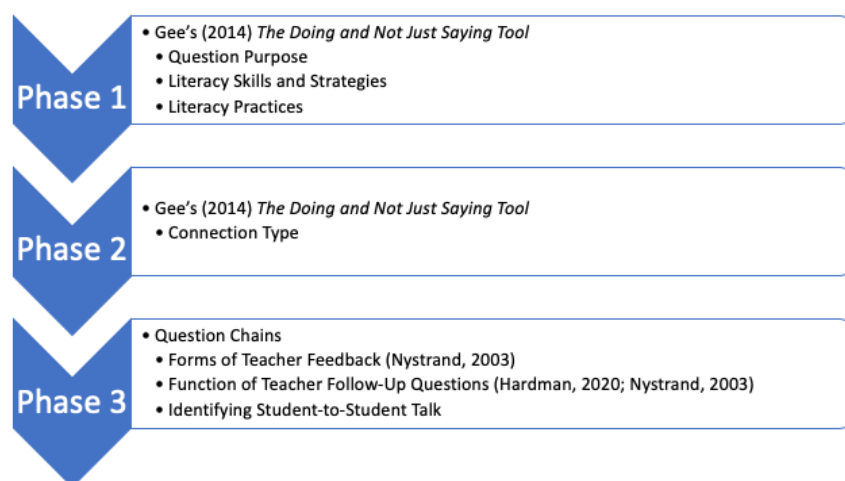
Phase 1

During phase one, I analyzed all remaining verbalized questions for three features (see Appendix A). To analyze Liz's verbalized questions, I applied Nystrand and colleagues' (2003) approach to use the *question event* to determine the function of a question. They defined a question event as the question, response, and then any follow-up responses. I employed Gee's (2014) *The Doing and Not Just Saying Tool* to examine the function of the question. I now further explain my use of Gee's tool as it applied to each feature.

The first feature I analyzed was the *question purpose.* In my analysis of the *question purpose,* I used Gee's (2014) *The Doing and Not Just Saying Tool* to ask, "What was Liz trying to do with each question she posed?" I drew on the work of Nystrand and colleagues (1997) and van de Pol and colleagues (2017) to define the question purpose as *authentic* and *inauthentic*. More specifically, Nystrand defined authentic questions as questions when the teacher does not have a certain answer in mind. These questions might be formed as requests for opinions or sharing a personal experience. Contrastingly, inauthentic questions are questions when the teacher does have a specific answer they are seeking. These questions might be simple recall of information, or answering yes/no questions. An example from my data occurred during the second interactive read-aloud when Liz asked, "What do they (king penguins) put on their feet?" I determined the function of this question to be *inauthentic* since Liz asked the question to evaluate the striving students' recall of the text details.

For the second feature, I analyzed the function of Liz's question in relation to literacy skills and strategies. I specifically asked, "What literacy skill or strategy is Liz trying to teach?" Illustratively, I determined that Liz was trying to probe for the students' knowledge of specific vocabulary words when during the second interactive read-aloud she asked, "What are those animals called?" I coded this as *vocabulary* since she wanted the students to respond with king

penguins, given that the text was about this specific species of penguins. Liz did pose some questions that pertained to more than one type of literacy skill or strategy. For these instances, I coded the question for both literacy skills and strategies.

The third feature I analyzed was *literacy practices.* One can learn about enacted literacy practices through observable *literacy events (Purcell-Gates et al., 2016).* Heath (1982) defined literacy events as "occasions in which written language is integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretive processes and strategies" (p. 50). For this feature, I asked, "What socially-constructed ways of interacting with written language does the teacher draw into the instruction during a literacy event?" I considered literacy events that involved interactions focused on gaining conceptual understanding of school subjects to be drawing on *school literacy practices (Gallego & Hollingsworth, 2000)* and interactions between a family member and child during which they meaningfully engaged with written language to be *family literacy practices* (Rodriguez-Brown, 2011).

Phase 2

For phase two of analysis, I further analyzed the questions that had been coded during phase one as *Making Connections.* I wanted to understand more deeply what Liz was trying to do when she prompted her striving students to make connections with the text. I again employed Gee's (2014) *The Doing and Not Just Saying tool.* For each question, I asked "How does Liz prompt students to make connections with the instruction?" In table 3.1, I present the codes for the approaches Liz used to prompt her striving students to make connections. To demonstrate how I applied these codes, I provide an example from the third interactive read-aloud when Liz discussed how the main character might feel if she was like the goose who lost a leg. Liz asked Travis, "Well could you imagine if you really did lose your leg?" This question was coded as

personal since Liz was explicitly prompting Travis to draw on his own personal knowledges or experiences to imagine how he might feel.

Table 3.1

Making Connections Approaches

Feature	Subfeature	Example
Connection Type D: How does the teacher prompt students to make connections with the instruction?	Non-personal D: Prompt student to make connection drawing on text or experiences without specifying that these should be from personal lived history.	A goose is like what?
	Personal D: Explicitly prompt student to make connection drawing on personal prior knowledge or experiences	Have you seen one (goose) maybe at your house or at a park?

Note. D=Definition

Phase 3

After analyzing the function of Liz's questions, I was curious if Liz enacted particular types of discourse exchanges when teaching literacy skills and strategies or connecting with the striving students' varying literacy practices. To explore this curiosity, I recontextualized Liz's questions in the discourse from the interactive read-alouds. This enabled me to examine if her discourse patterns supported monologic or dialogic classroom discourse exchanges. I focused my analysis first on noting if Liz's questions followed an IRE/F exchange pattern. I also identified instances when Liz's questions were followed by student-to-student talk exchanges (i.e., student responses building upon peer's previous talk).

Informed by the research about how teachers can shift monologic questioning patterns by altering how they evaluate or respond to students (e.g., Hardman, 2020; Nystrand et al., 1997), I

further analyzed any questions that followed the IRE/F exchange pattern. In particular, I
examined the form Liz's evaluation or feedback took. To be clear, I consider evaluation a form
of feedback. For clarity purposes, I refer to Liz's talk during the third part of the IRE/F exchange
pattern as feedback. Drawing on Nystrand's (1997) work, I categorized Liz's feedback as either
low-level or high-level (see Table 3.2). I then further categorized high-level feedback to identify
instances when Liz used questions in her feedback exchange. For instance when Liz did use
questions in her feedback, I then analyzed the function of the questions in terms of providing
feedback to the students (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.2

Forms of Teacher Feedback

Form of Teacher Feedback	Subcategory	Example
Low-Level Feedback D: Teacher's feedback acknowledges students' response.		Good.
High-Level Feedback D: Teacher's feedback acknowledges students' response and affects the course of the discourse.	Feedback in Non-Question Form D: The teacher forms feedback as a statement.	S: He (goose) live in water. T: They (geese) live in water. Ok, so they like water.
	Feedback in Question Form D: The teacher's feedback includes a question.	T: So what letter? S: C,G T: G and? (indicating that student should also say the letter sound)

Note. D=Definition, S=Student, T=Teacher

Table 3.3

Functions of Teacher Follow-Up Questions

Function of Teacher Follow-up Question	Description	Example
Challenge	Teacher provides a counter example or challenges the student's response (Hardman, 2020)	T: So the goose is what? S: Happy. T: Well she doesn't look happy to me. She's all by herself. So what do you think that means?
Expand	Teacher asks the same student to expand their response or to say more (Hardman, 2020).	S: I have seen it (goose). T: You've seen one. Have you seen one maybe at your house or at a park?
Rephrase	Teacher asks student to rephrase or restate their own or a peer's talk (Hardman, 2020).	T: So who's Henry? S: (points to a picture in the book) T: What's that? S: A dog.
Uptake[a]	Teacher incorporates student's response into the question (Nystrand et al., 2003)	T: But they are who? S: The mom and dad. T: The mother and father of who?

Note. S=Student, T=Teacher
[a]Uptake was doubled coded with other follow-up question functions.

Researcher Positionality

Throughout the study, I positioned myself as an *observer as participant* (Glesne, 2011). In this role, I primarily observed Liz's experiences without directly engaging her or her striving students. While my preference was to maintain this type of positioning, there were instances when Liz initiated explicit engagement with me. Liz made these bids for explicit engagement through eye contact, or verbally requesting feedback about how a lesson was proceeding. Due to the nature of Liz's bids, I am certain that my prior experience as a special education teacher

influenced my positioning, and the relationship I had with Liz. Nevertheless, I have attempted to represent Liz's discourses, and interactions with her striving students through her own words and actions, always interrogating my interpretations of her instructional questions.

Focal Interactive Read-Aloud Instruction

My purpose of this discourse analysis was to determine how Liz's questioning patterns during the interactive read-aloud instruction created opportunities for Liz to connect her striving students' family literacy practices to formal literacy skills and strategies instruction. I briefly describe how Liz engaged her striving students in an interactive read-aloud during each of the three observations. As displayed in Table 3.4, Liz taught the first and third interactive read-alouds within the general education classroom during literacy centers. The second interactive read-aloud was taught in the resource room setting. The number of students involved in the interactive read-aloud varied across all three observations, ranging from one to three striving students. For both the first and third interactive read-alouds, Liz used a narrative text genre (Duke et al., 2012), while she used an informative genre during the second interactive read aloud. The length of each interactive read-aloud varied, ranging from 7 min, 27s to 34 min, 48s.

Data showed that across all three interactive read-alouds Liz predominantly used questioning patterns supporting monologic discourse. Liz posed a question, a student responded, and Liz provided feedback. There were a total of four discourse exchanges when students built upon a student's response. Further explanation of the question functions and forms of feedback is included in the findings and discussion sections.

Table 3.4

Overview of Interactive Read-Aloud Instruction

Characteristic	Observation #1	Observation #2	Observation #3
Location	General Education Classroom	Resource Room	General Education Classroom
Number of Striving Students	1	2	3
Text Genre	Narrative	Informative	Narrative
Length of Instructional Lesson	7 min, 27s	34 min, 48s	21 min, 18s

Findings

My purpose for analyzing Liz's discourse was to understand how her instructional questions during interactive read-alouds incorporated her striving students' family literacy practices while formally teaching literacy skills and strategies. I found that Liz's questions did vary across the three interactive read-alouds. These variances related to (a) the purpose of the question and (b) the type(s) of literacy skills and strategies she taught. One consistency was that all questions drew upon the striving students' school-based literacy practices. Liz opened space in the feedback portion of her questioning exchanges by supporting students to connect the instruction with their prior experiences and knowledges, but not instances when the students and family members had meaningfully interacted with written text (i.e., family literacy practices). I now turn to an in-depth explanation of the findings.

Question Features

I found that there were similarities and differences across the three interactive read-alouds in the purpose of Liz's questions, and the literacy skills or strategies she taught. However,

Liz drew only school-based literacy practices, as opposed to family literacy practices, into her instruction throughout all three interactive read-alouds. I begin by discussing the similarities and differences in the purpose of Liz's questions. Then I move to explaining the differences in Liz's questions regarding the literacy skills and strategies she taught. Lastly, I discuss what the data indicates about Liz drawing other literacy practices into her instruction.

Purpose of Liz's Questions

The purpose of Liz's questions was coded as authentic or inauthentic (Nystrand, 2004). As shown in Table 3.5, the total number of questions Liz asked during the interactive read-alouds ranged from 36 to 100 questions. The data indicated three important findings. First, Liz asked more questions during each subsequent read-aloud. Second, Liz asked more inauthentic questions than authentic questions during all three of the read-alouds. Third, the number of authentic questions Liz asked increased with each interactive read-aloud. That is, Liz asked only two authentic questions during the first interactive read-aloud, and she asked 42 authentic questions by the third read-aloud. In summary, Liz mostly asked inauthentic questions during the first interactive read-aloud, but the purpose of Liz's questions shifted towards asking nearly equal numbers of authentic and inauthentic questions during the third interactive read-aloud.

Table 3.5

Frequency of Question Purposes

Question Purpose	Interactive Read-Aloud 1		Interactive Read-Aloud 2		Interactive Read-Aloud 3	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Authentic	2	6	7	13	42	42
Inauthentic	34	94	49	87	58	58
Total Number of Questions	36	100	56	100	100	100

Literacy Skills and Strategies

Analysis of Liz's questions revealed differences in the frequency of the types of literacy skills or strategies she taught (see Table 3.6). There were occasions when Liz's questions addressed more than one literacy skill or strategy. An example from the second interactive-read aloud illustrates how Liz's questions addressed two skills. Liz posed a question about the habitats of the king penguins in a way that students needed to complete her statement with the appropriate vocabulary word. Liz asked, "Habitat or where they (king penguins)…..?" Forming the question in this manner meant that students drew on their knowledge of vocabulary (i.e., habitat) as well as the main ideas and details of the text. I coded questions for all applicable literacy skills or strategies Liz was teaching. I include only frequency counts and not percentages to most clearly present the data and reduce confusion, since the number of literacy skills and strategies codes do not correspond with the number of questions Liz asked.

During the first interactive read-aloud, Liz's questions most frequently addressed decoding or letter-sound correspondence (n=33). Liz asked questions pertaining to only two other skills or strategies (i.e., vocabulary, and main idea and details). During the second interactive read-aloud, Liz's questions focused on four different types of literacy skills or strategies. Liz's questions were most frequently coded as main idea and details (n=56). This was a change from the first interactive read-aloud in that Liz's questions now focused on reading comprehension, rather than code-based skills. Compared to the other two interactive read-alouds, Liz asked questions addressing five types of literacy skills and strategies during the third interactive read-aloud. Across the five types of literacy skills and strategies, there were two that had the highest frequencies. These two types were the following: characters or plot (n=67) and making connections (n=44).

Table 3.6

Frequency of Literacy Skills or Strategies

Literacy Skill or Strategy	Interactive Read-Aloud 1	Interactive Read-Aloud 2	Interactive Read-Aloud 3
	n	n	n
Characters or Plot	1	0	67
Main Idea or Details	0	51	0
Making Connections	0	1	44
Vocabulary	2	15	17
Decoding or Letter-Sound Correspondence	33	2	0
Concepts of Print	0	0	1
Text Genre	0	0	1
Total	36	69	130

Literacy Practices

Upon first examination, the data indicated Liz did not ask questions that incorporated her striving students' family literacy practices while teaching literacy skills and strategies. Liz began the study with limited understanding of the theories and pedagogical practices undergirding family literacies, and I recalled that Liz viewed the work of incorporating family literacy practices as connecting the home and school contexts. Liz did teach her striving students to make connections with the text that they were reading. Further analysis of these connections indicated that of the 45 connections Liz made during the second and third interactive read-alouds, 38 of these were authentic questions that prompted students to make connections between the instruction and their personal lived histories. An example of this type of question came from the

third interactive read-aloud when Liz asked her students if they had ever seen a goose. She prompted the students to connect the text, which was about a goose, to their personal experience of seeing one by asking, "Have you seen one maybe at your house or at a park?" While this question did not draw in the students' family literacy practices, it did prompt students to make connections between their home/personal contexts and the school context.

Form and Function of Questions that Prompt Making Connections

Analysis of the questions that prompted Liz's striving students to make connections reveal additional findings (see Table 3.7). Of the 45 instances when Liz prompted her striving students to make connections, Liz used authentic questions to prompt personal connections (n=38) (e.g., "Have you ever seen a goose?") and inauthentic questions to prompt non-personal connections (n=7) (e.g., "Is Henry a girl's name or a boy's name?"). Liz did not ask inauthentic questions to prompt personal connections nor authentic questions to prompt non-personal connections. It is theoretically possible to ask inauthentic questions that prompt personal connections (e.g., Have you ever seen an injured animal like the girl in the story?) or authentic questions that prompt non-personal connections (How are king penguins similar or different to other animals?).

Data revealed that Liz prompted students to make connections during both the initiate and feedback portions of her IRE/F exchanges. Liz asked nine authentic questions prompting personal connections and four inauthentic questions prompting non-personal connections during the initiate portion. In comparison, Liz asked about the same number of inauthentic questions prompting non-personal connections (n=3) in the feedback portion, but substantially more authentic questions prompting personal connections (n=29). Notably, Liz prompted students to make connections using high-level feedback in question form rather than low-level feedback or high-level feedback in non-question form.

Table 3.7

Frequencies of Questions that Prompt Making Connections

Question Form	Authentic Question Prompting Personal Connection	Inauthentic Question Prompting Non-personal Connection
Initiate	9	4
Low-Level Feedback	0	0
High-Level Feedback in Non-question Form	0	0
High-Level Feedback in Question Form	29	3
Total	38	7

Additional analysis of functions of the follow-up questions that prompted Liz's striving students to make connections indicated that there was a range of question functions (see Table 3.8). When asking authentic questions that prompted students to make connections, Liz most frequently asked students to expand their initial response or to say more. This was also the most frequent function of Liz's follow up questions that prompted non-personal connections. Data indicated that other common functions were asking students to rephrase or restate their response, and posing a question that incorporated part of the student's response (i.e., uptake).

Table 3.8

Frequencies of Follow-Up Questions that Prompt Making Connections

Function of Follow-Up Question	Authentic Question Prompting Personal Connection	Inauthentic Question Prompting Non-personal Connection
Challenge	1	0
Expand	13	2
Rephrase	6	0
Uptake	9	1
Total	29	3

Together, the findings pertaining to Liz's questions that prompted her striving students to make connections indicate that Liz most frequently posed authentic questions to support her students to connect the literacy instruction to their personal lived histories. While Liz did ask this type of question when initiating a question-response exchange, she tended to ask questions around making connections during the feedback portion of the exchange. In particular, Liz asked her striving students to connect the text to their lived histories with expanding, or rephrasing follow-up questions. She also utilized uptake to prompt students to make connections. I now discuss the significance of these findings.

Discussion

I set out with the aim of examining how one novice special education teacher used questioning patterns to teach literacy skills and strategies while connecting to her striving students' family literacy practices. Similar to the findings of other scholars (e.g., Alexander, 2017; Hennessy et al., 2011), I found that Liz's classroom discourse reflected monologic exchanges. In particular, I found that Liz's questioning patterns followed an IRE/F pattern (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975).

Liz assumed the role of directing the classroom discourse and positioned students as respondents. She then provided feedback to the students. During the first two interactive read-alouds, Liz asked a limited number of authentic questions. However, Liz asked a balanced number of authentic and inauthentic questions. Liz's preference for asking inauthentic questions is consistent with other research in that teachers who use monologic discourse tend to ask inauthentic questions (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019; Nystrand et al., 2003).

Across all three interactive read-alouds, Liz most frequently asked inauthentic questions related to code-based skills and reading comprehension. These questions drew upon the striving students' school-based literacy practices rather than their full repertoires of literacy practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Returning to Purcell-Gates and colleagues' (2004) model of print literacy development, Liz's questions reflect an attention to formal instruction of reading and writing. Her questions do not indicate an attention for how formal instruction of reading and writing is situated within socially-constructed literacy practices (e.g., family literacy practices), and student learning outside of formal instructional opportunities. This is concerning given that striving students' literacy learning should not be limited to just formal instructional opportunities. Rather, formal instruction should create opportunities for striving students to draw on their full repertoires of literacy practices and learning experiences so that new learning can use and extend current literacy practices already available to the students (Encisco & Ryan, 2011; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003).

Despite the drawbacks I have noted about Liz's questioning patterns, I suggest that there are encouraging aspects to her questioning. Since Liz perceived incorporating students' family literacy practices as connecting the home and school contexts, I argue that the findings related to how she used questions to prompt students to connect the text with their personal lived histories are significant. Findings indicated that Liz posed both inauthentic and authentic questions to

prompt students to make connections between the instruction and their personal lived histories. This category of questions most frequently occurred during the feedback portion of the IRE/F exchange. To prompt students to make personal connections, Liz asked students to expand, or rephrase their response. She also included the student's response into subsequent questions.

There are two important points about Liz's questioning patterns as they relate to prompting students to make connections. First, the findings from this study provide further support that teachers who use IRE/F questioning patterns can open up the feedback portion of the exchange by altering their questioning (Hardman, 2020; Lefstein et al., 2015; Nystrand et al., 1997). Liz's questions created space in the IRE/F questioning pattern to move away from low-level feedback towards higher-level feedback. Liz specifically used uptake, expanding, and rephrasing students' responses to extend student participation in the discourse exchange (Hardman, 2020; Nystrand et al., 1997).

Second, Liz created opportunities for students to draw on their personal experiences and knowledges as they constructed understandings of the text. I suggest that intentional attempts to connect instruction with students' lived experiences could be part of a novice teacher's progression towards learning how to incorporate students' family literacies into their teaching practices. From the analysis of Liz's questions, there is a clear increase in the number of instances when she attempted to connect her instruction to students' prior experiences and knowledges. Educational theories, such as Vygotsky's (1978) theory of zones of proximal development, support designing learning opportunities that build upon students' current knowledges and experiences. Within literacy, scholars have suggested how to craft instruction around students' present literacy practices (e.g., Gutiérrez, 2008; Morrell, 2004; Purcell-Gates et al., 2004). What is not indicated in the present literature is how teachers might alter their

teaching practices as they learn about family literacy practices and how to incorporate these into their literacy instruction. This would be an area for future research.

Conclusions and Implications

The aim of the present study was to examine how one novice special education teacher used questioning patterns to connect her striving students' family literacy practices with literacy skill and strategy instruction during interactive read-alouds. Findings indicate that Liz most frequently asked inauthentic questions related to decoding, letter-sound correspondence, main ideas and details, or characters and plot. All of Liz's questions drew in students' school-based literacy practices rather than upon their full repertoires of literacy practices.

These findings also indicate that teachers can open up their feedback portion of questioning exchanges by asking additional questions that use part of the student's previous response, or that engage students in expanding or rephrasing their response. Liz was able to alter her questions to support her striving students to make connections with their personal experiences and knowledges. For teachers who are new to learning about family literacies, asking students to connect instruction with their personal experiences and knowledges might be part of the progression to incorporating students' family literacy practices into school-based literacy skill and strategy instruction.

There is a continued need for additional research examining the intersections amongst students' family literacy practices, teachers' literacy instructional practices, and teachers' knowledge—knowledge of students, the theory of family literacies, and pedagogical practices that build upon students' literacy practices. Close examination of Liz's questioning patterns revealed how she approached drawing in students' varied literacy practices when teaching literacy skills and strategies during interactive read-alouds. Analysis of teachers' questioning patterns seems to be a useful approach for understanding how teachers are enacting literacy

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instruction that connects striving students' repertoires of literacy practices with explicit teaching of literacy skills and strategies.

As research has shown, teachers' questioning patterns shape teaching and learning (Alexander, 2018; Boyd, 2015). Being intentional about the types of questions used in classroom discourse is important for teachers looking to expand their literacy teaching practices to incorporate striving students' full repertoires of literacy practices. Questions that prompt students to make connections with the instruction appear to hold the potential for connecting not just students' personal experiences, but also their literacy practices—personal experiences around meaningful interactions with written language. These types of questions could be an avenue for incorporating family literacy practices in productive ways that support increased student learning.

APPENDIX

Appendix: Discourse Analysis Features

Table 3.9

Coding for Discourse Analysis Features

Feature	Subfeature	Example
Question Purpose D: What is the teacher trying to do with each question?	Authentic D: The teacher does not predetermine or specify the answers. The teacher may also seek to engage in dialogue with the student. (Nystrand et al., 2003; van de Pol et al., 2017)	Where's the tail supposed to be? (Liz asking about a student's drawing of a king penguin.)
	Inauthentic D: The teacher determines the expected answer and may pose the question to evaluate student understanding. (Nystrand et al., 2003; van de Pol et al., 2017)	What do they (king penguins) put on their feet?
Instructional Skill or Strategy D: What literacy skill or strategy is the teacher trying to teach?	Characters or Plot D: Questions about the characters or plot of a text	Who's Henry (i.e., name of a character in the story)?
	Main Idea or Details D: Questions about the main idea or details of a text	Do you think that's important to tell what they (king penguins) look like?
	Making Connections D: Connecting text to prior knowledge, experiences, texts or the world	Have you ever seen a goose?

Table 3.9 (cont'd)

Feature	Subfeature	Example
	Making Connections D: Connecting text to prior knowledge, experiences, texts or the world	Have you ever seen a goose?
	Vocabulary D: Questions about word meanings or vocabulary terms (Wright & Neuman, 2013)	What is the main word that we use for animals that have wings and fly?
	Decoding or Letter-Sound Correspondence D: Questions pertaining to decoding words or letter-sound correspondence (McKenna & Stahl, 2015)	What letter?
	Concepts of Print D: Questions about concepts of print (e.g., title, author) (McKenna & Stahl, 2015)	What's the story called Travis?
	Text Genre D: Questions about text genre or genre features (Duke et al., 2012)	So that's why this story is what (i.e. name a text genre)?
Literacy Practices D: What socially-constructed ways of interacting with written language does the teachers draw into the instruction?	School Literacy Practices D: Socially-constructed ways that teachers and students interact with written language to gain conceptual understanding of school subjects (Gallego & Hollingsworth, 2000)	Do you know what sound it makes?

Note. D=Definition

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ARTICLE THREE: ENHANCING HIGH-LEVERAGE TEACHING PRACTICES IN LITERACY: LEVERAGING FAMILY LITERACY PRACTICES

Introduction

Increasingly, parents, educational stakeholders, and policymakers expect schools and teachers to provide effective instruction that supports student learning (Ball & Forzani, 2011; Nasir et al., 2016; Perry et al., 2010). There are initiatives in both the fields of general and special education to define the teaching practices effective teachers enact (e.g., The Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform Center; Core Practice Consortium; Council for Exceptional Children). Providing explicit instruction and eliciting student thinking are two teaching practices that are identified as *high-leverage teaching practices* (Kavanagh et al., 2017; Sayeski, 2018).

In this article, I examine how teachers who work with striving students might enhance their high-leverage teaching practices of explicit instruction and eliciting student thinking when teaching literacy. Throughout this article, I refer to students who struggle with reading or writing, or who receive special education services as *striving students* (Fink, 2006) rather than struggling students or readers. I intentionally shift my language to striving students to reflect the mindset that all students have the potential to learn within school contexts.

Drawing on research in family literacy, I describe how teachers can leverage striving students' family literacy practices as a way to enhance how they provide explicit literacy instruction or elicit student thinking. I start with a brief explanation of how family literacy is conceptualized. I then illustrate how one novice special education teacher, whom I call Liz[6], enacted novice forms of high-leverages practices, namely, eliciting her striving students'

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6 All names are pseudonyms.

thinking and engaging her students in explicit literacy instruction. I share how Liz began to modify her teaching practices to include leveraging her striving students' family literacy practices. I include steps that Liz could take to continue expanding connections between her use of these high-leverage teaching practices and her striving students' family literacy practices.

Conceptualizing Family Literacy Practices: A Theoretical Framework

For this article, I ground how I conceptualize family literacy in the sociocultural perspective (e.g., Street, 1995; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1993). According to the sociocultural perspective, literacy practices are ways that individuals meaningfully interact with written language (Bloome & Green, 2015; Street, 1995). When children and families, or students and teachers meaningfully interact with a text, their interactions are interwoven with the practices of thinking, believing, valuing, talking, and socializing. An individual's race, social class, culture, and linguistic background intersect with these interactions.

To be clear, literacy practices cannot be separated from the context or the learning experience in which they are enacted. Literacy practices enacted within classroom contexts are commonly labeled as *school-based literacy practices* and the practices that children and families enact with each other in their home contexts as *family literacy practices* (Edwards & Peltier, 2016; Gallego & Hollingsworth, 2000).

Before turning to the research literature about how teachers might connect family literacy practices with high-leverage teaching practices during literacy instruction, I want to dive deeper into the concept of family literacy practices. A child engages in family literacy practices when they co-construct or co-use written language with a family member, such as an older sibling, parent, or relative (Morrow, 1995; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). As Morrow and colleagues (1995) explained, family literacy practices can occur spontaneously (e.g., reading a food label to select the right item) or in planned activities (e.g., writing a card to a relative). Family literacy practices

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are embedded in the home context; thus, they reflect the ethnic, racial, linguistic, and cultural heritage of the family. Bloome and colleagues (2018) reminded educators that it is important to acknowledge that family literacy practices might be (dis)similar to the literacy practices enacted within classroom contexts.

Leveraging Family Literacy Practices

Teachers who are focused on the enactment of high-leverage teaching practices might wonder: Why should I incorporate students' family literacy practices into my explicit instruction or the ways that I ask students' about their thinking? From educational theorists like Piaget (1936) and Vygotsky (1978), we know that students learn new things by building upon what they already know. According to Risko and Walker-Dalhouse (2015), students draw from diverse layers of literacies, languages, ways of understanding, and experiences as they engage in classroom-based learning. These diverse layers of literacy practices may arise from students' literacy experiences with their families (Edwards, 2004; Taylor, 1983).

Research suggests that lowered expectations for striving students' literacy learning can be countered when higher-order literacy skills are taught in culturally and linguistically sensitive ways within the striving students' zone of proximal development (Portes & Salas, 2009; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2015). I offer, then, that Vygotsky's (1978) theory of zones of proximal development is a tool that teachers can use to understand how they can leverage striving students' family literacy practices when enacting high-leverage teaching practices during their literacy instruction. Vygotsky (1978) defined a student's zone of proximal development as the distance between what the student was able to accomplish independently and what the student was able to do with the support of an adult or peer.

To determine a striving student's zone of proximal development, teachers need to have an understanding of the student's present literacy practices. In her review of research on teaching

striving students, Wharton-McDonald (2011) concluded that expert teachers of striving students need to not only have a deep knowledge of the content, but also of their students. Deep knowledge of students' abilities, cultural influences, and histories can support teachers to enact high-leverage teaching practices that are responsive to students' zones of proximal development. With a deeper awareness and understanding of striving students' family literacy practices, teachers can design explicit instruction or elicit student thinking so that they utilize students' present literacy practices and available cultural resources.

In summary, teachers can view striving students' diverse literacy practices as assets to support literacy learning and mutual sense-making rather than deficits that hinder students' learning. Adopt this type of mindset may support teachers as they connect high-leverage teaching practices with striving students' family literacy practices during literacy instruction. To make these types of connections, teachers can use explicit instruction or how they elicit student thinking to support students to link their known literacy practices (i.e., present level of development) to the literacy practices they are teaching (i.e., potential level of development).

The Study

I spent part of the 2014-2015 school year with Liz, developing an understanding of how she approached literacy instruction for her striving students. Liz was beginning her third year as an elementary special education teacher. After having taught on the East Coast, she relocated to the Midwest and was hired as an early elementary resource room teacher at Logan Academy, a K-12 public charter school. Liz "pushed-in" to her striving students' general education classrooms, providing her support and services in this space so that students continued to have access to the general education curriculum. As Liz explained, "*I really enjoy my push-in time with my students. I feel that it is least restrictive and it provides my students and their teachers*

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more time in the classrooms."[7] Liz shared that most of her students were *"learning the basics—letter names, letter sounds, simple sight words."* Liz viewed these skills as the *"groundwork that students needed in order to even start to read or write*." Liz's statements revealed a focus to teach her striving students decoding skills since it was the foundation for later literacy learning.

I learned that like most teachers, Liz wanted to help her striving students succeed in school. Liz explained, *"I am always trying to figure out if something is not working for a kid, what can I do? I am always racking my brain...It is always a learning experience. I always feel like I want to get as much information as I can so that I can help these kids to the best of my abilities."* To better support her striving students, Liz sought avenues for growing professionally because as she shared, *"What might have worked for me in the past, it's not going to work for me in the future."* Liz's drive to further develop her teaching practices led her to voluntarily participate in my research about striving students and their family literacy practices.

Exploring How to Leverage Family Literacy Practices

I present two instructional episodes from Liz's teaching to illustrate how teachers can leverage striving students' family literacy practices when enacting the high-leverage teaching practices of explicitly teaching literacy and eliciting students' thinking during literacy instruction. For each instructional episode, I present an extended excerpt from Liz's teaching to illustrate how, as a novice teacher, she enacted initial forms of these two particular high-leverage teaching practices—explicit literacy instruction and eliciting student thinking. At points in the instructional episodes, I denote the specific language that Liz used with quotation marks and italics to clearly indicate the high-leverage practices she did use and the literacy practices she did leverage.

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7   I use italics to denote Liz or her students' specific language.

As a novice teacher, Liz is still developing her enactment of high-leverage teaching practices during literacy instruction. After I describe each instructional episode, I then suggest how Liz might enhance the enactment of her high-leverage teaching practices. My suggestions focus on how Liz can expand the ways that she leverages her striving students' family literacy practices. These suggestions outline possible approaches teachers might use to create space to draw on students' family literacy practices as they enact high-leverage teaching practices during literacy instruction.

King Penguins

I first illustrate how Liz enacted the high-leverage teaching practices of explicitly teaching her striving students and eliciting their thinking during a small group literacy lesson. Liz designed her small group instruction to use the curriculum materials from the general education core reading program. As Liz shared, "*Right now in class, something that was a weakness on their (the striving students) last A-Net testing (the school's progress monitoring assessments) was finding the main idea and details from a text. So that's actually what we have been working on.*" That is, Liz used her knowledge of the students' Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals and the school's progress monitoring data to determine the focus of her explicit instruction—identifying the main ideas and details in a text.

For the day's lesson, Liz began her explicit instruction by reading a short informational text about king penguins with her students. Liz explained, "*I'm going to read this to you. And then when we are finished reading, we're going to work together to fill out the graphic organizer on the back of it*" (see Figure 4.1). Liz began by reading the first section of the text about the king penguin's appearance. When she finished reading aloud, Liz explicitly directed the students to "*highlight some important information in this section because we're going to look at all the sections and highlight the important information.*" Through a series of question and response

exchanges, Liz elicited the students' ideas about what were the main ideas and details of the text. Then Liz explicitly guided the students through the text to identify and highlight the important information for the appearance section and all subsequent text sections.

Figure 4.1

King Penguin Graphic Organizer

After Liz finished explicitly supporting the students with reading and highlighting the text, Liz shared, "*Now we're going to flip our paper over. And if you take a look at this side, we have a graphic organizer and we're going to fill it out together based off of all the things we highlighted on the other side.*" Liz used the high-leverage teaching practices of explicit instruction and eliciting student thinking to complete the graphic organizer one section at a time. Collaboratively, Liz and the students identified the appropriate heading in the text, reviewed what information was highlighted, summarized this information, and then wrote the summary as bullet points on the graphic organizer.

For example, Liz explicitly guided the small group through the first portion of the graphic organizer. Liz explained, "*Okay, so here, it says looks like. Go ahead and turn your paper over and let's see what we highlighted under what it looks like. Under the appearance it says that the*

tail, back, the head are black. So I'm going to abbreviate this so we don't have to write as much...So we do a little bullet point and we say tail. If you need help spelling the words, remember they're on the back because you highlighted them, right?" After Liz and the students had completed the graphic organizer, the students drew a picture the king penguin in the center circle on the graphic organizer. Liz ended the lesson by asking the students to share one thing that they had learned about king penguins.

To review, Liz used the latest progress monitoring assessment data to determine the students' zones of proximal development, namely that her students needed explicit instruction in identifying the main ideas and details in a text. Liz enacted the high-leverage teaching practices of explicit instruction and eliciting student thinking to teach her striving students the literacy strategies of highlighting key details and recording these details on a graphic organizer. During the lesson, Liz provided necessary accommodations such as reading the text. The provision of the accommodations and Liz's explicit instruction in how to apply the literacy strategies served to bridge the distance between the students' current literacy skills and practices and the focus of the lesson, highlighting and summarizing main ideas and details. In other words, Liz demonstrated a strong novice enactment of the high-leverage teaching practices of explicit literacy instruction and eliciting student thinking.

To extend this novice enactment, I suggest that Liz could alter how she enacted the high-leverage teaching practices of explicit instruction and eliciting student thinking during the lesson. In particular, she could use these high-leverage teaching practices to intentionally incorporate striving students' family literacy practices. The first step to connecting her high-leverage teaching practices with striving students' family literacy practices during the lesson is for Liz to develop an awareness of her striving students' family literacy practices. I adapt prior research (e.g., Cremin et al., 2012; Galindo, 2000) addressing how teachers can develop critical

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awareness of the literacy practices striving students may bring into the classroom. Based on this research, I suggest Liz could have conversations with her striving students or their family members. During the conversations, Liz could ask about how the family co-creates texts to help remember important information. Following the conversations, she could write brief summaries of what she learned.

When planning the lesson about king penguins, Liz could refer back to the summaries she had written. She could identify how the family literacy practices were (dis)similar to the practices of highlighting details and recording these details in a graphic organizer. Liz could identify if there were specific family literacy practices that might complement the literacy strategies she intended to teach. If so, Liz could note these as practices that she would intentionally ask students to share when teaching the lesson.

When teaching the lesson, Liz could have her students read the text twice. During the first reading, Liz could prompt her striving students to use their family literacy practices to identify main ideas or details. She might ask the following:

- What ways do you and your family keep track of important information?
- How could we use those strategies to keep track of important details about king penguins?

She could then support students to use these strategies to record important details while reading.

During the second reading, Liz could explicitly teach the striving students how to highlight the main idea and details in the text. As part of her explicit instruction, Liz could guide the striving students to use the important details identified during the first reading to inform what text should be highlighted. Then, she could instruct students how to incorporate these details into the graphic organizer.

When concluding the lesson, Liz could elicit students' thinking about the strategies they used to identify the main ideas and details. Some questions she could ask include:

- What different strategies did we use to identify the main ideas and details?

- What are the (dis)advantages of each strategy?

- For what types of reading or writing activities might you use one of these strategies?

- Why would this be a good strategy to use?

During this conversation, Liz could be intentional about the questions she asks so that the conversation incorporates both the students' family literacy practices and the school-based practices of highlighting and summarizing with a graphic organizer.

In summary, Liz could leverage her striving students' family literacy practices after deepening an awareness of the striving students' family literacy practices. Liz could glean valuable "data" about students' zones of proximal development from conversations with the striving students and their families (Cremin et al., 2012; Galindo, 2000). For example, she might learn that a student routinely leaves notes for family members to remind them of missed phone calls, or needed grocery items. Liz could combine this knowledge of her striving students' family literacy practices with the school-based assessment data for a more complete understanding of the students' current literacy development. She then could intentionally design her explicit instruction of the text and how she elicited student thinking to build upon these family literacy practices. Knowing the students' current zones of literacy development could help Liz to identify how she might support the students during explicit instruction to draw upon their family literacy practices. As Liz incorporates her striving students' family literacy practices, her novice enactments of high-leverage teaching practices may become stronger and promote increased student learning.

Geese, Ducks, and Penguins

Liz routinely pushed into the general education classroom to support her 2nd grade

students during their literacy center rotations. On this particular day, Liz again utilized the high-

leverage teaching practices of explicit instruction and eliciting student thinking. At the beginning

of the literacy center, Liz called together two of her students, Dante and Travis, so that Liz could

explicitly teach the story from the core reading program. The story for the week was about a

goose with a hurt leg.

Liz began her explicit instruction by reading the title of the story. She then paused to ask

Dante and Travis about their understandings of what a goose was. Liz asked, "*What is a goose?*

Do you know what a goose is?" Travis responded that geese live in the water while Dante

replied that ducks drink water. Liz replied, "*They (geese) drink the water. Ok, but they're not*

ducks cause ducks are ducks." Liz then reposed the question of what a goose was and directed

the boys to look at the picture in the text. Through a series of questions and responses, Liz

clarified that ducks and geese were two different types of birds that live near water.

Next Liz asked, "*We know that they are birds. Have you ever seen a goose?"* Travis

responded that he hadn't while Dante had seen one near some water. Liz proceeded to then read

the initial pages of the story, stopping when she came to a picture of the goose. Liz explicitly

drew the boys' attention to looking at the picture to note the color of the goose's feathers and the

shape of the beak. Liz noted, "*So we know that the geese are black and white and gray and*

brown...You know, see their beaks. How long and skinny they are."

After listening to Liz, Dante pointed to the book and declared that the picture was of a

penguin and not a goose. Liz corrected Dante's misunderstanding by saying, *"They're not*

penguins. Remember?" Dante adamantly responded that the animal in the picture was white and

black. Liz's initial attempts to correct Dante's misunderstanding were unsuccessful. Liz paused

and considered that Dante might be connecting this story with a previous reading about king penguins. She pointed to the picture in the text and explained to Dante, *"Ok, but.. yes, penguins are black and white. You remember the penguins that we read bout the last time. But these are not penguins. They are a lot smaller than penguins. They have the same kind of coloring as penguins do. You are right."* Travis shared that he now saw it, while Dante remained quiet. The small group proceeded with reading and discussing the story.

In this instructional episode, Liz utilized the high-leverage teaching practices of explicit instruction and eliciting student think to orient Dante and Travis to the text and develop a shared understanding of what a goose looks like. Based on Dante's and Travis' responses to Liz's questions, it appears that neither of the boys had much experience involving geese. In this instructional episode, Liz's explicit instruction drew on school-based texts and literacy practices when eliciting the students' thinking. For instance, Liz directed the boys' attention to the current text when describing what a goose looked like. Additionally, she explicitly linked Dante's thinking to the prior school-based reading about king penguins. Similar to the first instructional episode, Liz demonstrated a strong novice enactment of these two high-leverage teaching practices. These enactments could be enhanced by intentionally prompting Dante and Travis to share about their family literacy practices when eliciting their thinking about the narrative text.

How might Liz then expand the ways that she elicits students' thinking to include opportunities for Travis and Dante to leverage their family literacy practices as they co-construct understandings of the text and the differences between geese, ducks and penguins? As teachers, we want to move beyond creating opportunities for students to share their background knowledge or experiences when eliciting their thinking. Teachers can enhance how they elicit student thinking by creating space to leverage students' literacy practices. Since students' family literacy practices are interwoven with their social practices of thinking, developing knowledge,

and speaking about prior experiences, teachers could use questions and conversations to explore how students engaged with family member(s) to interact with written language in a substantive way (Bloome & Green, 2015; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). Spending time in these types of conversations creates opportunities for students to freely draw on their diverse family literacy practices while they make sense of school-based texts (Edwards, 2004).

Similar to the King Penguin episode, Liz could talk with Dante and Travis to learn about students' family literacy practices (Hamel, 2003). Liz could use conversation to elicit Dante's thinking about why he thought the picture of the goose was of a penguin. Some examples of how Liz might elicit Dante's thinking include:

- What do you see in the picture that reminds you of penguins?

- How do you know that it is a picture of a penguin?

- Have you ever learned about penguins with your family? What resources did you use to learn about penguins? What information from the (book, internet, picture, visit to the zoo) helped you to know what penguins look like?

As the conversation evolved, Liz could focus on asking questions that might reveal Dante's family literacy practices. If Dante does share about his family literacy practices, Liz could record theses literacy practices on the graphic organizer presented in Figure 4.2, specifically under the *Family Literacy Practices* side of the "Present Zones of Development" table. Liz could also record any school-based literacy practices Dante happens to mention these during the conversation. These practices could be recorded under the *School-Based Literacy Practices* side of the "Present Zones of Development."

Figure 4.2

Zones of Proximal Development
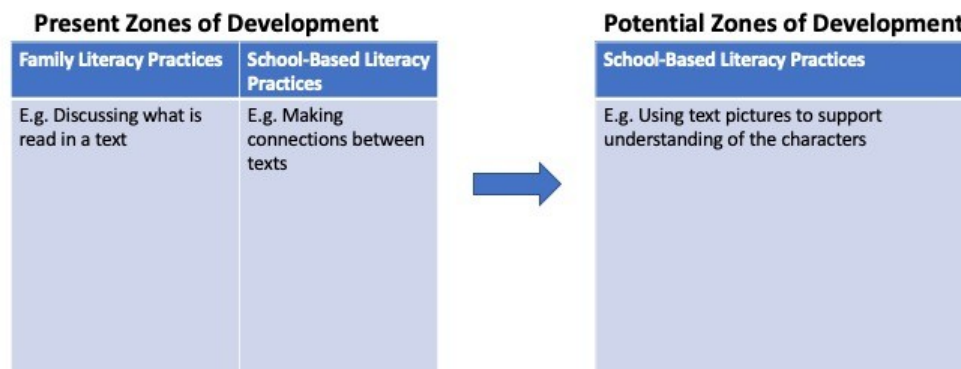
After teaching the lesson, Liz could reflect about which school-based literacy practices would be appropriate for the "Potential Zones of Development." She could consider how the literacy practices she recorded on the "Present Zones of Development" table relate to the practices identified on "Potential Zones of Development" table. More specifically, Liz could use these new insights about Dante's present zones of development to (re)construct deeper understandings of his diverse literacy practices. Liz could use these (re)constructed understandings to inform and enhance her novice enactments of the high-leverage teaching practices of explicit teaching and eliciting student thinking during future literacy instruction.

Concluding Thoughts

The two instructional episodes described how Liz enacted the high-leverage literacy teaching practices of explicit instruction and eliciting student thinking. I illustrated how Liz could expand these two high-leverage teaching practices to include leveraging her striving students' family literacy practices. In the lesson about king penguins, I suggested that Liz could learn about the students' family literacy practices and then summarize her learning (Cremin et al., 2012; Galindo, 2000). Liz could then use these summaries to determine how she could incorporate the students' family literacy practices into her enactment of the high-leverage

teaching practices of explicit instruction and eliciting student thinking. During the lesson, Liz

could use explicit instruction to link these family literacy practices with the literacy strategies of

highlighting main ideas and details; and then using a graphic organizer to summarize them.

In the lesson about the duck story, I offered that Liz could elicit Dante's thinking about

why he thought the picture was of a penguin. Liz could use the conversation to learn about the

types of literacy practices Dante enacted with his family (Cremin et al., 2012; Galindo, 2000).

Liz could use the high-leverage teaching practice of eliciting student thinking to (re)construct her

understanding of Dante's family literacy practices and his present level of literacy development.

She could then use this knowledge to create a zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978)

in which they collaboratively make sense of the difference between geese, ducks and penguins.

Leveraging striving students' family literacy practices can seem like a daunting task

given that this type of teaching requires intentionality. Teachers will need to be intentional as

they develop understanding of their students' family literacy practices (Edwards, 2004; Galindo,

2000; Hamel, 2003). Teachers will then need to continue this intentionality as they critically

reflect about how to bridge these family literacy practices with high-leverage literacy practices.

Teachers should not be discouraged, but should commit to being intentional about connecting

students' family literacy practices with high-leverage teaching practices so that they can teach

within students' zones of proximal development.

I suggest that valuing and incorporating striving students' family literacy practices will

help teachers to better serve and connect with their striving students. When teachers develop

fuller understandings of striving students' zones of proximal development, they may be able to

enact high-leverage teaching practices that create spaces for striving students to draw on their

diverse literacy practices. In summary, crafting literacy instruction to incorporate both high-

leverage teaching practices and opportunities for striving students to leverage their family

literacy practices has the potential to positively impact the education of striving students.

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