

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: BEYOND BENCHMARKS:
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
PRESERVICE TEACHERS' VISIONS
FOR USING DIVERSE FAMILY
LITERACY PRACTICES TO GUIDE
CLASSROOM READING INSTRUCTION

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Many preservice teachers are entering the field of teaching feeling unprepared to collaborate with families to foster the growth of students (Caspe, Lopez, Chu, & Weiss, 2011); further, they are less prepared to engage families from various cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and other diverse backgrounds (Patte, 2011). Given that using vision has been shown to help to prepare preservice teachers for their future classrooms (Duffy, 2002; Turner & Mercado, 2009), this study examined the visions of elementary preservice teachers and how they envisioned the role that families and their diverse literacy practices will play in their future reading instruction.

Using qualitative research methods and a sociocultural lens, this dissertation investigated the visions of 34 elementary preservice teachers.

Throughout the semester, the preservice teachers participated in two course assignments: a.) they attended a local family literacy event hosted by Ethiopian American parents who wanted their children to maintain their Ethiopian culture, and b.) the preservice teachers chose one family member of one of their students to interview to learn more about their family literacy practices. Seven of the 34 preservice teachers were selected to participate in individual interviews and one focus group to further examine their visions.

Through the review of their vision statements, course assignments, interviews, and the focus group, I examined their visions through a “funds of knowledge” (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) lens. Additionally, I created a Funds of Knowledge Rubric to assess whether their visions were “emerging,” “developing,” or “advancing” toward using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction and to what extent that they held a “funds of knowledge” perspective.

Findings illustrated that the majority of the preservice teachers envisioned families as supporters of the literacy learning that occurs in the classroom by extending the learning at home. Only five of the 34 preservice teachers had visions of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom instruction. Suggestions for supporting preservice teachers’ vision development and strengthening teacher education initiatives around preparing teachers to learn about families and integrating their literacy practices into instruction are discussed.

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TO GUIDE CLASSROOM READING INSTRUCTION

by

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Dedication

For my grandmother,

Sharon Sue Dillow.

She passed down her many funds of knowledge.

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No man or woman is an island. To think that we can find success on our own is naïve. I have had the privilege of being surrounded by people throughout my life who have offered advice, provided support, modeled how to do things, and guided me through mentorship. Like every other area in my life, collaboration and teamwork made this dissertation possible.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Preparing teachers to teach using vision as a tool is not a new phenomenon (Duffy, 2002; Hammerness, 2006; Kennedy, 2006; Turner, 2007; Vaughn & Faircloth, 2013). For example, scholars have investigated the development of teachers' visions for teaching reading through a culturally and linguistically responsive lens (Turner & Mercado, 2009), examined preservice and in-service teachers' visions compared to their practice (Hammerness, 2006), and explored the visions of collaboration among mainstream teachers and teachers of English Language Learners (Peercy & Martin-Beltran, 2012). Among the many studies that have used vision to understand preservice teachers and teachers, most of them have focused on teachers' roles or classroom instructional practices/strategies. Although some scholars have studied how factors beyond the classroom affect teachers' visions for teaching, such as parents' roles in the education of their children (Turner & Mercado, 2009) or working with parents from culturally diverse backgrounds (Kim, Turner, & Mason, 2015), using vision to understand how elementary preservice teachers plan to learn about diverse families' literacy practices continues to be an understudied area within the vision literature in teacher education. Developing elementary preservice teachers' visions for learning about diverse families and their literacy practices helps to prepare teachers to engage families in literacy and to contribute to their classroom reading instruction. Greater insight into how teacher educators can use vision to prepare elementary preservice teachers to identify diverse family literacy practices and to use them to guide their classroom instruction can provide the field of teacher education with additional ways to bridge outside factors to the

classroom instructional context, which ultimately benefits future teachers, students, and their families and contributes to the family literacy and teacher education literature.

Many preservice teachers report that they do not feel prepared to work with families. One of the reasons preservice teachers in traditional elementary education programs may feel unprepared to work with diverse families is due to the consistent number of White, middle-class females making up the majority of the elementary teacher education programs (Morrell, 2010) as classrooms and communities across the United States become increasingly more culturally, linguistically, and racially diverse (Iwai, 2013). Caspe, Lopez, Chu, and Weiss (2011) stress that out of the preK-12 students in the United States more than 33% are from minority backgrounds and many are recent immigrants, non-native English speakers, or from diverse religious communities. The need for more diversity among traditional teacher education preservice teachers clearly exists, but that is beyond the scope of this study. I highlight the overall contrast between elementary preservice teachers and their students to emphasize the rather large problem faced by traditional teacher educators to prepare preservice teachers to work with diverse families. Although preparing elementary preservice teachers to develop positive dispositions toward families from diverse backgrounds is a challenge, it is not impossible. Kidd, Sanchez, and Thorp (2007) write, “Fortunately, it is possible for teachers with cultures different from their students to provide effective instruction when they approach teaching in a way that is responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity of their students” (p. 317). One of the ways that elementary preservice teachers can become prepared to work with diverse families is to develop a vision for learning about diverse

families and their literacy practices and to plan their instruction for literacy through a family responsive lens.

In this chapter, I first present the challenge that many elementary preservice teachers report that they do not feel adequately prepared to engage families. Next, I outline the purpose of this study, the research questions for this study, and the significance of this study. I conclude this chapter with definitions of terms to help to guide readers for the remaining chapters in this study.

Statement of the Problem

Many preservice teachers are entering the field of teaching feeling unprepared to engage families or to collaborate with families to foster the growth and development of students (Caspe, Lopez, Chu, & Weiss, 2011). Further, many elementary preservice teachers have reported that they do not feel prepared to work with diverse families. According to a study of 200 early childhood and elementary preservice teachers (juniors and seniors) in a public university, Patte (2011) found that 64% of the preservice teachers mentioned a lack of training and professional development, cultural (56% reported) and language (43% reported) differences between the parents and teachers, parents' socioeconomic levels (28% reported), and parents' level of education (10% reported) would hinder the development of family-school partnerships. Not only are preservice teachers reporting a lack of preparation to work with diverse families, many do not intend to work in schools with diverse populations. Preservice teachers in traditional teacher education programs typically plan to teach in schools with less diversity among the student population. Lazar (2016) writes that preservice teachers in traditional teacher education programs "do not have their sights set on teaching in underserved and/or urban

schools that serve high concentrations of students of color and emergent bilinguals” (p. 142). With their sights set on non-diverse schools, some preservice teachers do not see the need to prepare to develop relationships with diverse families.

Additionally, Zeichner, Bowman, Guillen, and Napolitan (2016) suggest that preparing preservice teachers to work with families has been a goal of teacher education for over 50 years, yet they argue that “there has been only minimal attention to both the preparation of teachers to work with families and communities and to community field experiences” (p. 277). Other researchers argue that many traditional teacher education programs do include courses to prepare teachers to engage families, but that they are usually a focus in the early childhood education and special education programs (Caspe, Lopez, Chu, and Weiss, 2011). Accordingly, greater attention to preparing preservice teachers in elementary programs to work with and learn about diverse families is warranted.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine how elementary preservice teachers envision engaging families and learning about their diverse family literacy practices. This study will also closely examine the preservice teachers’ visions for the role that families play in the classroom reading instruction. Ishimaru, Torres, Salvador, Lott, Williams, and Tran (2016) maintain that families offer cultural and linguistic expertise, social resources, and lived experiences that are often “largely untapped” (p. 851). Families’ “funds of knowledge” (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) are ready to be accessed, recognized and valued, and used by teachers. Based on the work of these scholars, it is vital that researchers discover how elementary preservice teachers of reading envision their

students' and families' diverse literacy practices playing a role in their classroom reading instruction, and how they plan to tap into these literacy funds of knowledge?

The literature on teacher vision suggests that using vision as a tool to help to prepare teachers to teach shows promising results for classroom instruction and practices, thus the exploration of elementary preservice teachers' visions to identify and use family literacy practices to guide their classroom instructional practices can provide insight into the ways that teacher educators can prepare teachers to engage families.

Family members play a critical role in the development and mastery of literacy skills. For example, research studies suggest that vocabulary development begins with the family (Hart & Risley, 1995), siblings can help to co-construct reading skills (Gregory, 1998; Gregory, 2001), and families possess cultural knowledge and skills that can be utilized in classroom instruction (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2005). For nearly 35 years, researchers have investigated how children learn to read in relation to the social and familial factors that contribute to literacy achievement beyond the classroom (e. g., Heath, 1983; Taylor, 1983; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 1991; Saracho, 2002). In 1983, Denny Taylor's seminal work titled *Family Literacy* initiated a line of research around "the ways families, children, and extended family members use literacy at home and in their community" (Morrow, 2009, p. 378). Taylor's work launched this field into full gear, and in the years following, researchers in this area have studied family literacy programs, relationships between literacy use in the home and students' success at school, and how literacy is naturally used in the context of the home (Tracey & Morrow, 2012) in order to better understand students and their families in hopes of providing more equitable and adequate literacy instruction.

Because family members play such an important role in children's literacy development, it is important to examine how elementary education preservice teachers of reading envision using family literacy practices in their classroom literacy instruction as one way to bridge the home and school environments and to foster teacher-family partnerships. In fact, many scholars have examined a wide range of diverse families and their literacy practices (Heath, 1983; Gregory, Long, & Volk, 2004; Saracho, 2000a; Purcell-Gates, 1996), but this knowledge does not always transfer to every teachers' classroom context, nor is every teacher aware of all of these studies within the field of family literacy. Because they are in prime positions to lay firm foundations for their future teaching careers, elementary preservice teachers should be equipped with the tools to develop visions for learning about families and their diverse literacy practices so that they can consider ways to identify the diverse family literacy practices of students and their families in their specific classroom each and every year and use them to plan their classroom reading instruction. Every school across the United States is increasingly becoming more culturally, linguistically, socioeconomically, and racially diverse (Morrell, 2010), so preparing elementary education teachers to view diverse families as members of the school community with rich resources and assets to offer will hopefully instill in them strong and clear visions for recognizing and valuing family literacy practices that can drive their classroom reading instruction. Preservice teachers will also be more likely to engage diverse families in literacy if they have developed and can articulate a clear vision for learning about family literacy practices and ways that they can guide their reading instruction in the classroom.

Through in-class assignments, a field trip, a survey, and individual interviews, I will investigate elementary preservice teachers' visions for learning about diverse family literacy practices and teaching reading, and I will explore how learning about families and their literacy practices can help to shape their visions. I will seek to understand their level of preparedness to engage families in literacy. This study investigates vision as a beneficial tool that has been used by reading teacher educators (Turner & Mercado, 2009) to examine the extent to which elementary preservice teachers envision using diverse family literacy practices as additional literacy data to drive their classroom reading instruction, to discover how these preservice teachers' visions for teaching reading change over the course of one semester, and to identify a level of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy among these elementary preservice teachers. This will allow teacher educators and researchers to further investigate ways to improve their teacher education experience and ensure that they are prepared in all areas, including how to engage diverse families in literacy.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which elementary preservice teachers envision using diverse family literacy practices to drive their classroom reading instruction, to explore how these preservice teachers' visions for teaching reading change over the course of one semester, and to identify a level of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy among these elementary preservice teachers. The following research questions will guide my proposed study.

1. How do elementary preservice teachers envision diverse family literacy practices playing a role in their future classroom reading instruction?

2. How do elementary preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom reading instruction develop over the course of one semester?
3. To what extent do elementary preservice teachers feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy?
 - a. What do preservice teachers identify from their reading methods courses as supports to the shaping of their visions to engage families in literacy? (e.g., assignments, class lectures, etc.)
 - b. What do preservice teachers foresee as some of the challenges to enacting their visions for recognizing and using diverse family literacy practices in their future classrooms of reading?

Significance of the Study

This study addresses the need to better prepare elementary preservice teachers to engage and learn more about families, especially families from diverse backgrounds, and to envision the role that diverse family literacy practices can play in their classroom reading instruction. Drawing on a “funds of knowledge” (Gonzalez, Moll, Amanti, 2005) approach, this study asks elementary education preservice teachers to specifically learn about diverse family literacy practices and think about ways that those literacy practices can be used in their classroom reading instruction. In this study, I plan discover how vision can help novice teachers design reading instruction based on students' literacy assets both when they are in their teacher education coursework and in their future classrooms.

As previously indicated, teachers who were prepared in a traditional teacher education program not only make up approximately 75% of teacher preparation programs, but they are more likely to remain in the profession of teaching longer than teachers who are alternatively certified (e.g., Teach for America). Thus, an examination of visions for teaching reading of elementary preservice teachers prepared in programs that produce the majority of our teaching force can help teacher educators to better understand the factors that shape their visions for their reading instruction and how they view the role of diverse family literacy practices within that vision for teaching reading.

With the student population across our country becoming more diverse while the majority of our preservice teachers continue to come from White, middle class backgrounds, it is imperative that teacher educators find ways to prepare preservice teachers to reach all of our students based on their assets. In addition to race/ethnicity, language, and religious differences, diverse literacy practices can be found in families who differ in income, ability, sexual orientation, level of education, and other background factors (e.g., hometown/region). Just as teacher candidates are taught to use literacy assessment data to drive their reading and writing instruction, preservice teachers could benefit from learning about ways to gather information about diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

Definitions of Terms

Preservice teacher refers to one enrolled in a traditional four-year elementary teacher education program, unless otherwise indicated.

To *engage diverse families in literacy* means teachers reach out to learn more about the literacy practices of families and to provide resources in literacy. To use

Ishimaru et al.'s definition, family engagement “recognize[es] broader notions of family as well as a broader set of behaviors related to student learning and development both in and out of schools” (p. 853). When preservice teachers engage families in literacy, they reach out to families and learn about their unique characteristics and practices that can help the teacher understand additional ways to tailor the curriculum for each student in his or her classroom.

Diverse family literacy practices include practices around a form of communication (i.e., reading, writing, listening, speaking) used among family members that may be unique to that specific family, community, or culture. Family members can vary with regards to, but not limited to, race/ethnicity, culture, language, religion, ability, socioeconomic status, level of education, and sexual orientation. The literacy practices can range from television practices (Perry, 2009) to siblings reading together (Gregory, 1998) to storytelling (Perry, 2010). In a study of preservice teachers observing the diverse lives of their students and communities, Lenski, Crawford, Crumpler, and Stallworth. (2005) share one of their participant's, Jodi, perspectives on diversity. Jodi wrote, “Diversity is far reaching. It's not just race/ethnicity. My classroom will be full of children who are diverse and I want to be aware and sensitive to all kinds of diversity (race, gender, academics, economics, etc.) to be an effective teacher” (p. 8). Diversity includes the specifics aspects that make each individual and his or her family unique. Drawing on the work of Lenski et al. (2005) that investigated ways to prepare preservice teachers to address cultural differences, I view diversity in this study as a broad range of areas. In the education literature and in our society, the term diversity can sometimes be viewed through a single-dimension lens of race/ethnicity, which can dilute the meaning

of the term diversity. My goal in this study was to assess how the preservice teachers viewed diversity and to examine the various dimensions they included in their visions for teaching reading. Other scholars choose to use the terms dominant and non-dominant to frame differences between the mainstream culture (e.g., school norms, White and middle class) and communities and families that do not align with the mainstream culture (e.g., marginalized families, immigrants and refugees) in order to highlight issues of power and privilege (Landa & Stephens, 2017). The concepts of dominant and non-dominant, in my view, seem to be binary, as in an individual is either from the dominant or non-dominant culture. This can create a challenge to describe an individual whose race/ethnicity is from the non-dominant culture, but the individual may have grown up in an affluent family and community making part of their identity from the dominant culture. It was my goal as an instructor of preservice teachers to help them widen their view of diversity and to think about the term in its pure meaning. Diverse family literacy practices in this study include practices that may or may not align with the dominant school culture and expectations. But, an understanding of each individual student's home lives and home literacy practices can guide a teacher's classroom reading instruction; and this study emphasizes the importance of learning about the diverse literacy practices of students and their families in order to move beyond the risk of making assumptions of students and their home lives.

Elementary preservice teachers' visions for teaching reading include the plans, goals, and intentional thoughts about specific dimensions of their reading instruction derived from reflection, experiences, and social construction. These dimensions include the following: a) how they envision using assessment for teaching reading, b) how they intend to plan for their reading instruction, c) how they see their classroom environment

in regards to reading/literacy, d) how they envision the role of the teacher, and d) how they view the role of diverse family members in regards to their reading instruction. In this study, I view vision as a plan held within the mind of an individual preservice teacher that can be found somewhere between the knowledge base and the action/practice.

Classroom reading instruction involves what takes place primarily during the reading block within the classroom during the school day. Reading blocks in elementary classrooms usually last approximately 90 minutes and can include activities such as guided reading, literacy centers, mini-lessons on reading strategies, read alouds, and independent reading.

Conclusion

In this introductory chapter, I highlighted the consistent number of White, middle-class female preservice teachers coming out of traditional teacher education programs and entering schools with diverse populations of students. The mismatch between our teachers and our students calls for a need to examine the ways that elementary preservice teachers can develop visions for teaching reading that responds to the needs and unique differences of each and every student in the classroom. This dissertation's goal is to identify how elementary preservice teachers' visions are shaped and developed over one semester of coursework that provides opportunities to identify diverse literacy practices of families and to consider ways to use that knowledge to plan their classroom reading instruction. Another objective of this study is to investigate the elementary preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction and the factors that helped to shape their visions throughout their teacher education program. Findings from this study can help to inform the field of

teacher education and help to identify ways to better prepare our preservice teachers of reading to learn about families and to use diverse family literacy practices as additional data to drive their classroom reading instruction. In the next chapter, I provide an overview of the literature that used vision in teacher education and reading teacher education and conclude with my theoretical framework for using vision in this study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

“You start with a vision. You don’t start with just a bunch of stuff you need to do.”

-Gay Su Pinnell

Just as the beginning quote suggests, teachers should begin their careers with a vision—not a to-do list—and teacher educators should help elementary preservice teachers to develop strong visions for teaching (Hammerness, 2003). Others have commonly described vision as ‘a play with many acts’ (Kennedy, 2006, p. 207), “images of ideal classroom practice” (Hammerness, 2006, p. 1), and “touchstones for literacy teachers” (Turner, 2007, p. 13), and below I engage in further description of how other scholars’ definitions and use of vision shape how I define and use vision in this particular study. By vision, I mean the personal framework and set of realistic plans for teaching reading developed by each elementary preservice teacher through experiences, thoughtful reflection, and the building of content knowledge and pedagogy. As mentioned in the first chapter, scholars have been investigating preservice and in-service teachers’ visions for teaching for many years (Duffy, 2002; Hammerness, 2003; Hammerness, 2006; Kennedy, 2006; Turner, 2007; Vaughn & Faircloth, 2013; Scales, 2013), and more can be learned and understood about teachers’ visions for teaching. In this chapter, I intend to demonstrate the need to examine elementary preservice teachers’ visions for teaching reading with a specific focus on how they envision learning about diverse family literacy practices and using them to guide their classroom reading instructional practices. This chapter is organized into three sections: 1) teacher vision and existing frameworks within the teacher education landscape, 2) visions in reading teacher education, and 3) my

theoretical framework for using vision in this study. Drawing from the body of literature on vision in teacher education, I begin with ways scholars have defined vision, the significance of using vision, and how vision has been used in teacher education.

Vision Within the Teacher Education Landscape

Defining Vision

What is vision? Shulman (1987) and Zeichner and Liston's (1987) work published nearly 30 years ago provides a foundation for the teacher vision research. Shulman (1987) shares the story of Nancy, a high-school English teacher of 25 years, and how she used a conceptual framework to teach literature throughout the school year. He writes that Nancy had a "flexible style" and that she "adapted to the characteristics of [her] learners" (Shulman, 1987, p. 3). Shulman suggests that Nancy had a strong knowledge base for teaching that he argues should be the foundation for all preservice teachers to be effective in their instruction. His categories for the knowledge base that teachers should possess include: a) content knowledge, b) general pedagogical knowledge (i.e., classroom management), c) curriculum knowledge, d) pedagogical content knowledge, e) knowledge of learners, f) knowledge of educational contexts, and g) knowledge of educational ends, purposes, values, and their philosophical and historical grounds. From these seven categories, pedagogical content knowledge seems to set the stage for teacher vision in that Shulman describes it as "that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding" (p. 8). Shulman's definition of the process of pedagogical reasoning that turns into action is an "image of teaching [that] involves the exchange of ideas" (p. 13). He writes, "The idea is grasped, probed, comprehended by a teacher, who

then must turn it about in his or her mind, seeing many sides of it. Then the idea is shaped or tailored...” (p. 13). Although Shulman did not use the term *vision* in this portrait, Nancy did have a vision for teaching all of her students to read novels based on their needs and she adapted her instruction accordingly. Her vision stemmed from obtaining a strong foundation of knowledge and the process of pedagogical reasoning that Shulman (1987) describes as “a process of thinking about what they are doing and an adequate base of facts, principles, and experiences from which to reason” (p. 13). From her vision, Nancy was able to enact her effective pedagogical practices. Through the process of pedagogical reasoning (Shulman, 1987), preservice teachers can begin to develop a vision for how they will use certain instructional strategies or when to pull out specific tools from their “pedagogical toolkits” (Kim, Turner, & Mason, 2015, p. 109).

Laying additional groundwork for teacher vision, Zeichner and Liston (1987) examined an elementary student teaching program at a large Midwestern university to demonstrate how the use of reflective teaching prepared student teachers with content and pedagogical knowledge while developing self-directed teachers. They argue that the act of reflection allows student teachers to “exercise their judgment about the content and processes of their work and to give some direction to the shape of schools as educational environments” (p. 24). Similar to Shulman (1987), Zeichner and Liston (1987) do not use the term *vision* in their study, but the vernacular that they both include acts as a point of departure for how other scholars have described vision in teacher education. In their study, the elementary student teaching program used journals for self-reflection, seminars for collaboration and discussion of educational research, supervisory conferences, inquiry-based projects (e.g., action research and ethnographic studies), and the student

teaching experiences as their curricular framework to develop reflective teaching among the preservice teachers. Upon review of several studies that assessed the elementary student teaching program, they found that some of their program goals were being addressed, but not all of them. One key finding was that their approach had little effect on changing the preservice teachers' views toward teaching. Zeichner and Liston write, "Students came into the program with initial perspectives and beliefs about the role of the teacher and the curriculum, and left with those same beliefs essentially intact" (p. 36). Based on this finding, they call for longitudinal studies to follow student teachers into their beginning years of teaching to investigate whether or not the effects of the program become evident once they start their teaching careers.

Creating a framework that outlines key tasks of learning to teach over time, Feiman-Nemser (2001) argues that learning to teach goes beyond subject matter, students, curriculum, and pedagogy. She suggests that teaching "involves transforming different kinds of knowledge into a flexible, evolving set of commitments, understandings, and skills" (p. 1048). Feiman-Nemser provides a continuum of the phases of learning to teach, starting with the teacher education program, then moving through the induction stage for new teachers, and concluding with the ongoing professional development of teachers. In the preservice teacher phase, Feiman-Nemser calls for an examination of one's beliefs and their vision for teaching and to develop an understanding of content knowledge, students, issues within diversity, and the tools to continue to investigate teaching and learning. This phase emphasizes the importance of developing, thinking, learning, and reflecting. The induction stage involves more of the doing in that Feiman-Nemser suggests teachers in this stage should design their

instructional programs, create a classroom learning community, and incorporate their ranges of instructional strategies. The third stage of professional development continues throughout teachers' careers; here, Feiman-Nemser invokes terms such as extend, strengthen, and expand. In this phase, teachers should further their knowledge base; extend and refine their ideas around curricula, instruction, and assessment; and enhance and build on their leadership skills. While all of these stages involve teachers' visions, her continuum highlights the significance of developing visions for teaching during their preservice years. Feiman-Nemser contends that preservice teachers should develop "visions of what is possible and desirable in teaching to inspire and guide their professional learning and practice" (p. 1017) and that it is the responsibility of teacher educators to help preservice teachers' examine their beliefs and change them to form "images of good teaching and strong professional commitments" (p. 1017).

Hammerness' (1997; 1999; 2003; 2006) extensive work on teacher vision drew from these scholars and made an indelible mark in the teacher education literature regarding teacher visions. Hammerness (2006) defines vision as the "images of ideal classroom practice ... [that] embody teachers' hopes for the future and play a significant role in their lives and work" (p. 1). Following teachers from their student teaching experiences into their early years of teaching, Hammerness (2006) shows how teachers' visions vary but how they all have views of their ideal situation and are either moving toward it or realizing that they are far away from it. One example includes Jake, a seventh-year social studies teacher at a large public high school in California. Jake's vision played a critical role in his decision of where he would teach and the types of professional learning opportunities that he would choose to engage in his school. Jake

noted that he viewed his vision to play out in small moments of ideal practices and this outlook motivated and sustained him to keep teaching. Another example involves Carlos, a preservice teacher at a large high school in northern California. His vision for teaching encompassed a view of his community and “centered upon helping the Latino students in his classroom” (Hammerness, 2006, p. 61). Hammerness describes Carlos’ vision as a “social vision” (p. 62) and he planned to create courses that would allow his Latino students come to “understand and appreciate their own cultural and historical backgrounds” (p. 70). Comparing Jake and Carlos’ visions, Hammerness describes Carlos’ as being incredibly distant and more ideal, yet he maintained his commitment to his vision and continued to explore the possibilities. While Carlos continued to seek his ideal situation, Jake’s vision sustained him by offering small instructional moments that aligned to his ideals. Hammerness’ (2003; 2006) use of vision involved the examination of high school teachers’ views of their ideal classroom or school situation and how those visions impacted their practice.

In contrast to Hammerness’ (2006) definition and use of teacher vision, Kennedy (2006) describes teachers’ visions as a play with many acts and that teachers plan “each unit, each lesson, each activity ... with different characters playing different roles, with a problem at the beginning and a denouement at the end” (p. 207). Visions, based on Kennedy’s definition, are not “idealist, or head-in-the-clouds” or “idealistic imaginings” (p. 207), but they are realistic, purposeful, filled with direction. Kennedy contends that teachers are thinking about six broad areas for teaching, these include: 1) covering desirable content, 2) fostering student learning, 3) increasing students’ willingness to participate, 4) maintaining lesson momentum, 5) creating a civil classroom community,

and 6) attending to their own cognitive and emotional needs. Kennedy's use of vision is specific to the everyday plans of the classroom and the particular aspects of teaching and learning; and the vision provides a sense of purpose and direction.

Based on the literature presented in this section, vision in teacher education can be broad and idealistic (Hammerness, 2006), purposeful and realistic (Kennedy, 2006), or somewhere in between (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). As some scholars have illustrated, teacher education programs play a significant role in the development and formation of preservice teachers' visions (Feiman-Nemser, Tamir, & Hammerness, 2014). The use of vision as a tool to help preservice teachers develop specific images of their future teaching can be beneficial in helping novice teachers have a sense of purpose and to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of their students. Next, I discuss the importance of developing vision in our preservice teachers and how visions can contribute to teachers' instruction in a powerful way.

Significance of Vision

Why vision? Strong visions demonstrate leadership, leave room for creativity within instruction, and allow teachers to adapt to the needs of each and every student in the classroom. Duffy (2002) writes that "the best teachers are not followers" and teachers with strong visions can "adjust, modify, adapt, and invent; they do not emulate" (p. 333). Preservice teachers who enter the profession with strong visions for teaching can become leaders in their schools and think about curriculum and instruction for reading through an inventive lens allowing them to try new approaches. Further, teacher visions can create a "strong sense of purpose and direction" (Kennedy, 2006, p. 205) and allow for self-reflection to identify areas of success and areas for improvement. According to Feiman-

Nemser (2001), “visions connect important values and goals to concrete classroom practices” (p. 1017). Turner (2007) refers to visions as “touchstones for literacy teachers” and can act “as a source of personal strength and professional integrity” (p. 13). In a way, visions act as the starting point and can greatly impact teachers’ decisions and practices.

Visions are also crucial to allowing teachers the flexibility to adapt instruction to meet the needs of all students. Turner, Applegate, and Applegate (2011) suggest that new teachers can become literacy leaders by expanding upon their visions for teaching reading that they developed in their teacher education program. Turner et al. (2011) write, “New teachers on the path toward literacy leadership learn to expand their vision as they acquire new strategies for teaching literacy, use new assessments, and work with different groups of students” (p. 550). As new research and instructional strategies emerge in the field, teachers must be able to digest this information and know how to incorporate it into their vision for teaching. Teachers’ visions allow them to clearly see their plans for their classrooms based on their personal goals and individual thoughts, not to necessarily follow someone else’s checklist or framework. With vision being such a significant tool for teachers and their future classrooms, it is important to examine how researchers have used vision in teacher education. In the next section, I unpack key studies that have used vision in the field of teacher education.

Vision Within the Teacher Education Landscape

How has vision been used in the teacher education landscape? The scholarly work regarding and using teacher vision took hold in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Hammerness, 1997; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Duffy, 2002). In the last 20 years, the body of teacher education research regarding and using vision has expanded to include

how vision can be used to understand aspects that keep teachers in the teaching profession and how ideal images compare to actual reality of the classroom (Hammerness, 2003), to gain insight into the dimensions that shape teachers' practice and the decisions they make on a daily basis (Hammerness, 2006), and to examine the identity and agency among teachers (Horowitz, 2014).

Exploring the visions of two first-year high school teachers, Kelly, a science teacher, and Andrea, an English teacher, Hammerness (2003) found many differences between Kelly's vision and practice and Andrea's vision and practice. Hammerness describes three key dimensions to vision: a) focus, b) range, and c) distance. Kelly's vision focused on her students becoming independent thinkers and envisioned a classroom where her students "can identify, develop and pursue their own interests" (p. 16). Kelly's vision ranged beyond just the classroom to encompass a view of collaboration with "like-minded colleagues" (p. 17). While Kelly felt that her vision was still in the distance, she believed that she was getting closer to closing the gap between her vision and her practice. Kelly said that "her vision was imminent" and that she and her "colleagues were actually going to attempt to implement her—and their—vision" (p. 20). Kelly also shared that she uses "her vision as a guide for practice constantly" (p. 21). These findings demonstrate how vision can help to achieve the ideal dream for one's practice by developing a vision and using it as a guide. Contrary to Kelly, the gap between Andrea's vision and practice was found to be incredibly wide. Andrea's focal point for her vision was to provide rich experiences around literature for her students so that they could develop strong communication skills. Andrea's initial range of her vision was quite narrow in that she viewed her classroom through the lens of her small private

high school experience and quickly realized that she would need to broaden that range to fit the needs of her diverse student population in a large public high school in a low-income community. Regarding the dimension of distance, Andrea believed that her vision was out of reach and that she “was being very idealistic” (p. 8). After reflecting, Andrea realized that she would need to adjust her vision in order to close the gap between her vision and her teaching practice that would best meet the needs of her students. Kelly mentioned that she was eager to remain in the teaching profession while Andrea mentioned that she was still struggling to decide. Hammerness’s (2003) findings show how vision can be used as a tool to investigate how teachers view their ideal classrooms, how they think about their teaching practices, and how likely they are to remain or to leave teaching.

Vision has also been used to learn more about beginning teachers’ identities and developing sense of agency. Horowitz (2014) followed thirty preservice teachers from their teacher education program through the first few years of their teaching careers to explore their developing identities and evolving sense of agency. Horowitz describes the concept of identity as a phenomenon “needed to move beyond the idea of a person simply fulfilling a role” and the personal factors that are internalized showing “the importance of attending to the ways that teachers draw on broader personal capacities and resources beyond the specifics of teaching” (p. 75). In this study, Horowitz defined agency as “the ability to function effectively and creatively in an environment ... and having a direction or purpose going forward” (p. 77). Three key time points were captured in this study: a) the childhood and background of the teachers, b) the teacher education experience, and c) the early years of the teachers’ careers. Of these 30 teachers, 22 were female, 27

identified as White, 3 identified as people of color, and 25 were born within the United States. Using in-depth interviews, educational autobiographies, and surveys, Horowitz found that a variety of background factors and experiences “shaped the ways they envisioned themselves as teachers” (p. 100). For example, most of the participants reported that teacher relationships, the identification of poor school experiences, or the experiences of working as a teacher or in a related position contributed to their decision to teach. Some of the teachers found that their in-service teaching experiences closely aligned with their teacher education program, while others felt a disconnect. The understanding of the development of identity and agency is important so that teacher educators can help new teachers prepare to navigate certain specific contexts that may or may not align with their vision for teaching.

Another way that vision has been used was to explore the relationship between teachers’ “viewing” and “doing” (Percy & Martin-Beltran, 2012, p. 669), in other words, their vision and practice. Although Percy and Martin-Beltran (2012) did not initially intend to use vision in their study that investigated how ESOL teachers and mainstream teachers view their work together as collaborative, the “concept of envisioning emerged from the data post hoc” (p. 659). Through a university-school district partnership, 26 teachers participated in five months of professional development sessions that focused on collaborative teaching. Three focal pairs (each consisting of one mainstream teacher and one ESOL teacher) were selected to be interviewed and observed during the co-planning, teaching, and lesson follow-up discussions. Percy and Martin-Beltran found four specific factors contributed positively or negatively to the collaborative visions, including: a) whether the teaching pair shared common goals for

teaching and learning, b) if the two teachers were willing to work through disagreements, c) whether they valued each other's expertise, and d) if they viewed their roles as situated in an equal collaborative relationship. They found that when ESOL teachers and mainstream teachers envisioned a collaborative partnership, both teachers were more likely to put the collaborative vision into their teaching practices. Using vision as a tool to assess and examine how the teaching pairs viewed their work as collaborative, Peercy and Martin-Beltran identified some of the factors that impact the collaborative relationship between ESOL and mainstream teachers. These findings emphasize the importance of understanding how teachers see specific ideas, concepts, or situations so that teacher educators and professional development sessions can hone in on specific topics to help to achieve an ideal goal.

These three studies illustrate how vision has been used as a tool to understand the perspectives, images and ideals, and thoughts that both preservice and in-service teachers have about the profession, their practice, how they developed their identities and built agency, and how they view collaboration with colleagues. In addition to the examination of visions of individual teachers, vision has also been used to understand the field of teacher education at a program level (Feiman-Nemser, Tamir, & Hammerness, 2014). Feiman-Nemser and colleagues (2014) build on the research that examined the role that teachers' visions play in their practices and careers and "the widespread belief that strong teacher education programs rest on a clearly articulated vision of good teaching" (p. 10). They explored three teacher education programs' contexts and their visions and missions for their curricula and learning opportunities for their preservice teachers, including a) a teacher education program that prepares teachers specifically for the Chicago Public

Schools (CPS), b) a teacher education program that focuses on teacher preparation for urban and rural Catholic schools, and c) a teacher education program that prepares teachers to teach in liberal Jewish day schools. While the contexts of each preparation program differed, all three programs had clear missions and visions and helped to instill them in their preservice teachers. For example, the two programs that prepared teachers for CPS and liberal Jewish day schools offered a strong vision for good teaching as a continual professional practice that can continue to grow and develop over time. The programs intentionally shared this vision with their preservice teachers and offered many opportunities for them to learn how to enact this vision in practice. Feiman-Nemser (2014) writes, “As they incorporated these visions of good teaching into their developing identity as classroom teachers, they pictured themselves teaching for a long time” (p. 204). Similarly, Zeichner and Conklin (2008) found that teacher education programs with strong, clear visions highly impacted the depth of preservice teachers’ learning. These examples demonstrate the importance of teacher education programs developing visions for their teacher preparation curricula and how program visions can greatly impact and enhance individual preservice teachers’ visions, and thus their learning and practice. In the next section, I outline three existing frameworks for instruction prominently used in the field of teacher education noting the use and lack of expectations to engage and learn about parents and families.

Existing Frameworks for Instruction Within Teacher Education

Within teacher education, visions can be explicitly developed and shaped or visions can be formed tacitly and subconsciously. Preservice teachers will leave teacher education programs with either implicit visions based on key themes or frameworks

taught or with explicit visions based on the thoughtful integration and inclusion of aspects of teaching that can sometimes be missing from key themes or frameworks (e.g., role of families). As Horowitz (2014) found that many factors (e.g., background and childhood experiences, teaching experiences) helped to shape and contribute to the development of vision among preservice teachers, one can suggest that tacit visions will be shaped inevitably by new knowledge, experiences, and other social factors even if teacher educators do not purposefully guide preservice teachers to develop their explicit teaching visions. Thus, an examination of key teacher education frameworks that are widely used in many U.S. teacher education programs is necessary to show the possible ways that preservice teachers think about their classroom instruction upon entering the teaching profession if explicit visions are not developed.

The field of teacher education has made strides in developing frameworks that guide teachers to teach using a series of best practices (Danielson, 2007; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009) with many of them focused on developing teachers' practice (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Lampert, 2009; Grossman, 2011). The notion of linking preservice teachers' knowledge of content and pedagogy to the enactment of practice is critical to the preparation of teachers, but teacher educators must ask what is missing (e.g., parents and families) from prominent frameworks for teaching and be sure to include them in the development of preservice teachers' visions. In this section, I present three key frameworks that are being used within the teacher education landscape: a) high leverage practices/core practices (HLPs/CPs), b) Education Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA), and c) Common Core State Standards. Although these three frameworks are not an exhaustive list, I include these three as examples of rather well-

known and highly-used frameworks within teacher education. All of them incorporate students' needs and an understanding of students' backgrounds to an extent, but all three mostly focus on classroom practices and the role of the teacher which leaves the role of parents and families completely out of the framework or in the periphery. I begin with high leverage practices/core practices.

High leverage practices/core practices. In recent years, teacher education scholars have examined teaching practices with the aim of identifying a specific set of “core practices” (Zeichner, 2012; Forzani, 2014) or sometimes referred to as “high leverage practices” (Tamir & Hammerness, 2014; Davin & Troyan, 2015). Zeichner (2012) writes, “The idea of creating a common core of these teaching practices (e.g., posing problems, leading discussions) that are taught to new teachers in all teacher education programs is potentially a good development” (p. 378). As the core practices (CPs) or high leverage practices (HLPs) framework grows within the field of teacher education, it is important to examine and evaluate what is included and what is missing, or what is the main focus and what is in the background, within this framework.

According to the seminal work of Teaching Works, a website populated with teacher education resources by faculty and educators at the University of Michigan, they define high leverage practices as “the basic fundamentals of teaching ... used across subject areas, grade levels and contexts ... for advancing the skill in teaching” (Teaching Works, 2016, n.p.). Teaching Works describes the HLPs as a framework for teacher education, they write, “The set of high-leverage practices is intended as a common framework for the practice of teaching that will provide the basis for a core curriculum for the professional training of teachers” (n.d., n.p.). Teaching Works has created and

defined 19 HLPs as well as “high-leverage content” that uses Common Core State Standards as a foundation (n.p.). Some examples of the 19 HLPs include the following: 1) leading a group discussion, 2) making content explicit through modeling, 3) teaching a lesson or segment of instruction, 4) setting long- and short-term learning goals for students referenced to external benchmarks, 5) setting up and managing a small group, 6) building respectful relationships with students, 7) talking about a student with parents or other caregivers, and 8) learning about students’ cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources for use in instruction (Teaching Works, 2016).

Many of the HLPs outlined by Teaching Works involve assessment, planning, and classroom instructional strategies/best practices. For example, regarding assessment, five of the nineteen HLPs involve student assessment (e.g., #15, Checking student understanding during and at the conclusion of lessons). Two of the nineteen address the planning of instruction (e.g., #14, Designing single lessons and sequences of lessons). Six of the nineteen offer instructional practices (e.g., #2, Explaining and modeling content, practices, and strategies). While most of the HLPs regard assessment, planning, and instruction, the list only includes two that address students’ needs and backgrounds: 1) Talking about a student with parents or other caregivers, and 2) Learning about students’ cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources for use in instruction. Although the inclusion of these two practices is a step in the direction of teachers engaging families to learn more about their lives, some of the literature suggests that these are on the sideline and are not equally in focus with the other practices that can be observed more easily in the classroom. For example, Zeichner (2012) welcomes the use of CPs/HLPs, he also cautions about the “danger of narrowing the role of teachers to

that of technicians who are able to implement a particular set of teaching strategies, but who do not develop the broad professional vision” (p. 379) that includes a comprehensive understanding of each student and the cultural context of teaching. Notably, Zeichner argues that the enactment of core practices alone will not provide the better learning outcomes that we seek for all of our students and that teacher educators must work to prepare our preservice teachers with cultural competence and culturally responsive teaching abilities.

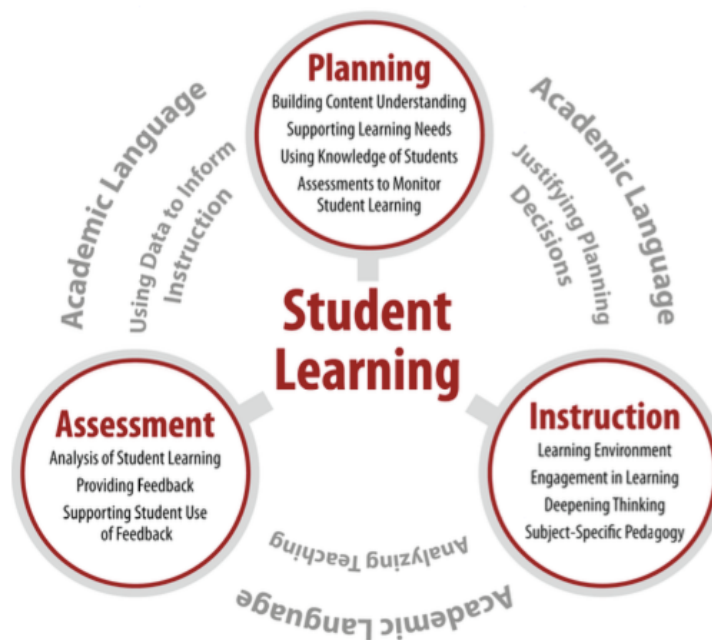
Many of these HLPs and other teaching frameworks around core practices (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Lampert, 2009; Grossman, 2011; Forzani, 2014) focus heavily on the practice of teaching and the actions that teachers are doing in the classroom. For instance, Grossman, Hammerness, and McDonald (2009) noted that definitions of HLPs/CPs varied across programs and teacher education scholars, but held that all of the definitions of HLPs/CPs shared the following characteristics: a) practices that occur with high frequency in teaching, b) practices that novices can enact in classrooms across different curricula or instructional approaches, c) practices that novices can begin to master, d) practices that allow novices to learn more about students and about their teaching, e) practices that preserve the integrity and complexity of teaching, and f) practices that are research-based and have the potential to improve student achievement (p. 277). These practices rely on the classroom environment and do not concentrate on aspects of teaching and learning that take place beyond the classroom walls. Focusing on practice in teacher education is important and critical to preparing teachers for the field of teaching; however, much more can be done to widen the aperture to equally encompass the areas outside of the classroom.

edTPA. Another framework or lens used in teacher education to help to prepare elementary preservice teachers is the Education Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA). The purpose of edTPA is to provide guidelines that preservice teachers need to meet and for teacher education programs to assess preservice teachers' level of preparedness based on their set criteria. According to the edTPA website (2016), 38 states and the District of Columbia currently have policies in place that all of their preservice teachers must pass edTPA in their subject matter before receiving licensure and 705 teacher preparation programs across the country are using edTPA. With the majority of states using it as a measurement of preservice teacher readiness, it is an important framework to examine. Assessments exist for many different grade levels and subject matter (e.g., Secondary English Language Arts, Elementary Literacy, and Middle Childhood Mathematics). For the purposes of this section, I draw from the Elementary Literacy Assessment edTPA Handbook. According to the edTPA Elementary Literacy Handbook (2015), the purpose of the elementary literacy assessment "is to measure novice teachers' readiness to teach elementary literacy" (p. 1). The proposed participants in this dissertation study (i.e., elementary preservice teachers of reading at a large Mid-Atlantic university) will be in the process of preparing for their edTPA elementary literacy assessment; thus, this framework is important to mention as it is one that they use to guide them in their preparation of teaching reading and the consideration of their future classroom reading instruction.

The format for the edTPA is for elementary preservice teachers to teach a literacy learning segment/lesson; videotape the instruction with students; and formally and informally assess the students throughout the learning segment. The elementary

preservice teachers do their edTPA assessment in the last semester of their teacher education program (i.e., spring semester of their senior year). Once the preservice teachers submit their edTPA, local or national scorers evaluate each portfolio based on ten rubrics. The framework for edTPA follows a cycle of the following areas: a) assessment, b) planning, and c) instruction. Figure 1 below is a screenshot from the edTPA elementary literacy handbook demonstrating this cycle (2015, p. 2).

Figure 1: edTPA Cycle of Effective Teaching



After a careful review of edTPA documents it does not seem to encompass aspects outside of the classroom (i.e., parents’ and families’ roles and assets). Although Rubric 3 asks the elementary preservice teachers of literacy to “use knowledge of students to inform teaching and learning,” they can score proficient by simply using “prior academic learning” (edTPA Elementary Literacy Handbook, 2015, p. 16) which could include previous lessons taught in the classroom. In order to score advanced, the preservice teachers must use prior academic learning AND “personal, cultural, or community

assets” (p. 16). The edTPA lens is focused on the classroom with a practice-based lens for teaching. edTPA assesses preservice teachers on what can be visibly witnessed in the videotaped lessons, thus it is challenging for this performance assessment to capture other aspects of teaching not found in the video. As Zeichner (2012) points out that too much attention given to practice-based approaches can lead to “other aspects of teaching” being “defined as not essential and will be marginalized or eliminated” (p. 376). Accordingly, if engaging parents and families to learn about cultural or literacy practices is not truly encompassed in a culminating assessment for one’s teacher education program, then this aspect of teaching will be viewed as unimportant. Further, Zeichner notes how some standards in teaching, like the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards, are too general or vague. He cites INTASC Standard 3 regarding diverse learners and suggests that it is open to interpretation and standards like these should be “translated into activities and routines that teachers can learn how to enact to realize the purposes of the standards” (p. 377-378). edTPA could be viewed in a similar manner in that the language in the rubric is too broad and general and that teachers could meet the assessment standards by completing any number of tasks.

In a review of several teacher performance assessments (prior to the development and implementation of edTPA), Wei and Pecheone (2010) found that these assessments did not provide a complete picture of teaching, although they can capture areas of knowledge and pedagogy. Wei and Pecheone conclude that the challenge in teacher education is to expand the definition of teaching “to better prepare all students for college and the workplace, giving significant attention to all aspects of a teachers’ professional competencies: dispositions, cultural sensitivity, content knowledge, and teaching skills”

(p. 124). While edTPA and other teacher assessments (i.e., PRAXIS exams) measure mastery on many important aspects of teaching and the practice of teaching, other beyond-the-classroom factors, like parent and family engagement, tend to fade into the background if they are not specifically measured. Consequently, it is imperative that teacher education programs develop these missing aspects in preservice teachers so that they will be included in their visions for teaching.

Common core state standards. Another framework or lens used in teacher education to help to prepare elementary education preservice teachers is the Common Core State Standards. The majority of states have either adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in their entirety or created college and career ready standards that align to CCSS. For example, the Maryland State Department of Education's website lists the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards as the foundation of their curriculum framework and notes that "these standards incorporate the Common Core State Standards" (MSDE, n.p., n.d.). According to the CCSS website (2016), only eight states have not officially adopted CCSS, yet all but two of these states have standards that highlight college and career readiness as a goal for each school in its state. Texas and Minnesota were the only states to have standards that do not mention college and career readiness as a goal. With 48 out of 50 states focusing on college and career readiness standards, many teacher education programs use the Common Core State Standards as a resource or a framework to prepare preservice teachers. Just like the HLPs/CPs and edTPA frameworks, an inspection of the CCSS to identify the areas of focus and the areas that fall within the margins is important for understanding what preservice teachers

will default to if certain aspects (i.e., engaging parents and families) are not intentionally developed within their visions for teaching.

Per the CCSS website, the only mention of parents is in reference to what they should know about the standards, including how they were developed, the rationale behind them, and how to read the standards (CCSS, 2016). Since these are skills-based standards and not a curriculum for teachers to follow, it is not the intent of the CCSS to provide teachers with a series of best or core practices or guidelines as to how to help students meet these standards. However, some of the key shifts in the CCSS could narrow teachers' focus so heavily on text (e.g., text-dependent questions, text complexity) that their views of literacy would involve only the skills listed in the standards. The emphasis placed on using evidence from the text and building knowledge through reading more challenging texts (Coleman & Pimentel, 2012) waters down the use of building background knowledge or bringing in the connections from students' lives. Coleman and Pimentel (2012) write, "Text-dependent questions do not require information or evidence from outside of the text or texts" (p. 6). Pearson (2012) critiques Coleman and Pimentel's (2012) position of weighting textual evidence in such high regard and suggests that students' background knowledge should be used in relation to the text. If scholars are in disagreement over the use and level of use of tapping into students' background knowledge, preservice teachers learning these standards for the first time could arrive at a conclusion that our students' background knowledge and experiences do not have a place in the reading instruction. This assumption could lead preservice teachers to have a narrow view of the literacy classroom and to leave students' home lives and family assets on the fringes.

The three frameworks outlined in this section strongly emphasize teachers' practices centered around what takes place in the classroom and the literacy skills that teachers should develop in students based heavily around text. While some of these frameworks include language about culture, parents, and students' prior knowledge, they do not seem to equally focus on these sociocultural aspects of teaching and learning. The danger in preparing our preservice teachers with a set of core practices, frameworks, or standards without drawing on sociocultural aspects and helping each preservice teacher develop their own vision of teaching is that they can become technical experts of instructional strategies (Zeichner, 2012) who struggle to situate teaching methods in students' background and cultural experiences. Bartolome (1994) reminds teacher educators to move away from the "methods fetish" and the attempt to find the "right teaching methods, strategies, or prepackaged curricula" (p. 174) and move toward a "humanizing pedagogy" (p. 173) that "shifts from a narrow and mechanistic view of instruction to one that is broader in scope and takes into consideration the sociohistorical and political dimensions of education" (p. 176). These frameworks can be incredibly beneficial to the preparation of teachers in the areas of assessment, content, classroom pedagogy, and instruction; however, they are less focused on factors of learning that take place beyond the classroom walls. Teacher educators must find ways to integrate outside-of-school elements (i.e., family literacy) into these existing frameworks in order to develop strong, well-rounded comprehensive visions for teaching. In the next section, I discuss the literature that assessed the ways teacher education has prepared preservice teachers to develop cultural competence; to learn about students' communities and families; and to differentiate instruction for every student and his or her background.

Developing Preservice Teachers with a Multicultural Lens to Embrace Diversity

In many teacher education programs, a move toward incorporating diversity into the preservice teachers' curriculum has taken place over several decades. This shift is important because many teachers are not being adequately prepared to teach in a diverse world. As with the instructional frameworks, teacher education programs that highlight and teacher certain ideas and frameworks without explicitly developing visions among preservice teachers will turn out teachers with a default vision for teaching through the lens of these frameworks. Similarly, teacher education programs that focus on issues of diversity and multicultural education will be more likely to produce teachers with a vision to use culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy in their future classrooms. But without vision being explicitly developed, some key aspects of teaching and teacher preparation may be left out or pushed to the margins. It is important to examine what is missing and how vision can be used to develop a comprehensive plan for preservice teachers' future classrooms that equally encompasses the role of diverse parents and families. With many programs including diversity, it is important to examine how programs and teacher educators have infused aspects of multicultural education into courses of content and pedagogy and to identify if and how programs have used vision to develop preservice teachers to work with diverse populations of students.

As previously mentioned, the majority of the teacher education demographics constitute White, middle-class females (Morrell, 2010). Recent statistics report 82% of all public school teachers are White and 76% are female (NCES, 2013). While the teacher demographics remain relatively constant, our student populations are growing more diverse. In the 2009-2010 school year, 59% of students who received Title 1 resources

based on family income level were elementary students (NCES, 2015). The percentage of students identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) enrolled in public schools has increased from 8.8% (4.2 million students) in 2003-2004 to 9.3% (4.5 million students) in 2013-2014 (NCES, 2016). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015), they project that nearly half of our nation's children will be from a minority race or ethnic group by 2020. As our schools become more diverse, the field of teacher education must continue seek ways to prepare preservice teachers to effectively teach all of their students.

In the past two decades, scholars have advanced the teacher education field through studies that identified ways to prepare teachers to teach in a diverse world. Lenski, Crawford, Crumpler, and Stallworth (2005) designed a study to help preservice teachers prepare to teach in response to students' culture by asking them to develop "'habits of mind' that incorporate an understanding and valuing of students' cultures and recognition of the need to consider those cultures in teaching practices" (p. 4). Twenty-eight elementary preservice teachers enrolled in both university courses and student teaching participated in the study that asked them to use ethnographic methods to research a community site with at least 10 visits throughout the course of the year. Out of the 28 preservice teachers, the demographics included: 26 females, 2 males, 25 from European American background, one from Hispanic heritage, and two were Asian American. During the ethnography project, the preservice teachers participated in class discussions about the various types of diversity, including gender, religion, and income levels to elicit "an awareness of the complexities of the populations that would constitute [their] future classrooms" (p. 5). The researchers collected student reflections, observations, and field notes from their community sites. Three key findings emerged: a)

the preservice teachers transitioned from initially making cultural assumptions to becoming aware of their cultural selves and understanding their own cultural backgrounds, b) the preservice teachers' views of diversity expanded to include not just the idea of race but to include issues of gender and socioeconomic status, and c) the preservice teachers were easily able to apply their observational experiences to their future classrooms and instructional practices. Lenski et al. (2005) found that the preservice teachers' final papers discussed the many ways that they could "connect curricula to students' lives, to help students apply their background knowledge, and to differentiate instruction" (p. 9). These findings demonstrate that helping preservice teachers develop "habits of mind" to identify ways to respond to students' diverse backgrounds and lives can offer a platform for them to think about creative ways to plan their classroom instruction based on students as individuals.

The seminal work of Moll and his colleagues on funds of knowledge has had substantial impact on multicultural education. Using qualitative methods (e.g., observations, open-ended interviews, life histories) to connect homes and classrooms, Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (2005) examined household and school practices in Arizona within working-class, Mexican families. Their aim was to develop teaching strategies and classroom practices that provide quality educational experiences for students who historically have been viewed as poor—both economically and educationally—by capitalizing on the cultural and community resources that the students bring to the classrooms. In their study, they found that the participating Mexican families had historically built and established areas of knowledge and skills "essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p. 72) that they refer to as *funds of*

knowledge. Some of these *funds of knowledge* include: a) business skills and economic knowledge, b) household management skills such as creating budgets and managing childcare, c) knowledge about medicine, and d) knowledge about religion and Bible studies. Moll et al. (2005) also found that the families had extensive networks both within the home and within the greater community. For example, a child may learn carpentry from an uncle and that uncle may be the same person who attends birthday celebrations but also goes fishing regularly with the child's father. Their social networks are thick and widespread, making the members in these networks view each other as whole people, not necessarily through the lens of one contextual experience as teachers usually tend to see students in the one context of the classroom. Further, they found reciprocity and active engagement existed among the children and the other community and household members. Children were not only receivers of information or "passive bystanders, as they seem in the classrooms" (p. 74). They were actively participating and both receiving and expressing ideas and knowledge.

After an investigation into the homes and communities, Moll et al. (2005) selected ten teachers to perform home visits to observe and analyze the *funds of knowledge* from their own perspective with the aim that they would then transform their teaching practices to reflect those *funds of knowledge*. They found that teachers became learners during these home and community visits, which helped to foster parent-teacher relationships opening the door to future revolving exchanges of family and school information and ultimately contributed to academic content and lesson strategies. This qualitative, teachers as co-researchers approach can act as a bridge for teachers of all students,

including refugee populations, to view homes and communities through a *funds of knowledge* frame that can transform teaching and learning.

In addition to asking preservice teachers to research communities using forms of ethnography, scholars have examined how working in and serving in communities can impact views of teaching and diverse learners. One example, Brayko (2013) investigated the use of community-based placements (one primarily served Latino children and the other mainly served Muslim Somali children) in one teacher education program to look at how elementary preservice teachers learned about their students' lives, families, assets, and other resources and how students and their communities could be placed at the center of education. Through in-class assignments, journals, observations, and interviews, Brayko (2013) found that the community-based placements provided opportunities for the preservice teachers to develop both literacy and pedagogical knowledge in tandem with contextual knowledge of students' literacy and language practices. More specifically, Brayko found three significant themes: a) preservice teachers' views of literacy expanded, b) preservice teachers' became more adept at engaging students in text-based discussions, and c) relationships among the teacher, student, and family were used to enhance student enthusiasm around literacy learning.

Finding that the effects of CBOs in their teacher education program lost relevance once preservice teachers entered their classrooms, Zeichner, Bowman, Guillen, and Napolitan (2016) explored how the use of members in the community acting as mentors to elementary and secondary preservice teachers could help to build relationships among teachers and families and allow the preservice teachers to "understand, engage, and respond to students and their communities" (p. 281). Using interviews, focus groups and

class assignments, Zeichner and his colleagues found the preservice teachers reported: a) a shift in their understanding of the role of families and the possibilities of collaboration with families and b) an increased use of a variety of contact with families (e.g., home visits, attending students' sports events, interviewing parents, etc.). They also found that these practices of consulting, communicating, and collaborating with parents and families continued on into the teachers' first year of teaching. Another key finding involved methods courses in that preservice teachers reported that they felt that they had to independently resolve how to transfer what they learned about the students' families and communities into the classroom and their instructional strategies.

Drawing on a funds of knowledge approach to help prepare teachers to build home-school connections with culturally and linguistically diverse students and their families, Amaro-Jimenez (2016) used a semester-long project in an English language learner methods course. With 104 preservice teachers, Amaro-Jimenez used the family suitcase project and reflections to explore gains in level of preparedness to work with families. The family suitcases were created by the preservice teachers and contain materials centered around literacy (e.g., pencils, paper, etc.). These suitcases were designed to provide a link between school and home and tap into families' funds of knowledge. Each suitcase had four common components: a) a theme, b) an introductory letter, c) a set of activities and materials, and d) a set of reflection prompts. From the preservice teachers' reflections on the family suitcase project, Amaro-Jimenez found several gains among the preservice teachers' abilities to build home-school connections. These gains include: 1) the preservice teachers were developing a view of parents and families as partners in order to bridge the home and school environments, 2) the

preservice teachers were developing an understanding of how to individualize instruction for students based on areas of strengths and needs gleaned from relationships with the families, and 3) the preservice teachers were developing an awareness of the language and lived experiences of the parents and families. Most notably, Amaro-Jimenez found that the preservice teachers believed that building relationships and engaging families in their future classrooms would “be one of the most important tasks they will be charged with as classroom teachers” (p. 81). These findings demonstrate how over the course of one semester, perceptions and viewpoints of preservice teachers can evolve and develop to bring parents and families roles into the forefront of their visualizations of their future classrooms.

All of the studies reviewed in this section demonstrate promising ways to prepare preservice teachers to embrace diversity, learning about their students’ families and communities, and to plan instruction to meet the needs of all students; however, but none of them used vision as a tool to prepare teachers to teach in a diverse classroom. Lenski et al. (2005) developed “habits of mind” in their preservice teachers, but did not focus on developing individual visions for teaching reading. In addition, these studies did not have a specific focus to literacy or classroom reading instruction. Thus, more could be learned by bridging the literature on preservice teachers’ visions, classroom literacy instruction, and the literature on diverse families.

Cultural Capital Literature

Another body of work that merits mentioning includes the literature on cultural capital. Although this study uses a *funds of knowledge* lens to examine the assets and resources that families and communities possess and offer, however, it should be noted

that a cultural capital lens exists and can sometimes overlap with the funds of knowledge framework. In this study, I am using a sociocultural framework that I believe aligns well with a funds of knowledge framework. However, I share key studies in the reading literature that use a cultural capital lens to show the similarities between capital and funds of knowledge. Yet I choose to not include cultural capital in my conceptual framework because it connotes a critical lens that “examine[s] the concept of power in relation to literacy learning” (Tracey & Morrow, 2012, p. 134); and this study is not concerned with examining the phenomenon through a critical perspective. The following paragraphs that conclude this section highlight aspects of capital in the reading literature.

One area of capital includes the concept of reading capital. In her study that examined the complexities of reading capital in two Puerto Rican families, Compton-Lilly (2007) defined reading capital through the forms of economic capital, social capital, and cultural capital. She writes that economic reading capital “includes possessions that require economic investment and are convertible to reading success” (p. 77). She describes social reading capital as one “being able to recognize, access, and utilize social relationships to support oneself as a reader” (p. 77). She breaks down cultural reading capital into three other subsets: embodied reading capital, objectified reading capital, and institutionalized reading capital. Compton-Lilly writes that embodied reading capital is found in students displaying “an allegiance to school-sanctioned reading norms” (p. 77) in which students follow school norms and “say the right things about reading” (p. 77). Objectified reading capital is the reflection of officially recognized (i.e., school recognized) reading proficiency through products such as written work by students, reading out loud, and proper classroom discussions. Institutionalized reading capital,

according to Compton-Lilly's definition, includes certifications and credentials such as test scores or report cards. Compton-Lilly (2007) used case study methodology to explore the reading abilities and practices (i.e., reading capital) in two Puerto Rican families: kindergartener Angel and his grandmother Ira, and kindergartener Aralon and her mother Lizette. Through the collection of spoken data, observational data, and documents from both the home and school environments, Compton-Lilly found both low-income families had forms of reading capital that was valued in the local context (i.e., their communities); yet, Lizette described herself as "school oriented" (p. 87) and Aralon's reading capital was recognized and valued in the school context by teachers more than Angel and Ira's whose reading capital was not perceived by the teachers in the same manner. Both families had extensive amounts of local reading capital partly because they both had strong social relationships that "supported official conceptions of literacy" (p. 87). However, in the school context, it was Aralon's reading capital that was valued and recognized by her teachers. Compton-Lilly writes, "Aralon's cheerful dispositions and willingness to participate in classroom activities as well as [her] interest in pleasing [her] teachers counted as they [the students] were assessed as learners and readers" (p. 88). Due to family situations, Angel was absent for a significant amount of his kindergarten school year and "these absences contributed to the ways Angel's teacher views Angel and his family" (p. 72). It is interesting to note, however, that the Aralon in the "school oriented" family was actually reading on a lower level than the Angel in the other family. In this study, actual reading levels did not fully account for reading capital. This study "reminds us that learning to read in schools is about much more than reading" (p. 94). Compton-Lilly uncovered the many ways teachers and parents view reading practices and

how schools may be overlooking the strong assets children actually possess and bring from their homes and families. Compton-Lilly's study represents how families build reading capital by reading at home, and helping with homework, but also how teachers tend to see and value reading capital that can easily be transferred to the classroom. While Compton-Lilly's definition of reading capital relates to this dissertation study, I chose not to use it because this study is not concerned with examining literacy in relation to economic terms, power, position, or how preservice teachers view students' reading levels based on how they view the students' backgrounds or home lives.

Another area of capital includes familial capital. Many researchers describe familial capital as an extension of social capital (Williams & Dawson, 2011; Yosso, 2005). Williams and Dawson (2011) write that familial capital is an "aggregation of various forms of capital within a family" (p. 92). Yosso's (2005) definition of familial capital "refers to those cultural knowledges nurtured among [family] that carry a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition (p. 79). Her definition, which stems from a critical race theory perspective, includes extended family, such as aunts, uncles, and grandparents, as contributors to building familial capital. Bourdieu (1986) writes that family members can tacitly transfer various forms of capital to their children along with a set of deeply rooted values. As mentioned in the section on reading capital, the concept of familial capital relates to this dissertation study as well. However, I invoke the funds of knowledge lens to examine my data and the visions of preservice teachers in my study. While aspects of cultural capital and funds of knowledge overlap, it is my view that including both would be too broad; thus, I chose one lens to view my data and to frame

this study. In the next section, I provide an overview of the literature in reading teacher education that used vision in studies.

Visions in Reading Teacher Education

From 1960 to 1980, reading teacher preparation typically stemmed from a cognitive perspective that students learned to read based predominately on the mental processes in the individual mind (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). By the early 1980s, these cognitive theories were challenged by the emergence of social learning theories (e.g., sociocultural, critical, and sociolinguistic) (Tracey & Morrow, 2012) that viewed reading as a social process. It was also during this time that the field of family literacy research developed with Denny Taylor's 1983 seminal work titled *Family Literacy* that initiated a line of research around "the ways families, children, and extended family members use literacy at home and in their community" (Morrow, 2009, p. 378). The family literacy research produced in the last 35 years has offered monumental insight into the home and community literacy practices of many different families, including low-income White families (Purcell-Gates, 1995), working-class Black and White families (Heath, 1983), and refugee families in the United States (Perry & Moses, 2011), just to name a few.

While multicultural education research developed toward the end of the 1960s, it did not gain prominence until the 1990s when topics of diversity, race, and culture became "staples in dialogues among teacher educators" (Marshall, 1999, p. 56). In tandem with the family literacy research, a line of inquiry around how teachers can use children's lives, cultures, and backgrounds to make pedagogical decisions began to emerge (Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2002). Many teacher candidates began to see social learning theories (e.g., sociocultural, social constructivism) and

culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) integrated into their reading methods coursework and student-teaching experiences.

Moving the reading teacher education field forward, Hoffman, Roller, Maloch, Sailors, Duffy, Beretvas, and the National Commission on Excellence in Elementary Teacher Preparation in Reading Instruction (2005) examined reading teacher education programs that were identified to have eight common features to investigate the effects these programs had on teachers through their first three years of teaching. These eight common program features included: 1) strong content knowledge base, 2) a variety of apprenticeship opportunities in the field, 3) clear literacy education program visions for good teaching, 4) a plethora of resources and a solid mission, 5) a focus on preparing teachers to adapt instruction to recognize and meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners, 6) preservice teachers given autonomy to make professional decisions, 7) emphasis on the collaboration among colleagues through a professional community, and 8) the development of proficiency in the area of assessment and how to use data to make instructional decisions. Teachers who completed a program with these eight features were found to be incredibly effective “in creating and engaging their students with a high-quality literacy environment” (p. 267). These findings demonstrate that programs that include a focus on preparing teachers with responsive pedagogical practices for diverse learners contributes to the effectiveness of teachers in their future classrooms.

Another scholarly contribution to the field of multicultural education and family literacy included Kidd, Sanchez, and Thorp’s (2004) study that asked preservice teachers to learn about diverse families’ stories to develop cultural awareness. Kidd and her

colleagues believed that the building of relationships between teachers and families presented teachers “with opportunities for making instructional decisions in a culturally responsive manner” (p. 64). Over the course of three years, forty-two preservice teachers in an early childhood graduate program collected stories from families of White, Hispanic/Latino, African American, African, Middle Eastern, Asian, and Caribbean backgrounds. The preservice teachers were tasked with learning about a family from a background different from their own and to plan lessons in response “to the family’s beliefs, values, practices, and goals” (p. 65). From field notes, questionnaires, and preservice teachers’ reflections, Kidd et al. found that 97% of the preservice teachers reported a better understanding of a different culture, 93% said that the experience of learning about one focus family helped them more effectively work with the student in that family, and 81% noted that the experience would be able to help them work with other families. These findings demonstrate how teacher educators can help to prepare preservice teachers for a diverse world and diverse classrooms by learning about their students’ families.

Many traditional teacher education programs now offer at least one course that provides preservice teachers with knowledge about diversity and multiculturalism with the goal of developing cultural competence and understanding the home and community practices of students (Brayko, 2013). But how well have teacher educators prepared preservice teachers to learn about diverse families to help inform their classroom reading instruction? Using sociocultural and social constructivist frameworks, Wosley, Young, Scales, Scales, Lenski, Yoder, Wold, Smetana, Grisham, Ganske, Dobler, and Chambers (2013) developed a comprehensive study that examined 10 teacher education programs

across the U.S. to identify signature literacy aspects among each program. They compared these signature program features to all of the other programs and to the 2003 and 2010 International Reading Association (IRA) Standards. They also investigated the extent to which the preservice teachers learned the content as compared to the IRA standards. Not surprisingly, across the 10 programs the preservice teachers reported the area of curriculum and instruction (i.e., lesson planning, developing instructional strategies, etc.) was the greatest strength and where the most learning and preparation occurred. Preservice teachers also reported the areas of assessment and creating a literate environment as areas where they felt mostly prepared and confident to put into practice. One significant finding from this expansive study was that the area of diversity as relates to preservice teacher learning “continued to present a problem for most institutions” and “across cases, [it] was almost always acknowledged as an area of need” (p. 213). The findings from this noteworthy study suggest that teacher education programs have work to do in the preparation of preservice teachers to work with diverse populations.

Based on these studies, (e.g., Wosley et al., 2013; Kidd, Sanchez, & Thorp, 2004) the integration of sociocultural frameworks and multicultural education into teaching methods courses, especially reading methods courses, has significantly enhanced the fields of teacher education and reading education, but it seems that the field has more work to do to successfully prepare all of our preservice teachers for diverse classrooms. What are the next steps to meet this challenge? Given the emphasis on literacy as a set of skills to ensure that all of our students are college and career ready, we must look at how literacy is defined. In the next section, I discuss how literacy is viewed from a skills-focused perspective and how scholars have pushed back on this view and suggest that

literacy learning outside of the classroom should be seen as literacy, too. The next section is important as it highlights how teachers come to define literacy; if their visions of literacy are too narrow, they may not see a need to include family literacy practices in the classroom. However, if preservice teachers come to envision literacy as a broad range of skills, they may be more prone to identifying family literacy practices and finding ways to integrate them into the reading instruction.

Issues of Learning Reading Content: What Counts as Literacy?

With the signing of No Child Left Behind in 2001, the field of education saw a shift from what many argue as once an era of equity for all children to an era of accountability for teachers (McGuinn, 2006). McGuinn (2006) writes, “During the 1960s and 1970s, the American public generally saw public schools as doing a good job, and the major debate over schools centered on equity, integration, and social issues rather than concerns about academic performance” (p. 48). In the mid 1980s, with *The Nation at Risk* report declaring that our public schools were not meeting the standards of properly educating our students, an emphasis on measurement and testing began to emerge. Fifteen years later, NCLB was signed into law placing more pressure on teachers and schools to ensure that all students were proficient in math and reading. During the past fifteen years, our schools and teachers have struggled to differentiate reading instruction for all students and ensure they all meet the testing demands on the same standardized test at the end of each school year. Many teachers’ jobs are tied to students’ performance on standardized test scores, so many teachers will choose reading instructional strategies based on the ways to best increase those test scores.

In 2010, a report on the preparation of teachers from the National Academy of Sciences stated that “teachers of reading are called on to prepare students to interpret complex ideas, critically analyze arguments, synthesize information from multiple sources, and use reading to build their knowledge [and] when literacy is measured by these criteria, the literacy crisis in the United States is evident” (p. 75). The report also noted that the achievement gaps for “historically underperforming subgroups” (p. 75) have remained the same. Our current teachers and preservice teachers feel the pressure to ensure that all of their students and future students score well on their end-of-year reading exams. This pressure to perform can lead teachers to think about reading through a technical reading lens and to focus mostly on reading strategies and what is included in the reading assessments and benchmarks. Barton and Hamilton (2012) refer to this viewpoint as seeing reading as an autonomous skill (i.e., cognitive perspective) and that we should move beyond seeing “literacy as something solely located in people’s heads as cognition” (p. 20). The paradox and tension lies in the fact that standardized exams are taken individually and stem solely from a cognitive perspective. But, we know that throughout the school year many students are encouraged to learn and practice reading through interactions with peers, teachers, family members, and other adults. This can lead teachers to think more about what literacy looks like on the test than what literacy looks like in children’s everyday lives. When teachers’ visions of literacy consist of the limited aspects of what can be measured on an exam, the students’ experiences around literacy in other contexts (i.e., the home and the community) can shift to the teachers’ periphery.

Gregory, Long, and Volk (2004) remind us to consider other contexts and people playing a part in students’ literacy development as this “shifts our exclusive focus from

the school to the children and the many contexts in which they are active participants” (p. 221). Gregory et al. (2004) suggest that all preservice teachers should start “with the assumption that children have had relevant and valuable experience with literacy before and outside of school” and that preservice teachers should “work with family members and fictive kin to learn about, understand and participate in such literacy events” (p. 222-223).

Helping preservice teachers of reading to arrive at the assumption that all students have had valuable literacy experiences outside of school is a challenge. Scholars have investigated these literacy experiences over the course of many years and consistently show the importance of parents and family members on the literacy development of children and the existence of literacy practices and learning outside of the classroom. Illustrating how parents can offer insight into the diverse aspects of children, Edwards and Pleasants (1997) invited twelve veteran first-grade teachers who all identified as White to identify students in their classrooms that they described as at-risk for not passing first grade and who were having reading and writing difficulties. The students in these teachers’ classes were from culturally, economically, and racially diverse communities. The teachers first shared their views of a focal student and the characteristics that contributed to the student’s literacy struggles and at-risk label. The teachers’ views ranged from one student craving too much attention in the classroom to another student not wanting to attempt to complete literacy tasks. Edwards and Pleasants then asked parents to share their stories of their children and their home lives to shed light on how teachers could better teach literacy to their children. One parent noted how her changing work schedule greatly impacted the amount of one-on-one time that she could

spend with her daughter which explained why she craved so much attention from her teacher. Another parent mentioned that when her son reads or writes at home, he would try to perfect his writing and that she was working to help him build his endurance to complete literacy tasks. These parent stories offered insight for the teachers to have a greater understanding of the home and family context to help them more effectively teach the students. Edwards and Pleasants (1997) write, “Through parents’ historical accounts and ideas and opinions about aspects of their home lives, we feel that teachers may be able to fill the gaps in their knowledge left by literacy assessments that are unidimensional” (p. 36). These parent stories show how literacy expands beyond the school walls and how family literacy practices can act as supplemental data to classroom reading assessments.

Heath’s (1983) seminal study on the literacy and language practices of families from three different communities in the Piedmont region of North Carolina offered detailed accounts of how the culture and social interactions of each community contributed to certain ways of talking and practicing literacy. In the community of the “townspeople,” Heath found that the set of skills such as questioning, labeling, and creating narratives were similar to the skills valued in the school setting; thus, the children from the main town were more likely to be successful at school. The children in the community of Roadville (the White mill town) practiced skills such as labeling and recalling facts which Heath refers to as a “limited readiness—and not a preparedness for the types of tasks necessary for higher-level school work” (p. 352). The children in the Trackton community (the Black mill town), to use Heath’s words, “have to find their own schemata in the complex, multi-channeled stream of stimuli about them, for neither talk,

time, nor space is set aside especially for them” (p. 353). According to Heath’s analysis, neither group of children in the mill towns had acquired the necessary literacy and language skills required by the school prior to entering kindergarten, but she keenly demonstrated how literacy practices in these communities counted as literacy.

In another key study, Purcell-Gates (1996) described how print is used in low-income homes and explored the relation between uses of print at home and emergent literacy knowledge. A key finding of this study was a pattern that children seemed to learn writing forms and patterns from parents and other literate family members modeling purposes for reading and writing and using more complex texts. Purcell-Gates writes later in this section, “So simply by living and participating in home contexts that included people reading books and magazines, reading the *TV Guide* for program information, and reading the rules for a board game...young children could begin to *construct* knowledge...” (p. 423). Her study helps to provide a specific and complex picture of how print is used in the homes of some low-income families in the U.S. and sheds light on the differences between what literacy practices are used in the home versus the school environment.

In a synthesis of research on family literacy practices, Saracho (2002) emphasizes that literacy learning can happen in many contexts and settings (e.g., reading labels at the grocery store) and that it is not specific to the school setting. Saracho also points out the deficit and wealth perspectives that occur in the field of teaching reading and working with families. The deficit model ignores the strengths, skills, and other assets of families by planning family literacy events or home communication from a “middle class family model” (p. 120). The wealth model highlights the families’ strengths and emphasizes the

family-child interactions. When preservice teachers envision family literacy practices through a deficit lens, they may be less inclined to define them as literacy. When preservice teachers come to see family literacy practices through the wealth model lens, they may be more likely to view them as literacy and begin to see a purpose for them in the classroom reading instruction.

Sharing her work from ten years of research with families, Compton-Lilly (2009) used teacher research as a way to learn more about the families in her school and their literacy practices. From her longitudinal study with students and their families at her school situated in a high-poverty, inner-city community, she identified seven lessons she learned: 1) the students' families had books and enjoyed reading, 2) for the students, reading was closely intertwined with social relationships, 3) even children who struggled with reading could collaboratively construct meaning from text, 4) computers represented possibilities to the families, 5) parents and children were overly focused on sounding out words, 6) parents were often aware of how they were perceived by school personnel, and 7) the parents often presented insightful critiques of their worlds. Of these lessons, many of them highlight the fact that literacy occurs regularly and naturally in the family unit and in the home environment.

In addition to these studies, scholars have investigated literacy practices among immigrant and refugee populations. Compton-Lilly (2007) used case study methodology to explore the reading abilities and literacy practices in two Puerto Rican families: kindergartener Angel and his grandmother Ira, and kindergartener Aralon and her mother Lizette. Through the collection of spoken data, observational data, and documents from both the home and school environments, Compton-Lilly found both low-income families

had forms of reading capital that was valued in the local context (i.e., their communities); yet, Lizette described herself as “school oriented” (p. 87) and Aralon’s reading capital was recognized and valued in the school context by teachers more than Angel and Ira’s whose reading capital was not perceived by the teachers in the same manner. Both families had extensive amounts of local reading capital partly because they both had strong social relationships that “supported official conceptions of literacy” (p. 87). However, in the school context, it was Aralon’s reading capital that was valued and recognized by her teachers. Compton-Lilly writes, “Aralon’s cheerful dispositions and willingness to participate in classroom activities as well as [her] interest in pleasing [her] teachers counted as they [the students] were assessed as learners and readers” (p. 88). Due to family situations, Angel was absent for a significant amount of his kindergarten school year and “these absences contributed to the ways Angel’s teacher views Angel and his family” (p. 72). It is interesting to note, however, that the Aralon in the “school oriented” family was actually reading on a lower level than the Angel in the other family. In this study, actual reading levels did not fully account for reading capital. This study “reminds us that learning to read in schools is about much more than reading” (p. 94). Compton-Lilly uncovered the many ways teachers and parents view reading practices and how schools may be overlooking the strong assets children actually possess and bring from their homes and families. Compton-Lilly’s study represents how families build reading capital by reading at home, and helping with homework, but also how teachers tend to see and value reading capital that can easily be transferred to the classroom—if those skills are not clearly evident, teachers may view a child’s reading skills through a deficit lens.

From a larger ethnographic study, Perry (2014) chose one family to act as the focal family: kindergartener, Remaz, and her parents, Akhlas and Amin. Perry's case study on Remaz and her family closely details how literacy brokering occurs at home and at school. At home, Remaz would broker for her mom and dad by teaching her parents about letter-sound correspondence in English words, spelling, and vocabulary. Remaz would also explain text purposes and genre knowledge for her parents. For instance, Remaz needed a permission slip signed in order to go on a field trip; so, she explained the purpose of the document to her parents and then they understood why they needed to sign it. Perry explained that Remaz's brokering goes beyond simply translating the English language for her parents. At school, Remaz would broker for her peers by sounding out words or showing her classmates how to spell certain words. Culturally, Remaz was accustomed to working in groups and collaborating; at school she was expected to work mostly independently, which meant she had to broker in a covert manner in order to help her peers.

Perry and Moses (2011) examined the data from Sudanese refugee families' literacy practices to focus on the television events that contributed to literacy and language development. This study contributes to both of the fields of literacy and applied linguistics by examining the literacy development and language use of the participating families via television events. After conducting a rigorous and thorough coding procedure, Perry and Moses found the following themes: a) the television viewing varied across the family members (e.g., some television events were given full attention by the participants and other television events were in the background), b) each of the three families varied in their television practices (e.g., the family with the highest level of

education preferred entertainment programming and the family with the lowest level of education preferred educational/informational programming), c) family viewing practices directly related to important cultural contexts and certain beliefs (e.g., families would watch DVDs of music videos from Africa), d) the television connected the families to U.S. culture and contexts (e.g., watching the news informed the families about current events, historical figures, and values and customs), e) television was used to mediate beliefs around religion (e.g., families would watch the Trinity Broadcasting Network to learn about other Christians), f) the families believed television was a resource for learning, g) television helped the families learn and practice English, print literacy skills, and real-life literacy practices (e.g., the children learned about abbreviations via television), and h) television events promoted other literacy practices (e.g., going to the library to find the book version of what was viewed on television). The findings from this study shed light on common uses of technology and how television events can act as a significant learning tool to help to develop literacy and language, but also to allow refugee families to maintain part of their culture and help to navigate within their new communities.

Quadros & Sarroub (2016) investigated the family literacy practices among Karen refugee women and their children who have resettled in Lincoln, Nebraska. Data was collected during a school-sponsored family literacy program as well as home visits within the households of the eight participating families. The researchers found that the mothers in the study would memorize vocabulary words while reading to incorporate later in their oral speech. Memorization is a commonly used strategy to learn and use language in many Asian cultures, according to Quadros and Sarroub. In addition to memorizing, they

found that the women and children worked collaboratively and would offer reading and language help to each other frequently, which demonstrated a group effort as opposed to an individualized one. This is critical in thinking about how our U.S. schools are structured; some classroom instructional time is designed for group work and collaboration, while other instructional and assessment events are designed for individuals. This finding is similar to Remaz's brokering experiences at school in Perry's 2014 study in which Remaz offered help to her peers but she had to do it covertly. Quadros and Sarroub (2016) also found that the women and children used computers and technology to learn language, find employment, and to provide entertainment.

The studies reviewed in this section represent in-depth research studies (many of them ethnographic in nature) conducted by literacy researchers with the time and resources to collect and analyze data of family literacy practices. One barrier to teachers using family literacy practices as an asset in the classroom reading instruction is the time and resources involved in actively seeking the knowledge about each individual students' family literacy practices and then reflecting on how those could be used as a pathway to reading in the classroom. Edwards (2007) advises family literacy and reading teacher education scholars to find ways to help teachers and suggests that "we must refrain from doing research where we, as a research community, are the only ones who learn from this research" (p. 9). Preservice teachers would benefit from the explicit development of visions for teaching literacy with a view that family literacy is just as important as school literacy and should be valued in the same manner. In the next section, I discuss the challenges of bringing in and using family literacy practices in the reading classroom.

Challenges of Preparing Literacy Teachers with a Vision to Connect Home and School

Based on the literature in the previous section, preservice teachers and teachers could benefit from developing visions of literacy that extend beyond the school to encompass the diverse ways that literacy is used and defined outside of the classroom. Many hurdles stand in the way of preservice teachers developing strong visions to bridge the home and the school environments. Some of these challenges to preparing teachers to come to understand these diverse family literacy practices include the following: a) the lack of transferability of the family literacy practices brought to light in published research articles to their individual classrooms, b) preparing teachers with a purpose for learning about diverse family literacy practices, c) teacher education programs struggle to find space in the curriculum to teach the importance of family literacy practices, and d) certain views of students' families or parent involvement may be deeply rooted and not easy to shift. In this section, I discuss the challenges of preparing teachers to work with families and to come to learn about and understand their students' diverse family literacy practices.

Some preservice teachers may come to view literacy practices outside of the classroom as vital information to guide their teaching, but they still may struggle with feeling prepared to engage families to learn about these practices. In a study with 223 elementary preservice teachers at a large university in the southeast region of the United States, Uludag (2008) found that preservice teachers had positive outlooks regarding working with parents but that preservice teachers at the beginning of their teacher education program indicated that they felt very unprepared to work with parents. And

while some scholars argue that teacher education has made significant gains in addressing diversity, the field has not come far enough to truly prepare teachers to work with diverse families. Turner and Edwards (2008) write, “Despite the increased attention that literacy teacher education programs have given to diversity, preservice teachers are still not adequately prepared to identify, affirm, and build upon their students’ home literacies” (p. 247). Clearly, based on the plethora of research reviewed in the previous section, a variety of family literacy practices exist in families across the United States, but these studies took place in specific locations, contexts, and groups of people. Although the findings of these studies can shed light on certain cultural family literacy practices or regional family literacy practices, preservice teachers cannot apply these specific studies to their own classrooms. Thus, it is imperative that the preservice teachers develop a vision for seeking out the knowledge of diverse family literacy practices found in the families of their future students. Preservice teachers, therefore, must find ways to investigate these practices for themselves.

One way that preservice teachers can consider identifying diverse family literacy practices is to ask questions of families and observe in homes and communities. Edwards (2003) discusses three courses of action in the family literacy research community that can impact how teachers view families and choose to work with families. One of these courses of action is the incorporation model. This model asks researchers to explore communities that have historically been undervalued by schools, identify literacy practices, and then incorporate those practices into the curriculum. The challenge with this course of action is that it does take a great amount of time to examine families and communities and identify their literacy practices, often taking researchers years to

complete an ethnographic study. This poses an extra set of tasks for teachers to gain knowledge of their students' families over the course of one school year.

Preservice teachers may be more inclined to seek out diverse family literacy practices if they strongly believe that they can play a key role in their classroom reading instruction. The incorporation of family literacy practices into the classroom reading curriculum offers a purpose for teachers to want to seek out the knowledge around home literacy practices. Compton-Lilly (2009) strongly advocated for more teacher research to occur as a way for educators "to learn more about their students and their families" (p. 450). Further she writes, "I make a case for teacher research that extends beyond classroom walls and spills out into communities and homes" (p. 450). In light of the various backgrounds of the families in Heath's (1983) study, teachers were able to build bridges between the home and school environment through Heath's use of having teachers learn as ethnographers in her study alongside her. Heath writes, "Teachers enabled students to translate and expand knowledge gained in activities outside the classroom to focus on different aspects of the curriculum and school skills" (p. 355). Heath's study demonstrates how teachers can come to see a purpose and the value of recognizing and valuing diverse family literacy practices and highlights how they can be brought into the classroom to integrate family literacies with school literacies. But, what if preservice teachers come to envision diverse family literacy practices as additional data and information that will purposefully guide their reading lesson plans? Gregory, Long, and Volk (2004) suggest that preservice teachers "explore ways to link mandated curriculum and standards to local funds of knowledge" (p. 223). By instilling in preservice teachers a vision to gather information within their own practice, especially in

regards to learning about how collaborating with families can improve their practice and help them continue to refine their vision for how families can play a role in their classroom reading instruction, preservice teachers can become more prepared to work with families and come to value and use their literacy resources.

Preparing teachers to teach students to read at a proficient level has been one of the centerpieces of teacher education programs for decades, but much of their preparation tends to focus on the assessment of reading levels, writing lesson plans, and the implementation of research-based reading strategies (National Academy of Sciences, 2010). Turner and Edwards (2008) maintain that the curriculum can be a point of tension within reading teacher education programs and making the space for issues of diversity or family literacy can be a critical challenge because some programs “are more concerned with including more rigorous content-specific literacy courses which develop novice teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge, subject matter knowledge, and repertoire of instructional strategies” (p. 247). The emphasis on the assessment, lesson planning, and reading strategies can promote a lens for literacy that does not account for literacy practices that occur every day outside of the classroom.

Another key challenge to developing preservice teachers with a vision to integrate home and school environments involves the deeply-rooted views of family and the role of the teacher. In a study with nine elementary and secondary preservice teachers at a large public Midwest university, Graue (2005) examined their dispositions for working with families. Through interviews, Graue found that the preservice teachers’ experiences and accounts of their own families’ relationships with their teachers played a role in how they came to view families in their future classrooms. More notably, Graue found three

significant themes: a) preservice teachers noted that parents know their children, but teachers could come to know children in a more relevant way; b) teacher professional knowledge was paramount; and c) the preservice teachers could imagine ways to build relationships with families. The preservice teachers in this study recognized the knowledge and understanding parents had of their children, but many believed this knowledge was less pertinent to the teacher's knowledge of the child. One of the preservice teachers said the following in her interview:

The teacher has to look at the entire class as a whole and has to take into consideration so many different students and so many different backgrounds, and so many different learning styles; whereas the parent really focuses mostly just on their own child and they don't have to find ways to make it all work together.

The second theme involved a view of teachers' knowledge as elevated above parents' or families' knowledge and this can impact how teachers envision working with families. In addition to the preservice teachers saying that they could come to know and understand the child better than their parents, the preservice teachers thought their technical knowledge was in contrast to parents' knowledge. Their professional instruction, knowledge of theory, and understanding of the field of education set them apart from parents and more suited to teach their children. Finally, when it came to building relationships with families, the preservice teachers imagined future classrooms where they would send information to the home from the school (e.g., newsletters) and where parents would come and volunteer to "provide an extra pair of hands" (p. 176). These ideas and visions of future classrooms show one-sided perspectives of these preservice

teachers and, according to Graue, “little attention was paid to relationships as partnerships of equals” (p. 176). These ideas and beliefs can run deep, making them extremely difficult to shift. Thus, it is indelibly important to help preservice teachers develop visions for engaging diverse families in literacy as early in their program as possible.

Graue (2005) concludes, “Helping prospective teachers see that relationships are interactive ... could provide a more permeable boundary between home and school” (p. 182). The two-way communication and mutual building of relationships can allow teachers to give literacy resources and strategies to families while also grasping knowledge of home literacy practices that can flow back into the classroom, ultimately making it a natural cyclical process. In order to achieve this goal, teacher educators must find successful ways to help preservice teachers to develop a vision to engage families in literacy, to learn about their diverse family literacy practices, and consider ways to incorporate them into the classroom reading instruction. In the next section, I review studies that have successfully used vision to prepare teachers of reading.

Using Vision to Prepare Reading Teachers

Nearly every successful leader, company, and organization have strong visions that clearly outline the goals, ideals, and direction for the future. Similarly, teacher educators understand the importance of helping preservice teachers to identify, shape, and clearly articulate their visions for teaching (Kim, Turner, & Mason, 2015; Vaughn & Faircloth, 2013). Just as teachers write their objectives for each lesson plan, preservice teachers should create and maintain a set of objectives for what they envision for their future reading classrooms. Although teachers’ visions can encompass a vast array of

aspects (e.g., student-centered approaches, culturally responsive pedagogy), they tend to include items that have been addressed and focused on throughout one's teacher education program (Feiman-Nemser, Tamir, & Hammerness, 2014). For example, if a teacher education program focused heavily on multicultural education, then the visions held by preservice teachers graduating from that program would most likely include many facets of culture, diversity, and social justice.

In the first section of this chapter, I outlined some of the ways vision has been used in the teacher education landscape. But how has vision been used specifically to prepare teachers of reading? Scholars have used vision to describe individual teachers' missions and purposes for teaching reading (Duffy, 2002; Vaughn & Faircloth, 2013); to develop literacy educators with culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy (Turner, 2007; Turner & Mercado, 2009; Kim, Turner, & Mason, 2015); to demonstrate the role vision plays in sustaining the practice of new literacy teachers (McElhone, Hebard, Scott, & Juel, 2009; Scales, 2013); and how it plays a significant role in teachers' abilities to adapt literacy instruction to meet the need of students (Vaughn, Parsons, Gallagher, & Brannen, 2015). These studies demonstrate the variety of ways that vision has been effectively used in the reading education field indicating the benefits of examining preservice teachers' visions for teaching reading.

Similar to Zeichner and Liston's (1987) call for preservice teachers to become more self-directed teachers through reflection, Duffy (2002) calls for preservice literacy teachers to develop a vision for teaching so that they can "combine and adapt many methods and materials to fit the situation in which they find themselves" (p. 331-332). Basically, how can we prepare teachers to think through dimensions of teaching while

developing pedagogical skills so that they know when and what to pull from of their “pedagogical toolkits” (Kim, Turner, & Mason, 2015, p. 109)? Duffy describes vision in this sense as developing preservice teachers “who are pedagogically competent while also being psychological strong” (p. 332). He defines vision as “a personal stance on teaching that rises from deep within the inner teacher and fuels independent thinking” (p. 334). In three different preservice teacher education programs, Duffy and his colleagues identified four key characteristics of outstanding literacy teachers and asked students to write a vision paper. The four characteristics of outstanding literacy teachers were a) teachers were decision makers, b) teachers had a deep sense of mission and service, c) teachers resisted the urge to follow, and d) teachers maintained passion and a sense of joy about their mission. The vision paper assignment allowed preservice teachers to search for self in the forms of teacher consciousness and creativity. Prior to the preservice teachers embarking on their vision papers, class discussions around the definitions of literacy and the complex nature of teaching literacy took place. Over the course of their programs, the preservice teachers were asked to consistently rethink and revise their vision papers as they were introduced to more knowledge, theories, methods of teaching reading, new settings, and new research. While some of the preservice teachers did not initially like the vision project because they would have preferred that their professors just tell them what to do, self-reports from the teachers once they had been in the field for three or more years indicated that they found the vision assignment to be incredibly helpful. One teacher reported that vision helped to connect teaching to the real world, another reported that vision provides focus even when environments and situations change, and another teacher said that vision helped to “try new things when things go

wrong” (p. 338). Developing visions helped teachers to “not just go through the motions” (p. 339) and to be more reflective and provided wisdom to accept all students. Duffy’s view and use of vision helps to identify ways that teacher educators can help preservice teachers wrestle with content and pedagogical knowledge to instill an individual sense of purpose so that they can become literacy leaders and not followers of others.

Echoing Duffy’s (2002) stance on developing preservice teachers with a vision that helps them “develop a clearer sense of their purposes for teaching and authorizes them to think for themselves” (p. 335), Vaughn and Faircloth (2013) used self-study to explore one teacher’s vision for teaching literacy as a way to examine and evaluate her purpose and mission. The teachers’ first-grade students were also interviewed to discover their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs around literacy and learning to read. After analyzing the qualitative data, Vaughn and Faircloth found the teacher’s vision for teaching reading contained two key dimensions: 1) she wanted her students to become empowered, and 2) she wanted them to develop skills for reading and writing as they engaged in meaningful literacy activities. These were the two driving forces that guided her to create a classroom environment that differentiated instruction, offered real-world activities, and was collaborative. From the student interviews, they found that the students enjoyed the flexibility of the classroom and activities. Findings from this study demonstrate the importance of teachers having a vision because it can impact and guide one’s teaching. According to Vaughn and Faircloth, the findings also indicate “that it is possible for teachers to be creative, adaptive, and flexible in their classroom decision making” (n. p.).

In addition to vision being used to develop literacy leaders with purpose, vision has been used to help reading teachers develop more responsive tools to meet the cultural

and linguistic needs of their students. Turner (2007) employed vision as a reflective tool to allow elementary preservice teachers of reading to articulate their images of culturally responsive pedagogy. Collecting and analyzing vision papers from 20 elementary preservice teachers in a racially- and ethnically-diverse reading methods cohort, Turner found that the preservice teachers' visions aligned with the five dimensions (i.e., areas of focus) but that they also had blind spots or conflicting elements within their visions. Turner's five dimensions included: 1) classroom environments as literacy communities, 2) teachers should serve as orchestrators within the classroom communities, 3) all students should participate as active members in the classroom community, 4) the curriculum should be student-centered, and 5) all students should be equipped to take ownership of literacy to further societal goals. The majority of the teachers' visions aligned with these five dimensions or focus areas of meeting the literacy needs of diverse students, however, the areas of classroom management in culturally-diverse schools and parental involvement were found to be areas that conflicted with the five dimensions of their visions, what Turner references as "blind spots" (p. 19). Nearly 40% of the preservice teachers indicated a one-size-fits-all view of classroom management by not addressing the cultural factors that may impact how students perceive classroom expectations. Regarding parental involvement, 85% of the preservice teachers perceived that creating partnerships with parents would be difficult because they viewed "culturally diverse parents to be unsupportive and lacking strong educational values" (p. 20). While still noting that challenges exist in getting culturally-diverse parents involved, 15% of the teachers thought they could build relationships with culturally and linguistically diverse parents by creating flexible modes of communication (e.g., translating documents that go

home, meeting in places that work better for the parents, etc.). Overall, though, all of the preservice teachers held deficit views of parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds by describing that obtaining their involvement would be challenging.

Findings from this study indicate that preservice teachers are moving toward developing a culturally and linguistically responsive classroom around literacy instruction, but we have much more work to do in the area of family engagement and seeing families through an asset-focused lens.

Vision can contribute to the development of leadership, purpose, and culturally responsive pedagogy among preservice teachers of reading, but how long do visions last? Two studies explored the sustainability of visions and found that strong visions for literacy teaching played a significant role in their practice and they appeared to be sustained over time. McElhone, Hebard, Scott, and Juel (2009) traced the experiences of 13 preservice elementary teachers of literacy from their preservice program through their first year of teaching to compare their visions from the last year of their teacher education program to the first year of their teaching careers. Four key themes emerged from the visions as preservice teachers: a) teacher's role as guide and lots of student talk, b) a classroom environment that emphasizes student ownership and diversity, c) confidence that their visions would turn into practice, and d) affective goals for literacy (e.g., students would develop a love of reading). Upon examination of the teachers in their first year, they found that overall the teachers' visions grew more focused, noting specific forms of assessment, instructional strategies, and teaching practices. Most notably, they found a strong link between visions and practice. Teachers who developed and were able to articulate strong visions around teaching practices and how they intended to use them

in their future classrooms demonstrated strong teaching practice in their first year of teaching. A similar correlation existed among the preservice teachers who held visions of teaching practices but could not support those practices with a rationale for why those practices were important did not demonstrate strong teaching practice within their first year of teaching.

In a similar study, Scales (2013) followed five elementary preservice teachers into their first few years of teaching. All five of the teachers were middle-class White females working in Title 1 elementary schools during their first year. Scales retroactively accessed the vision statements from the teachers' junior and senior years, literacy lesson plans, and lesson plan reflections. These documents were analyzed and coded. Scales also interviewed each of the five teachers during the first semester of their first year of teaching. From the data analysis, Scales found that all five teachers held morally focused visions by the end of their teacher education programs, but that their lesson plans and reflections had an intellectual focus. The gap seemed to exist due to the intellectual focus of the guidelines for lesson planning set by methods instructors. Scales (2013) writes, "Requirements across their literacy coursework focused on building elementary students' reading and writing skills through use of specific strategies" (n. p.). This focus on reading skills in their teaching education program and the pressures of covering content in their first-year classroom made it difficult for the teachers to enact their visions. Yet, Scales found from the interviews that all of the teachers still held their moral vision and they felt that it would make a difference in their future teaching once they had a handle on the curriculum, schedules, and other teaching demands. Scales concludes, "The first-year teachers continue to hold fast to the vision of who they want to be as teachers and to the

practices they believe best serve students” (n. p.). These findings show the possible dissonance between vision and practice and some of the challenges teachers will face once they step into their classrooms. From this study, we have garnered some insight into the sustainability of visions and the need to examine ways to bridge vision and practice.

Significant to the vision literature, the term “adaptive instruction” has recently emerged in the vernacular of literacy researchers (Duffy, Miller, Kear, Parson, Davis, & Williams, 2008; Vaughn & Parsons, in press). Vaughn, Parsons, Gallagher, and Branen (2015) argue that “teachers need to be flexible and responsive to provide integrated instruction that meets the diverse needs of the students they serve” (p. 540). Through observations of K-7 literacy teachers’ instruction and interviews with teachers from various regions across the United States, Vaughn and colleagues found patterns in characteristics of adaptive teaching. They found that adaptive teachers do the following: 1) they constantly informally assess students, 2) they reflect on their practice, 3) they know their students well, and 4) they have a vision. In one interaction between a teacher and a student, Vaughn et al. shared how a teacher knew how to help a student with a writing project because she had been to the student’s house several times and the student said “that talking about his home life helped him with his writing” (p. 544). The teacher’s knowledge of her students went “far beyond her understanding of their academic skills and strengths” (p. 544). One teacher used her vision for teaching by adapting her instruction to meet the needs of her students. In a guided reading lesson, a sixth-grade teacher introduced the skills of cause and effect to her students, and one of her students wrote down cause and effect to complete the task. Noticing that the student was trying to “accomplish the task given to them” (p. 545), the teacher adapted her instruction and

asked him to go back and read to think about other reading skills. The teacher said, “I don’t ever want them to read for skill...I feel like they’ve been so trained to just accomplish whatever the particular skill that they’re working on” (p. 545). The teacher’s vision for developing lifelong readers played out in her practice and through her use of adaptive teaching. These findings demonstrate how vision can allow teachers to be flexible and adaptive. Teachers with strong visions for teaching have a frame of reference, a foundation, that allows them to be flexible, creative, and adaptive to meet the diverse needs of their students.

In this section, I provided an overview of reading teacher education and how over the course of time an emphasis on multicultural education has emerged in this field. I then discussed the ways literacy is defined and the challenges for preservice teachers and teachers of literacy to bridge the home and school environments. I concluded this section with an account of how literacy scholars have used vision within the reading teacher education landscape. Based on a review of the existing research, we could benefit from learning more about how elementary preservice teachers envision learning about diverse family literacy practices and how they could be used in the classroom reading instruction. In the next section, I draw from the existing literature to outline the basis for my study.

The Study and Theoretical Framework

What I propose in this section may be a paradigm shift for many elementary preservice teachers. At the end of this section, I recommend that elementary preservice teachers of reading should be guided by teacher educators of reading methods courses to develop a vision for their classroom reading instruction that is informed in part by diverse family literacy practices, not only their reading benchmark data. Literacy data is

incredibly important to drive reading instruction, but should in-class benchmark data or classroom observations of students' reading behaviors be the only data driving instruction? This study aims to explore elementary education preservice teachers' visions for teaching reading and to specifically examine what they envision around the dimension of the role that diverse families play in their reading instruction. I also aim to examine how those visions are shaped and how likely they believe they are to carry out aspects of their visions.

Why is the development of elementary education preservice teachers' visions for teaching reading important? Teachers' visions are the "images of the ideal classroom practice" and "they embody teachers' hopes for the future" (Hammerness, 2006, p. 1). Helping elementary preservice teachers of reading develop and articulate their visions for teaching reading can greatly influence the daily decisions of their classroom reading instructional practice. Drawing from the work of Hammerness (2006), Feiman-Nemser, Tamir, and Hammerness (2014), Turner (2007), and Kim, Turner, and Mason (2015), I believe the development of visions for teaching reading can lay a strong foundation for how teachers assess reading skills and plan for their reading instruction every day in the classroom. In addition to the development of these reading teacher visions, it is important for preservice teachers to be able to articulate their visions for teaching reading so that the visions are explicit and have a purpose.

Further, as Feiman-Nemser (2001) addressed in her continuum of teachers' development of vision, visions can stem from one's beliefs and beliefs can act as a foundation or a starting point for teacher vision. Although beliefs can play a role in the development of vision, beliefs and vision are two separate concepts. Vision, in this

particular study, involves how preservice teachers see a specific area of teaching (i.e., classroom reading instruction and how diverse family literacy practices can play a role in guiding it). The vision includes the plan, the tools, the pedagogy, and the aspects that are important to each individual teacher. Certainly, beliefs can contribute to the development of vision as preservice teachers first examine their beliefs and then construct their visions. Nespor (1987) argued that “people’s beliefs are important influences on the ways they conceptualize tasks and learn from experience” (p. 317). Pajares (1992) described teachers’ beliefs as a “messy construct” (p. 307) and stated that “many see [beliefs] so steeped in mystery that it can never be clearly defined ... and is often seen as the more proper concern of philosophy or, in its more spiritual aspects, religion” (p. 308). I agree with Pajares’ description in that beliefs tend to be viewed more in an affective and philosophical lens; whereas, vision can be seen through a psychological lens and defined more clearly. For example, in defining vision and the development of vision, Duffy (2002) urged that “preservice teacher education must develop in teachers the psychological strength and spirit to make their own decisions rather than looking to us for answers” (p. 331). Thus, for the purposes of this study, I conclude that vision and beliefs are two separate constructs, but propose that beliefs can contribute to the development of teachers’ visions.

In this study, I define elementary education preservice teachers’ visions for teaching reading as the personal framework and set of realistic plans for teaching reading developed by each elementary preservice teacher through experiences, thoughtful reflection, and the building of content knowledge and pedagogy. Within those visions, I am interested in how preservice teachers view the role of diverse family literacy practices

in their classroom reading instruction. To capture the full visions of teaching reading, the preservice teachers will consider several dimensions and express their visions based on each of them. In this way, their visions for teaching reading are comprehensive and they are able to think through each of the components that influence their reading instruction; as opposed to simply asking them how they envision the role families play in their reading instruction. The preservice teachers were asked to think about their visions on the first day of class, and over the course of the semester were asked to reflect, ponder, and critically analyze their experiences of observing families and learning about one particular family member via an informal interview process. On the final day of the course, the preservice teachers were asked to represent their visions at that point in time in a second vision statement. I focused my analysis of their visions on how they viewed home literacy practices, how they envisioned themselves learning about them for each student in their future classroom, and how they saw themselves implementing the family literacy practices into their classroom reading instruction. In the next section, I provide an overview of these dimensions and describe how each one fits into reading instruction.

Vision Dimensions of Teaching Reading

Drawing on the work of Turner and Mercado (2009) and Turner (2007) that used vision to explore how preservice teachers are prepared to teach reading in a culturally responsive way and the revised 2010 International Literacy Association Standards, I developed five dimensions of vision for reading instruction to examine in this study based on how they asked preservice teachers to envision their reading instruction. Turner and Mercado's (2009) five dimensions included the following: a) classroom environment, b) curricular materials and resources, c) role as a teacher, d) students' roles as learners,

and e) parents' roles in the education of their children. Using their work as a framework, I include two of their dimensions (i.e., classroom environment and role of the teacher) and revised the parents' roles to the role of diverse families in their classroom reading instruction. Turner (2007) invoked five dimensions of visions for teaching reading: a) classroom environment, b) role of teachers, c) role of students, d) curriculum, and e) societal goals. I include three of Turner's dimensions in my vision dimensions. The revised 2010 International Literacy Association (ILA) standards for reading professionals include the following: 1) foundational knowledge, 2) curriculum and instruction, 3) assessment and evaluation, 4) diversity, 5) literate environment, and 6) professional learning and leadership. I integrate some of these standards into my five vision dimensions. All five of my vision dimensions are areas that impact reading instruction and they include the following: 1) the role of assessment in reading instruction, 2) the role of planning (i.e., curriculum) in reading instruction, 3) the role of the classroom environment in reading instruction, 4) the role of the teacher in the reading instruction, and 5) the role of parents and family members in the reading instruction. In the following sections, I discuss each of the vision dimensions for reading instruction.

Visions of assessment in reading instruction. One of the key phrases in the field of teaching related to assessment is that the *students' data should drive the instruction*. Fountas and Pinnell (2012) argue that "good assessment is the foundation for effective teaching" (p. 275). Turner, Applegate, and Applegate (2011) also argue that assessment data should drive instruction and to help teachers make "thoughtful instructional decisions" (p. 551). An understanding of the skills and needs for each student and assessment data should drive instruction, especially reading instruction. However, the

view of assessment data is sometimes limited to only what is produced through systematic standardized tests, regular literacy benchmarks, and sometimes observations of students' behaviors (see Fiene & McMahon, 2007). The Assessment and Evaluation Standard of the 2010 ILA Reading Standards emphasizes the "use of a variety of assessment tools and practices" (n.p.) but the standard focuses heavily on standardized tests and the "systematic monitoring of student performance" (n.p.) with no mention of data beyond the classroom and school. Fountas and Pinnell (2012) write that teachers "can use running records or benchmark assessments to: a) assess the accuracy level, b) assess fluency, c) observe and code oral reading behaviors systematically to note what students do at difficulty or at error and learn how students are solving problems with text, and d) engage the student in conversation to assess comprehension at several levels" (p. 276). Although data derived from running records and benchmarks are crucial to guiding and planning reading instruction in the classroom, preservice teachers could benefit from being asked to think beyond benchmarks. Would classroom reading instruction look different if elementary preservice teachers considered the rich data that exists beyond the classroom—within the home, family, and community—to envision how they will identify and recognize diverse family literacy practices and think about ways that they could use those as data to also guide and help to plan their classroom reading instruction?

Envisioning the planning of reading instruction. An additional area that is significantly emphasized in the preparation of reading teachers is curriculum or the planning process. Standard 2, Curriculum and Instruction, of the 2010 International Literacy Association Standards involves preservice teachers using "instructional approaches, materials, and an integrated, comprehensive, balanced curriculum to support

student learning in reading and writing” (n. p.). One of the major assumptions to this standard is that the instructional strategies used in implanting reading instruction should be research based. One of the tensions in the reading teacher education landscape is that there is a lack of “best practices” or “evidenced-based strategies” with regards to engaging diverse families in literacy. In their synthesis of literacy research, Turner and Edwards (2008) discovered that “there is no one ‘best way’ to education preservice teachers about children’s home literacy practices” (p. 249). With a shortage of research on ways that teachers can plan their reading instruction based on the knowledge of families and their literacy practices, it is important to examine how the development of vision can help to prepare teachers to find ways that best meets the needs of their students and their families. Would classroom reading instruction look different if elementary preservice teachers pondered ways to integrate diverse family literacy practices into their classroom literacy curriculum and had a vision for incorporating them on a regular basis?

Picturing the classroom reading environment. Another key area that many scholars of reading education report as critical to teaching all students to proficiently read involves the classroom environment (Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008; Turner & Mercado, 2009). According to a 2010 synthesis from the National Academy of Sciences, teachers of reading should be prepared to “create a rich literate environment” (p. 87). The 2010 ILA standards outline the importance of creating a literate environment in standard 5, which states that preservice teachers should “create a literate environment that fosters reading and writing by integrating foundational knowledge, instructional practices, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and the appropriate use of assessments” (n. p.). Preservice teachers should be proficient in areas such as curriculum

and assessment in order to have a rich classroom reading environment. One critical assumption of this ILA standard is that the classroom reading environment contains a “flexible border between the world outside the classroom and the school” and that “learning should extend beyond the walls of the educational context to explore the potential acts of literacy that affect the world outside” (n. p.). While this standard suggests an open border between the classroom and the community, no explicit mention of family or family literacy practices is included in this assumption. Thus, the role of family could be implied, but even if so, it is at best at the margins. Would classroom reading instruction look different if elementary preservice teachers pictured a classroom literacy environment that incorporated students’ diverse family literacy practices?

Viewing the role of the teacher of reading. Teachers play a critical role in educating elementary students. Zeichner and Liston (1987) described aspects of the role of the teacher from the perspective of a large Midwestern university’s teacher education program. These aspects include: a) instructing, b) developing curriculum, c) assessing students, d) managing the classroom, and e) adapting and modifying existing curricula. Adaptive instruction is another way to think about teaching in the moment or responding to students’ needs (i.e., responsive teaching) (Van den Berg, Sleegers, Geijsel, & Vandenberghe, 2000; Vaughn, Parsons, Gallagher, & Branen, 2015). Van den Berg et al. (2000) write that adaptive teaching takes place when “teachers accept the differences in the capabilities in pupils and take these differences as the starting point for teaching/learning” (p. 334). Vaughn et al. (2015) argue that it is the teachers’ role and responsibility to meet the literacy needs of all of their students. They write, “It is incumbent upon teachers to adapt to these students’ differing needs” (Vaughn, Parsons,

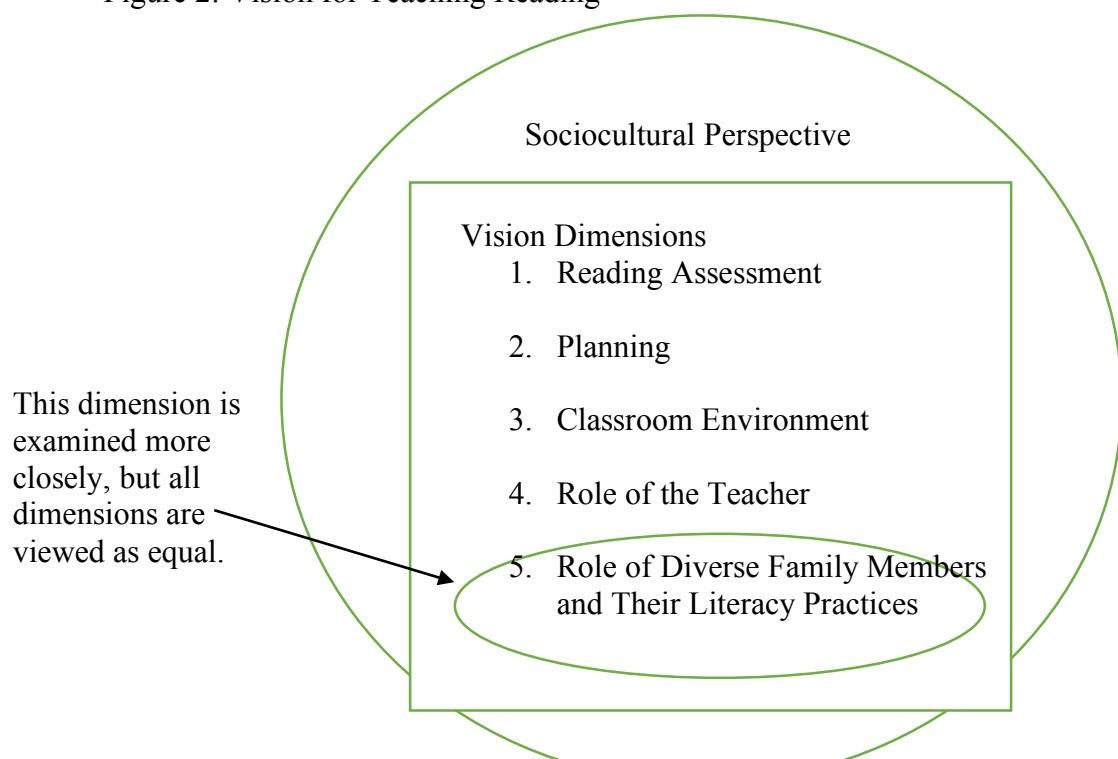
Gallagher, & Branen, 2015, p. 540). Kim, Turner, and Mason (2015) found that the elementary preservice teachers in their study “explicitly acknowledged that it was their responsibility to orchestrate reading materials and instruction that would motivate diverse students to read” (p. 109). Would classroom reading instruction look different if elementary preservice teachers viewed the inclusion of diverse family literacy practices as part of their role as a teacher?

Visualizing the role of families in reading instruction. As noted in the examples of the three frameworks within teacher education (e.g., core practices/high leverage practices, edTPA, and Common Core State Standards), many existing teaching frameworks and standards do not include a specific role for families to play in their children’s education or reading instruction. Similarly, the 2010 ILA standards do not involve a standard that addresses the role of families. Although they have a standard for reading teachers to be prepared to embrace diversity, the standards omit language about families and their role in reading. Due to a lack of focus or emphasis on families and their significant roles in children’s literacy development in these instructional frameworks, I include a specific vision dimension aimed at exploring how elementary preservice see the role of families in reading instruction and to help them to develop a vision for learning about diverse family literacy practices. Would classroom reading instruction look different if elementary preservice teachers envisioned families and their diverse family literacy practices to play a significant role in the classroom reading instruction?

This study is important because it examines elementary preservice teachers’ visions for teaching reading and closely examines how they develop their visions for using diverse family literacy practices as supplemental data to guide their classroom

reading instruction. Preservice teachers can begin to bridge the home and community environment to the school environment by thinking of ways to bring in diverse family literacy practices into the school reading curriculum. I am aware that many of these preservice teachers will not be able to identify family literacy practices of all of their students or to tailor their reading instruction based on each and every student's home lives; however, I suggest that it is the development of their visions for thinking about using diverse family literacy practices as a unique and innovative option that will encourage and drive them to consider using these literacy practices to guide their future reading instruction. If the idea of using diverse family literacy practices to drive their classroom reading instruction is not within their vision, then it is unlikely that they will consider taking this action in the future. My goal in this study is to examine the extent to which the thought of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction is held within their vision for teaching reading. Figure 2 below helps to demonstrate how I conceptualize this study and preservice teachers' visions for teaching reading.

Figure 2: Vision for Teaching Reading



In this study, I examined dimension number five more closely to discover elementary preservice teachers' visions of families, diversity, and literacy to explore their goals for using diverse family literacy practices as part of their data to drive their reading instruction in the classroom. How can teacher educators of elementary reading teachers help to develop visions for teaching reading that encompass a wide range of data to drive classroom instruction? If elementary education preservice teachers have a purpose for collecting data on diverse family literacy practices, they may be more inclined to use them as they teach reading. Right now, I believe most elementary preservice teachers to view families as important, but as a "nice to have" element. By "nice to have," I mean that preservice teachers would love to reach out to families and learn more about their home literacy practices if they had all the time in the world and all of the resources to do so. But with reading assessments and policies around standardized tests taking up much time and focus from teachers, I think teacher educators can help preservice teachers see how using diverse family literacy practices as additional data can help to increase not only students' test scores but also to build a love of reading and marry their worlds of school and home to help students to see literacy as an everyday skill. In the next section, I zoom out to discuss the lens that I use for this study as a researcher and teacher educator, and then I zoom in to outline the theoretical framework of how I intend to use teacher vision in this study.

Sociocultural Lens and Responsive Pedagogy

Across all five dimensions of their visions for teaching reading, I hold the view that a sociocultural lens should be used to develop all of these dimensions. Students benefit from elementary preservice teachers viewing reading assessment, planning, the

classroom environment, the teacher's role, and family and community members' roles as being impacted by social, cultural, and historical factors. In my teaching career, I have heard some teachers say that when the classroom door shuts for the start of the day students are to think only about school and what they are learning in the classroom. But, most students do not compartmentalize their worlds in that manner. For example, Gregory, Long, and Volk (2004) emphasize how students' worlds are blended and note "the fluid and creative interaction of words, ideas and practices" help to "create a dynamic, fruitful and positive whole" (p. 4).

Davidson (2010) writes, "The sociocultural approach attempts to be nonjudgmental and to understand and employ the practices of culturally diverse groups to foster literacy learning" (p. 251). As a researcher, I enter this study with a sociocultural perspective that social, cultural, and historical factors play a role in learning to read and to develop literacy skills (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). As a teacher educator, I encourage my students to develop a sociocultural framework and to implement culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002) so that they are including elements of students' homes and communities in their classroom reading instruction. Gay (2002) defines culturally responsive teaching as "using cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (p. 106).

In addition to Gay's (2002) work on culturally responsive teaching, other researchers emphasize the importance of teachers using linguistically responsive pedagogy in order to provide "the types of assistance that learners need to successfully learn academic content and skills through English while developing proficiency in English" (Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008, p. 361). Further, the well-known guided reading

framework created by Fountas and Pinnell includes a component that they call “precision teaching” (Fountas & Pinnell, 2012, p. 276) and sometimes referred to as responsive teaching. This component of the guided reading lesson framework asks the teacher to observe and notice reading behaviors throughout the first portion of the lesson and to respond with instruction based on those behaviors. Fountas and Pinnell (2012) write, “Reading teachers are like scientists gathering precise data and using it to form hypotheses” (p. 276). The idea of responding to students’ needs through tailored instructional planning and practices (i.e., responsive teaching) can have a significant impact on their literacy development and greatly enhance their learning. Further, teachers must be careful not to rely on assumptions about specific cultures or generalizations about students’ backgrounds; we must learn about each individual student and his or her background to understand their specific strengths and needs.

My proposed study stems from a broad sociocultural theoretical framework that seeks to include the social aspect of the family life as well as the rich cultural experiences found within families and communities. It is through this sociocultural lens that I incorporate teacher vision as a tool to help prepare elementary preservice teachers to envision using diverse family literacy practices as one way to guide their classroom reading instruction and as a tool to examine the extent to which elementary education preservice teachers are employing a sociocultural framework within their visions for teaching reading across all five dimensions.

Broadening Visions of Family

One of the ways that elementary education preservice teachers can begin to envision diverse family literacy practices to play a role in guiding their classroom reading

instruction is to broaden their view of *family*. Many times when preservice teachers hear the term “family engagement,” they think of parents, or possibly guardians. In this study, I will ask elementary education preservice teachers to think about students and their families more broadly than simply through a parent involvement or parent engagement lens. I want them to think about the diverse range of family members, including aunts/uncles, grandparents, siblings, cousins, and close family friends, not only parents (Gregory, Long & Volk, 2004).

In addition to thinking beyond just parents and to consider the strengths of other family members, I want to broaden the elementary education preservice teachers’ visions to think about what it means to engage families and to think of creative ways to learn more about their students and their families. For some teachers, they perceive parents in a negative light if they do not show up for parent-teacher conferences or if they are hard to reach. This can sometimes lead teachers to give up on parents or view families as if they do not care about the student or education. As a teacher educator, I encourage my students to think past parent-teacher conferences as the one of the few ways to engage families and to invite families into the classroom at other times throughout the year or to conduct home visits to get to know the students’ homes and communities. I also recommend that they think about other family members, such as siblings, to make connections between the home and the school.

Expanding Visions of Diversity

Another way that elementary education preservice teachers can begin to envision diverse family literacy practices to play a role in guiding their classroom reading instruction is to broaden their view of *diversity*. Hammerness (2006) cautions that

teachers' visions can potentially be culturally biased or not take all backgrounds into consideration. Hammerness (2006) writes, "Teachers may have visions of the ideal classroom that do not allow for or accommodate a diverse student body" (p. 4). I plan to encourage the preservice teachers to think about diversity as an array of aspects, including but not limited to religion, race/ethnicity, culture, language, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and education levels. Because the primary demographic of traditional teacher education preservice teachers in elementary education programs is White, middle-class females (Morrell, 2010), the view of diversity can sometimes be only through the lens of culture, race/ethnicity, and language. This view typically tends to exclude people who are White and from middle-class backgrounds. But, I argue that people from White, middle-class backgrounds can be diverse. For example, I am a White female, but I grew up in rural Indiana in a log cabin between two cornfields. Growing up, my family heavily followed a very conservative version of Christianity (i.e., independent, fundamental Baptist). My background is not the same as all people from White, middle-class backgrounds. In this same vein, I want to encourage elementary preservice teachers to consider the nuances and differences within and across cultures, races/ethnicities, and people who speak the same languages. All people who speak Spanish are not one homogenous group in and of themselves, but within that group there is diversity. By expanding their views of what the term diversity means, elementary education preservice teachers can think more critically about the similarities and differences each of their students and their families have in relation to one another. This, for instance, will also allow teachers to group students in reading groups based on a wide range of diverse aspects, not just data from running records or literacy benchmarks.

Turner and Mercado (2009) asked preservice teachers to write vision statements to consider how they will respond to students from culturally-diverse backgrounds. Through these vision statements, they found that the preservice teachers were “able to thoughtfully articulate their emerging understandings of diversity and how students’ cultural differences might be attended to in literacy instruction” (p. 6). In a similar fashion, this study is concerned with using vision to help elementary preservice teachers to develop a vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. In order to develop this vision, these preservice teachers will need to develop a wide view of diversity.

Another way to look at diversity is through the lens of dominant and non-dominant identities as Landa and Stephens (2017) do in their study of a preservice teacher who was developing cultural competence through children’s literature. Landa and Stephens used a critical lens to examine preservice teachers’ knowledge and skills that would allow them to teach students to become “full participants in a democratic society” (p. 54). According to Landa and Stephens, some non-dominant identity groups include American Indians, Asian Americans, African Americans, Migrant Farm Workers, Individuals with Disabilities, and LBGT Children and Families. Because the use of the terms dominant and non-dominant invoke issues of equity, power, and privilege, I choose to use the term diverse to show a variety of unique aspects that families possess. Although some elements of critical literacy may be present in the findings, this study is focused mostly on the sociocultural perspective to examine how preservice teachers envision the social and cultural aspects within families being used in the classroom.

Widening Visions of Diverse Family Literacy Practices

In addition to thinking about reading dimensions and families through a sociocultural lens, I intend to try to help the elementary education preservice teachers to develop a vision of literacy that is broad and captures the social and cultural aspects, not only what is measured on benchmark assessments. Drawing again from the work of Gregory, Long, and Volk (2004), I also aim for “a wider interpretation of literacy” (p. 5) and to ask the elementary education preservice teachers to intentionally think about literacy through a wider lens. From my own traditional elementary education teacher education program preparation and elementary teaching experience, I know how easy it is to focus on student outcomes, reading levels, and how to prepare students to score proficient or advanced on the end-of-year standardized tests. From my perspective, this sometimes limits a teacher’s perspective of “literacy” or “reading” and teachers can sometimes then focus on how reading skills look on standardized tests. In my teaching career, I have heard other teachers say, “He can’t read” in reference to students who are not able to read on grade level. The notion that literacy is binary in that you either can read or you cannot read is one that I would like elementary education preservice teachers to critically ponder. If a child can comprehend a book during a read-aloud lesson, then I hold the perspective that that child can in fact read, but that he or she may need additional instruction in phonics or fluency.

Many researchers suggest that literacy is social and learning to read involves guidance and modeling from other people (Au, 1997; Barton & Hamilton, 2012), it is not simply a relationship between the reader and the text. Regarding a sociocultural framework, Au (1997) writes that “reading, like other higher mental functions, is

essentially social in nature” (p. 184). Moving past a cognitive view of reading as an independent skill, Barton and Hamilton (2012) wish to change the narrative around literacy to shift to see the situated nature of literacy. Preparing elementary education preservice teachers of reading to expand their views of literacy and to think intentionally about how they define literacy can help them to develop a strong vision for what they would like to ideally see in their future classroom reading instruction. Drawing from Moll (2005) and his work on funds of knowledge, in this study, I invite elementary preservice teachers of reading to identify families’ “literacy funds of knowledge,” which could include, but is not limited to, the following: going to the library; visiting museums; watching movies as a family and discussing the plot and characters; reading recipes and cooking together; writing to-do lists; singing songs; playing video games; and reading labels and signs while grocery shopping. Widening their visions for what counts as literacy can also help to identify the diverse family literacy practices taking place in the home, which in turn can help them to develop a vision for identifying and recognizing diverse family literacy practices and finding ways to integrate them into their classroom reading instruction. In the next section, I demonstrate how I define vision and how it is developed among preservice teachers.

The Development of Teacher Visions for Reading Instruction

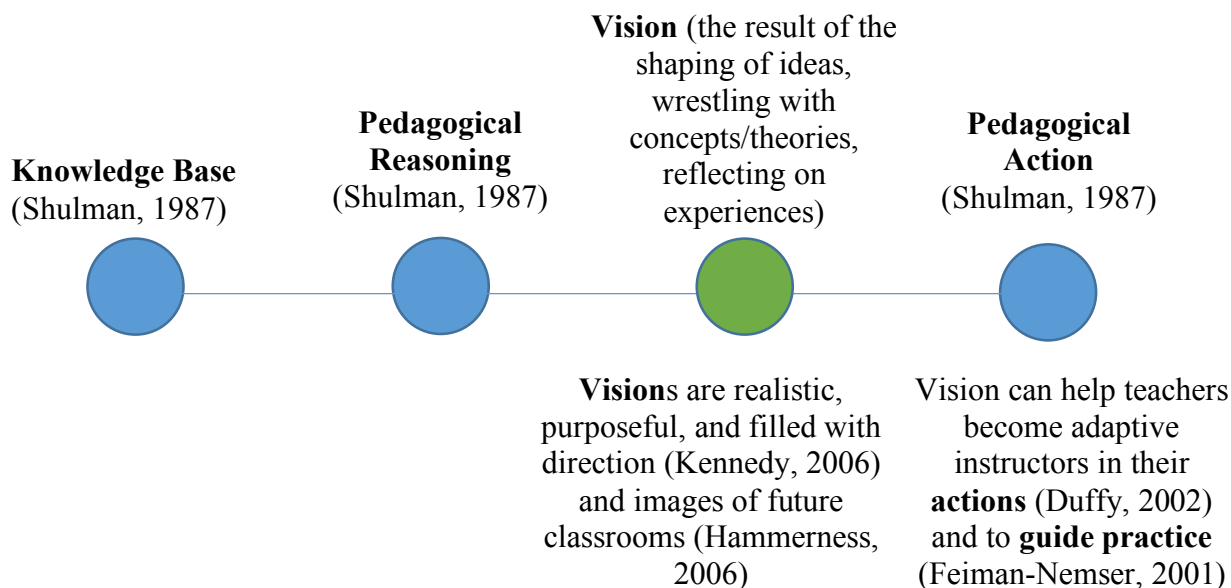
Although I view each of the five dimensions as equal pillars of reading instruction, in this study, I aim to zoom in on one of the dimensions and examine it closely. The dimension that I plan to closely explore is the visions these elementary preservice teachers have in regards to the role that diverse families play in their classroom reading instruction. More specifically, I want to know if these elementary preservice teachers

have a vision for seeing family literacy practices as a part of their assessment data and if they envision their classroom reading instruction being guided in part by diverse family literacy practices.

While I hold a broad sociocultural perspective in regards to the five dimensions of the elementary education preservice teachers' visions for reading instruction, I am aware that their visions for teaching reading are individual and are held in one's mind. Their individual visions involve each preservice teacher's own specific thoughts and perspectives that are categorized as a cognitive perspective. Tracey and Morrow (2012) write that "cognitive processing frameworks attempt to explain the internal workings of the mind as individuals engage in complex mental activities" (p. 151). In the course of this study, I plan to ask the elementary preservice teachers of reading to conduct many reflections and to critically think individually about their own visions for teaching reading. Their teacher visions can then only be analyzed after I have asked each preservice teacher to clearly articulate them in the form of written work or elicited them through interviews. Thus, in this study I am interested in how the preservice teachers developed their visions for teaching reading, how explicit the preservice teachers articulate their visions for teaching reading, and if they believe the visions will influence their classroom reading instructional practice in the future. I want to examine how their visions can grow and evolve from tacit thinking to clearly articulating their ideals, goals, and intentional thoughts about their reading instruction for their future classrooms.

Figure 3 below provides a visual representation of how I am defining vision, based on the work of other scholars, and how visions develop.

Figure 3: The Development of Vision for Teaching



If teacher educators provide a strong foundation of content and pedagogy for elementary education preservice teachers, then should we expect them to naturally develop their visions for their teaching practices? The development and shaping of preservice teachers must be an intentional practice where preservice teachers are asked to synthesize the material presented in methods courses and the experiences from their internship placement to grapple with the ideas and knowledge in order to come to their own personal vision for teaching. Although I view their individual visions for teaching reading through a cognitive lens in that they are personal and partly developed internally, I also believe that their teacher visions are socially constructed. The elementary education preservice teachers are not simply reading and reflecting in order to shape their visions, they are interacting with colleagues, responding to others' reflections, and interviewing a family member of a student in their internship placement. Just as Vygotsky (1978)

believed that learning stems from the interaction with other people, I believe visions for teaching are shaped and molded by the interactions and exchanges with others (e.g., students, family members, colleagues, mentor teachers, teacher educators, etc.). In this study, I aim to investigate the change and development of elementary preservice teachers' visions for teaching reading and explore how they are shaped and how they grow.

By attempting to expand elementary education preservice teachers' visions for family, diversity, and literacy, my hope as a teacher educator is that they would shift their focus from reading assessment outcomes to encompass a vision for teaching reading that embraces the diverse elements of each student's background, including how family members' literacy practices can play a role in supporting the classroom reading instruction. As a researcher, I aim to explore how using vision as a tool can help to expand these preservice teachers' views of family, diversity, and literacy and how their visions can be used to assess the extent to which they intentionally think about diverse family literacy practices informing their classroom reading instruction.

My aim in this study is to provide opportunities for elementary education preservice teachers to develop their visions for teaching reading across the five dimensions that I have previously discussed. I am interested, then, in drawing out those visions for teaching reading through written reflections and interviews to further examine how they have developed within the dimension of the role that diverse family literacy practices will play in their classroom reading instruction and how it compares to the other four dimensions. I will also explore their thoughts on the challenges that may hinder them from acting upon their visions for teaching reading, however, it is beyond the scope of this study to explore

their future actions or the reading outcomes of their future students. Of teachers who bridge vision and practice, Hammerness (2006) writes that they “have learned to navigate the gap between their ideals and dreams and the kinds of instruction, activities, and achievements their context seems to support” (p. 7). The development of teachers’ visions for teaching reading is the beginning and ideally the visions will allow them to carry out their ideals; in this study, I hope to help the preservice teachers begin with the development of their visions and explore them further.

This chapter outlined definitions of vision and its significance within teacher education, highlighted how vision was used in teacher education research, and examined existing frameworks for teaching that leave the role of family literacy off to the margins. In this chapter, I also reviewed the literature in the reading teacher education landscape and how vision has been used to develop teachers of reading. Additionally, I discussed the challenges of preparing teachers to see literacy in a broad fashion and to engage families in literacy. I also reviewed the literature that used vision to prepare teachers of reading. I concluded this chapter with the foundation for my study and outlined my theoretical framework on how I intend to use teacher visions as a tool to help to prepare elementary education preservice teachers to teach reading and how I will use teacher vision as a tool to assess the extent to which they will use diverse family literacy practices as data to drive a part of their classroom reading instruction. In the next chapter, I provide an account of my plan of my methods for my dissertation study, including my methods for data collection and analysis.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine elementary preservice teachers' visions for engaging diverse families in literacy, to explore how these preservice teachers envision using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction, and to identify a level of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy among these elementary preservice teachers. The research questions guiding this study are the following:

1. How do elementary preservice teachers envision diverse family literacy practices playing a role in their future classroom reading instruction?
2. How do elementary preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom reading instruction develop over the course of one semester?
3. To what extent do elementary preservice teachers feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy?
 - a. What do preservice teachers identify from their reading methods courses as supports to the shaping of their visions to engage families in literacy? (e.g., assignments, class lectures, etc.)
 - b. What do preservice teachers foresee as some of the challenges to enacting their visions for recognizing and using diverse family literacy practices in their future classrooms of reading?

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the pilot study, describe the participants and setting, and outline the data collection and analysis process.

The Pilot

Methods

To develop and refine my research and interview questions, as well as garner ideas for data collection via in-class assignments, I asked current teachers who were enrolled in a masters in reading education program at a large Mid-Atlantic university to offer their insight and feedback via a focus group. Most of these teachers had, on average, five years teaching experience so they had a unique perspective in reflecting on assignments they had in their teacher preparation program or that they wished they had experienced that would help to prepare preservice teachers to engage diverse families in literacy. The participating teachers were all proficient in the English language and included seven White females and one White male. One of the female teachers was fluent in two languages other than English and the male teacher in the group was also proficient in the Spanish language. All of the teachers who participated in the focus group were in their last week of teaching elementary students who attended a three-week summer reading program for rising first- through eighth-grade children who were identified as needing extra support in reading over the summer. The teachers were completing their master's degrees in reading education K-12. Out of eleven total teachers working in the reading program, eight attended the focus group.

As the graduate assistant for a summer reading program designed as a practicum experience for teachers in a reading education master's program at a large university in the midAtlantic, I worked closely with all of the eleven teachers who taught in the summer reading program and built rapport through providing resources, coaching, and feedback throughout the summer. The focus group lasted approximately one hour and I

provided snacks and coffee as a way to thank the teachers for participating. I recorded the focus group discussion with verbal permission of each person in attendance. I did not obtain IRB approval for the pilot as I was advised that it was not needed because I would not use this data as findings in my research project. The findings from the pilot study were used to inform the methods and other aspects of the study's development, not as part of my findings. Three university faculty were present for the focus group, one faculty member recorded field notes on chart paper and another faculty member recorded field notes on her computer.

I began the focus group by introducing the study and the purpose of the focus group and providing an outline for our time together. The focus group was designed to help me to begin to develop and to refine my research and interview questions as well as assignments to help explore teacher candidates' level of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy.

We began with my existing research questions that included: a) How are traditional teacher education programs preparing elementary education teacher candidates to engage diverse families in literacy? and b) What do teacher candidates plan to do once they start teaching to engage diverse families in literacy? I then asked them to help me refine my existing questions or help to generate additional questions. We then transitioned to the interview questions and I provided a list of existing questions for both teacher candidates and faculty members (see Appendix A for full list). Finally, I presented my existing ideas for in-class assignments throughout the fall 2016 semester of my reading methods courses.

Findings from Pilot

After rereading the field notes from the chart paper and the electronic document that were recorded by two faculty members, I coded ideas and items that I believed would be pertinent to my study. After coding, I went back to some of the literature and found additional literature to refine some of my questions and assignments. The teachers in the pilot study mentioned teacher beliefs, teacher identity, cultural sensitivity, and cultural competence as areas that teachers should develop in order to be prepared to engage diverse families in literacy. Therefore, I reviewed Turner and Mercado (2009) and found that an exploration of preservice teachers' visions could be beneficial in eliciting their beliefs, teacher identity, cultural sensitivity, and cultural competence. In addition, gathering preservice teachers' visions provides a strong picture of what these teachers intend to do to engage diverse families in literacy once they have their own classrooms. Thus, I refined my research questions to include: 1) What are elementary education teacher candidates' visions for engaging diverse families in literacy? and 2) To what extent do elementary education teacher candidates' feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy?

Further, the teachers in the pilot study provided several interview questions that I should be sure to ask the teacher candidates via individual interviews and focus groups once the fall 2016 class has ended. Some of these questions included: a) How do these preservice teachers define diversity? b) What are non-traditional ways to engage families? and c) What types of communication are you planning? I plan to include these questions in my interview protocol for the teacher candidates. The teachers also provided a few questions to ask faculty members who teach reading methods courses. Some of

these included: a) What does success look like for teacher candidates? b) How do you define diversity? and c) How do you prepare students to handle all types of diversity? Since going back to the literature and refining my research questions, I do not believe I will continue to plan to include faculty members in this study as I would prefer to go in depth with these preservice teachers' visions for engaging diverse families in literacy.

Lastly, we discussed ideas for possible assignments throughout the fall semester that would prepare preservice teachers to engage diverse families in literacy and elicit their visions for how they will engage families in literacy when they enter the first year of teaching. One of the assignment ideas generated in the focus group was to have the teacher candidates interview someone from a diverse background. I intend to expand on this idea and have the teacher candidates interview a family member that they believe has a diverse background. With the preservice teachers defining why the family member is "diverse," I can further explore their views of diversity.

The pilot study with the existing teachers offered many ideas for questions and assignments that I intend to draw from and use for this proposed study. They helped to refine my research and interview questions and also generated several more questions and assignments for me to consider. Listed below, I outline the key ideas gleaned from the pilot that I will use in this dissertation study.

- The ideas around teacher identity, beliefs, cultural sensitivity, and cultural competence led me to review Turner and Mercado (2009) and to include teacher vision as a focal point.

- The teachers in the pilot study mentioned an interview as a class assignment; this led me to incorporate the family member interview assignment.
- The teachers in the pilot study helped to refine my interview questions and generate additional questions to ask the preservice teachers.
- The teachers in the pilot study helped to refine and helped me rethink some of the research questions.

Drawing from these findings, in the next section I outline my methods for my study.

Methods and Procedures

The purpose of this study was to explore elementary preservice teachers' visions for identifying and using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom reading instruction, as well as how these visions change and develop over the course of one semester. This study also aimed to explore the extent to which elementary preservice teachers believe that they are prepared to engage diverse families in literacy. In the following sections, I describe the participants and the setting, data sources and methods of collection and data analysis.

The Participants and Setting

The participants for the study included 34 elementary education (1st-6th grades) preservice teachers in their final year of a traditional four-year teacher preparation program enrolled in one of two sections of a reading methods course that I taught in the fall 2016. Because nearly 80 percent of teachers are prepared in four-year traditional teacher education programs at colleges or universities (National Research Council, 2010), it is warranted to select participants from such programs. Further, the vast majority of the

demographics among teacher education programs continue to be comprised of White female preservice teachers (Department of Education, 2016; Morrell, 2010) which contrasts with the growing diversity of the US K-12 student population. Since teacher education programs consist largely of one single demographic of primarily White females, an investigation as to how preservice teachers can develop strong and clear visions for engaging racially, culturally, socioeconomically, and linguistically diverse families in literacy and using family literacy practices to drive their classroom reading instruction is important.

During fall 2016 I instructed two sections of an undergraduate reading methods course within a large Mid-Atlantic university's elementary education teacher education program. The course, EDUC 404 (a pseudonym for the course), included topics such as guided reading, spelling inventories, and reading instructional strategies. I asked the students enrolled in these two sections to act as my study participants on the last day of the course when I asked those willing to participate to complete and sign forms indicating that they would allow me to use five of their assignments, which focused on their visions for engaging students and families from diverse backgrounds, as part of this study. I requested their participation on the final class day to help to ensure that their assignments throughout the semester were completed without any possible manipulation or for them to feel that they needed to respond in any certain manner (e.g., to tell me what they think I want to hear). Additionally, by the end of the semester, many of their assignments had already been graded, further eliminating any pressure they may have felt with regards to their grades. By choosing to consent or not consent to participate, I did not want them to feel that their grades would be affected in any way.

The collected assignments used in this study included: a) vision statements for teaching reading from the first day of class, b) family member interview assignments, c) reflections from their experiences of attending an Ethiopian family literacy community event, d) surveys to assess their level of preparedness to engage families, and e) vision statements for teaching reading from the last day of class and Venn diagrams to compare vision statements. Individual interviews and one focus group with a sample of seven preservice teachers were also conducted in the spring 2017. I had 46 students on my roster between both sections at the beginning of the semester; each section had 23 students enrolled. Some of these students were enrolled in my spring 2016 course, EDUC 403 (course pseudonym), on reading methods and strategies so I was aware of many of the reading strategies, assessments, and educational theories they had learned to that point, including class readings and discussions on culturally relevant pedagogy and choosing multicultural literature for their future classrooms. The majority of the students enrolled in my two fall sections were White females around the ages of 21 years old, and only four male students were in these classes (2 males in each section). The participants included preservice teachers who were enrolled in their first semester of their final year of a four-year undergraduate teacher education program, and in an internship three days per week in first through sixth grade classrooms.

The elementary preservice teachers' placement schools were located in three counties. The university was located in one of these counties and the other two counties border it. Per the university's elementary education program handout that included data on each of the placement schools (Elementary Education Program, personal communication, August 19, 2016), the preservice teachers were placed at elementary

schools with a range of students who receive free and reduced meals (FARMS) and students with limited English proficiency (LEP). For example, out of the ten placement schools, the statistics on students receiving FARMS and students with LEP widely varied with one school reporting the lowest percentage of students with LEP at 10% and the highest percentage reported is 53%. In addition to LEP, one placement school reported the lowest percentage of students receiving FARMS at 25% and the highest percentage reported for students receiving FARMS is 80%. The various differences in the two categories of English language proficiency and income levels show the many different experiences the preservice teachers obtain throughout the course of their year of student teaching. Table 1 below provides information on all of the student-teaching placement schools.

Table 1: Demographic Statistics of Student-Teaching Placement Schools

**UNDERGRADUATE ELEM ED PROGRAM ||
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL
CLUSTERS (2016-2017)**

Version: August 18, 2016

Section 1	Section 2
*Eisenhower Elementary **FARMS 46.1, ***LEP 22.6	Grant Elementary FARMS 59.9, LEP 35.4
Jefferson Elementary FARMS 82, LEP 23.8	Johnson Elementary FARMS 41.2, LEP 53
Adams Elementary FARMS 67.5, LEP 42.2	Washington Elementary FARMS 68.9, LEP 22
Tyler Elementary FARMS 64.8, LEP 31.4	Lincoln Elementary FARMS 24.1, LEP 10.2
Kennedy Elementary FARMS 71, LEP 39.3	Roosevelt Elementary FARMS 26.3, LEP 15.2

*All school names listed are pseudonyms.

**FARMS=Free and Reduced Meals (in %)

***LEP=Limited English Proficiency (in %)

These statistics indicated a large range of student needs and suggested that each preservice teacher worked with students and families from diverse socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds.

Data Sources

I begin this section with a data sources table (Table 2) to provide an overview of information about the data sources. Then, I offer more description for each source in the latter part of this section.

Table 2: Data Sources for the Study

Source	Number of Participants	Origin	Brief Description	Purpose
Vision Statements	34 preservice teachers who consented to participate in this study	In-class assignment collected in EDUC 404	Visions for teaching reading across the following dimensions: assessment, planning, teacher's role, classroom environment, and the role of the family in reading and reading instruction Appendix B	To capture the preservice teachers' visions for teaching reading
Venn Diagram	34 preservice teachers who consented to participate in this study	In-class assignment collected in EDUC 404	To allow the preservice teachers to analyze the changes or consistencies in their vision statements from #1 (first day of class) to #2 (last day of class) Appendix B	Preservice teachers compare/contrast their initial and final vision statement; allow me to verify my interpretations of changes between vision statements

Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness Event Reflections	34 preservice teachers who consented to participate in this study	Course assignment collected in EDUC 404; submitted online	One two-hour family literacy event hosted by Ethiopian parents at a local library to teach children aspects of Ethiopian literacy practices and to help to preserve the Amharic language in future generations Appendix C	To offer an experience to the preservice teachers and an opportunity to experience one specific culture's literacy practices beyond the classroom.
Family Member Interview Assignment Reflections	34 preservice teachers who consented to participate in this study	Course assignment collected in EDUC 404; submitted online	Each preservice teacher identified one family member of one of their students and conducted an informal 30-minute interview to learn more about the family and their literacy practices. Appendix D	To offer an experience to the preservice teachers to help them learn about one family and their diverse family literacy practices to begin to think of ways to incorporate those practices into the classroom reading instruction
Survey	34 preservice teachers who consented to participate in this study	In-class assignment collected in EDUC 404	Survey asked questions related to the preservice teachers' self-identified levels of preparedness to work with families. Appendix E	To demonstrate level of preparedness of preservice teachers to engage families
Individual Interviews	7 preservice teachers selected upon data analysis of fall 2016 course work	On campus	One-hour semi-structured interview	To gain more insight and deeper understanding into the visions

			Appendix F	of 7 preservice teachers who varied in their vision statements
Focus Group	7 preservice teachers selected upon data analysis of fall 2016 course work	On campus	90-minute semi-structured focus group Appendix G	To allow the preservice teachers to visually represent their visions, describe the visual representations, and discuss thoughts and reflections as a group

Primary data sources were collected in EDUC 404 to garner individual elementary education preservice teachers' visions for learning about diverse family literacy practices and their visions for identifying ways to use those family literacy practices to drive their classroom reading instruction. Primary data sources were also collected with the goal of identifying elementary education preservice teachers' level of preparedness to engage and to learn about families and their diverse literacy practices. In-class assignments, such as teacher vision statements, offered rich insight into these preservice teachers' visions for their future reading classrooms and how family literacy practices could play a role. A class field trip to a local Ethiopian community event and a family member interview offered the elementary preservice teachers opportunities to shape their visions for teaching reading and learning about families. Following the semester's assignments, individual interviews and a focus group allowed for deeper exploration into their visions for teaching reading, learning about diverse families, and the level of preparedness to work with diverse families. In the following sections, I outline each data source and method of collection.

Teacher vision statements and Venn diagram. Drawing from Turner and Mercado's (2009) work on preparing reading teachers using vision, I asked the preservice teachers on the first day of class in early September 2016 to write vision statements (Hammerness, 2006) for how they view their classroom reading instruction, as one of their assignments in EDUC 404. On the last day of the class session in December 2016, they followed the same procedure to write their vision statements again. These were written on the "My Vision" document (see Appendix B) during the last 20 minutes of class. Each class session throughout the semester concluded with an exit ticket. These exit tickets collectively consisted of 10% of their grade and were designed as a formative assessment for me as the instructor to check for understanding, but they were also designed as a way to show the preservice teachers a variety of ideas for formative assessments to use in their future classrooms or their existing student-teaching placements. With regards to their vision statements, the allocated time of 20 minutes to complete their vision statement followed the normal class structure of which they had become accustomed. The time limit also helped to show what their true visions entailed. If they had been given time to take the vision statements home and turn them in at a later time and date may have provided the preservice teachers with the time to include potentially more details in their vision statements than were actually contained in their visions. Essentially, the time allocated allowed them to include what was important first and foremost and to not ruminate on aspects that may not truly be part of their visions. The preservice teachers were, however, allowed to continue writing their thoughts and ideas after class concluded; I did not ask them to stop writing or rush them out of class. They were given ample time to complete them, as well as the freedom to remain until

they felt that their writing was complete. On a power point slide, I provided a definition of “vision” so that the preservice teachers understood the assignment. The following is the definition of vision that I used: Teacher visions allow teachers to consider “what is possible and desirable in teaching to inspire and guide their professional learning and practice. Such visions connect important values and goals to concrete classroom practices” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1017).

The vision statements asked the preservice teachers to explain their visions for teaching reading around the following dimensions: a) assessment, b) planning, c) classroom environment, d) the role of the teacher, and e) the role of parents and family. I specifically did not ask them to include aspects of diversity or to share how they viewed and defined literacy because I wanted to garner an accurate account as to whether or not these were key components of their visions and to not draw them into integrating aspects in their visions based on leading questions or phrases that I included. Further, I did not ask them in the vision statements how they perceived diverse family literacy practices, but rather I asked them how they viewed the role of the parents and family in the classroom reading instruction. This allowed me to analyze which preservice teachers envisioned parents and families’ roles as a source of strengths and resources or those that viewed parents and families as people who need resources from the teacher. The vision statements also allowed me to see which preservice teachers extended their description to include that they perceived families as possessing knowledge and resources that could be used to plan reading instruction.

Once they had written their second vision statements, I provided them with their original vision statement from the first day of class. I waited to hand back the original

vision statement until after they had completely written their second statement. I asked them to read both statements and compare and contrast them on a Venn diagram graphic organizer. These comparisons allowed each elementary preservice teacher to interpret the similarities and differences and consider areas of their visions that they believe are deeply rooted and areas that have evolved and have been shaped over the course of the semester. See Appendix B for a detailed description of this assignment.

Ethiopian literary and culture awareness event reflection. Working in collaboration with Dr. Melissa Landa who provided access to a family event that recognizes literacy and cultural elements of Ethiopian families, the preservice teachers attended the Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness Association Event on a date of their choice in either late September or late October 2016. The Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness Association (ELCAA) was formed in 2011 by “a group of Ethiopian expatriates [who] got together privately with friends” (ELCAA website, 2017). The mission of the ELCAA is five-fold: a) to strengthen Ethiopian Literary & Cultural life in America; b) to promote and develop planning and co-operation mainly in the areas of education, heritage, culture and social welfare of Ethiopians and Ethiopian-Americans; c) to co-ordinate activities, programs and events, exchange information, and share expertise, ideas and co-operation between various Ethiopian community organizations across America; d) to identify and share best practices as between Ethiopian community organizations and individuals; and e) to assist in coordinating the activities of Ethiopian identity, education, welfare, heritage and culture (ELCAA website, 2017).

On one Saturday each month, the ELCAA partners with a local library to host a family literacy event in the afternoon for parents and families to bring children to hear

read alouds in both English and Amharic, to sing songs in Amharic and about the Ethiopian culture, and to do coloring activities and projects to help the children develop and maintain the Amharic language and Ethiopian culture. As one of their assignments, I asked the preservice teachers to attend one ELCAA event and to reflect on their observations and experience. The ELCAA is an organization founded by several Ethiopian parents in a community located about 10 miles from the university. The organization's mission is "to strengthen Ethiopian Literary and Cultural life in America" (ELCAA website, 2017). The ELCAA partners with a local library to offer story time for children on one Saturday afternoon each month. At the two-hour story time events, children ranging from ages 3 to 10 years old participate in singing songs in the Amharic language, listen to and interact with stories in both Amharic and English, and complete an activity to learn more about vocabulary words or alphabet letters in Amharic (e.g., coloring pages with Amharic letters or words). The event took place in a large meeting room in a local library which had a carpet area for the children to hear the stories and to sing the songs. Tables were arranged with coloring pages, crayons, and markers in another area of the meeting room for the children to complete their activities after the stories and songs. While the children participated on the carpet, parents and family members sat in chairs that encircled them. The parents and family members observed the children and teachers and would interact from time to time with head nods, smiles, or sometimes singing along.

The preservice teachers in EDUC 404 attended one of these events that lasted approximately two hours and they were asked to observe the presenters, children, and families during the event. The preservice teachers were asked to attend one of these

Saturday events either in September or October as a way to learn about another culture (i.e., Ethiopian culture and the Amharic language) and to observe family literacy practices. After they attended one of the ELCAA events, they were given reflection questions to ponder and to then answer via an online discussion post. Their reflection questions included the following: 1) How did the experiences at the Ethiopian Literary and Culture Awareness Association Event affect your vision of teaching reading? How did it affect your vision for engaging diverse families? 2) How did your attendance contribute to your vision for teaching reading in regards to the following two dimensions: a) the role of the teacher and b) the role of parents, family members, and community members? 3) What specific family, community, and cultural literacy practices did you observe? How do you think you could use those literacy practices to guide your classroom reading instruction? and 4) Did this experience change how you view reading assessment to drive your reading instruction?

Their reflection of the event was exit ticket #7. The preservice teachers' reflections offered insight into their visions for teaching reading, engaging diverse families, and identifying and using family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. See Appendix B for more description of this assignment.

Family member interview and reflection. Building from the work of Buck and Sylvester (2005) who asked elementary education preservice teachers in a Master's program to interview members of an urban community, I asked the students to interview a family member of one of their students in their placements. Buck and Sylvester (2005) write, "We, as educators, have to guide our preservice teachers through experiential meaning-making by directing them toward evidence that ... untapped educational

resources do exist in urban communities” (p. 228). I guided the preservice teachers to make meaning from one family that they believe comes from a diverse background and to identify that family’s untapped educational resources. The preservice teachers in EDUC 404 were asked to interview a family member of one of their students from their student-teaching placement. The interview allowed them to learn more about one specific family and their literacy practices in order for the preservice teachers to expand their vision of what counts as literacy and to become more skilled in identifying diverse family literacy practices.

This assignment also built on the work of Kidd, Sanchez, and Thorp (2004) who asked early childhood preservice teachers in a graduate program to collect family stories over the course of a semester. In their assignment protocol, they write, “[The families] are teaching you about their family, their culture, their hopes and dreams for their children, their cultural practices. Your purpose is to get to know them” (p. 72). I asked my students to do a similar assignment on a smaller scale. Over the course of the semester, the preservice teachers conducted one interview with a family member of one of their students in their student teaching placement. I offered a list of family members to the preservice teachers and they chose one member from that list. The list included: a) a parent, b) a grandparent or great-grandparent, c) an aunt or uncle, d) a sibling, e) a guardian, f) cousin, or g) a non-related person that is living in the same residence as the student (e.g., a close family friend who plays a significant role in the child’s life). They were asked to provide a rationale for why they chose the family member.

The preservice teachers arranged for a 30-minute interview that took place with their chosen family member at their placement school after they attend the Ethiopian

Literary and Culture Awareness Association (ELCAA) event in either September or October. I asked them to conduct the family member interviews after they experienced the ELCAA event so that they could draw on that experience and their reflections of that experience to plan their family member interview. I provided the preservice teachers with five questions they must ask the family member, and asked them to offer at least five additional questions to the interview list. See Appendix C for more description of the family member interview assignment, including interview questions to ask the family members and reflection questions for the preservice teachers to answer.

Schultz (2003) reminds us that listening is “an active, relational and interpretive process that is focused on meaning making” (p. 8). I encouraged the preservice teachers to focus on listening, and to not focus on trying to write down every word the family member says. The primary purpose of the family member interview was to help the preservice teachers shape their visions for engaging diverse families in literacy by listening to a family member and focusing on his or her educational resources and literacy assets. We practiced with in-class peer interviews to outline the procedures and emphasize the listening framework. I specifically asked the preservice teachers to avoid recording the interview and emphasized that there was no need to record and transcribe it. They were encouraged to listen closely and take notes if the family member said something interesting (i.e., a quote or an idea), but to think about the interview as an authentic conversation that they would have with someone they were trying to get to know better. I invited them to keep the interviews casual and informal ensuring that the family member was comfortable throughout the process.

After the interviews were conducted with a family member by the preservice teachers, I asked them to reread their notes from the interview questions and answers and then submit a written reflection based on the interview experience. I provided them with seven reflection questions (see Appendix C) they must have answered immediately following the interview with the family member. I only collected the interview data for class grading purposes, not for the purposes of this study. I did, however, collect the preservice teachers' written reflections as data to code and analyze. See Appendix C for a detailed description of the assignment and reflection questions.

Survey. In order to assess the extent to which the elementary preservice teachers enrolled in EDUC 404 feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy, I offered a survey to all of the preservice teachers in my two sections. I created the survey in the form of a Google Form and ask them to complete it during class. Some basic demographic information was included in the survey (e.g., age, hometown, gender) along with questions regarding the preservice teachers' self-assessment of their levels of preparedness to engage families. In my class sessions, I used Google slides and share these with my students ahead of our class session. I embedded a link to the survey within these slides and asked them to complete it before our 10-minute break. Once they had completed the survey, they were free to take their break. This allowed everyone the necessary time they each needed to thoroughly complete the survey. See Appendix E to view the survey form. The survey results indicated the general preservice teachers' levels of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy.

Individual interviews. After analyzing and coding the fall 2016 course assignment data for themes, I selected seven elementary preservice teachers from the pool of

participants based on these themes. Using their vision statements and the Venn diagram that they completed that compared and contrasted their first vision statement to their second vision statement, I created a data matrix in Google sheets to help me to see the preservice teachers' visions across several dimensions (see Figure 1 for a sample of the data matrix). In addition to taking the emerging themes into consideration for choosing the seven interview participants, I attempted to obtain a close representation of the two class sections' demographics. As noted earlier, many of the students in these two sections are White females, with only four males, and a small number that identify as people of color. With regards to the four males, I had hoped to select at least one to participate in the interview and focus group in order to gain a perspective from a male preservice teacher. However, two of the four did not attend the ELCAA event, one attended but did not complete the reflection assignment, and the one who attended and submitted the reflection assignment did not complete the vision statements in a coherent fashion. Further, two of the four males did not consent to participate in the study. Thus, I was unable to select males from EDUC 404 to participate in the interview or focus group. With regards to the preservice teachers who identified as people of color, two Black females were able to participate in the interviews and focus group.

Based on the themes that emerged from their vision statements and Venn diagrams, I selected seven preservice teachers from the 34 to participate in the individual interviews and the focus group. The emerging themes involved three categories of preservice teachers based on their final vision statements: emerging, developing, and advancing (these are discussed in detail in Chapter 4). I selected two preservice teachers from the emerging group, two from the developing group, and three from the advancing

group. The demographics of the preservice teachers included four White females, two females who identified as Black, and one preservice teacher who identified as Hispanic. One of the preservice teachers who identified as White also identified as Jewish. I selected three from the advancing category because the visions found in this group captured the focus of this study in that they envisioned using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction; thus, I wanted to explore their visions further and come to understand what has helped to shape and develop them. The demographics of the selected seven focal participants closely resembled the overall demographics of the two sections of EDUC 404. In my initial selection, I had five White females, one Black female, and one Hispanic female; however, two of my initial selected participants were unable to participate. Thus, the alternates were selected and were able to participate which changed the overall demographic makeup of the focal participants.

All of the data collected prior to the interviews included written documents with specific sets of questions or parameters. These did not allow for follow-up questions or for the preservice teachers to share their visions and thoughts in a verbal manner. The purpose of the interviews was to allow me to ask some of the same questions and allow for follow-up questions to clarify or to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. The interviews also allowed me to ask additional questions or questions in a different way in order to go deeper into the phenomenon of understanding their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

The semi-structured interviews lasted approximately one hour and took place on the university campus. Prior to the interview, approximately four days in advance, I asked each of the seven participants to review my analyses of their in-class assignments to

ensure that I had interpreted their visions and reflections accurately. I emailed a one-page attachment of key themes derived primarily from their vision statements to each individual participant and asked if they would review it and let me know at the interview if I misinterpreted their written work. These interviews allowed me to explore further how these seven preservice teachers' visions of teaching reading, engaging diverse families, and using family literacy practices to inform their classroom reading instruction have been shaped throughout the course of the semester. I also investigated more deeply their level of preparation in regards to engaging diverse families in literacy. See Appendix F for the individual interview protocol.

Focus Group. The seven preservice teachers who were selected to participate in the individual interviews were also invited to participate in one ninety-minute focus group. The focus group took place on campus and was designed for three thirty-minute segments. The first thirty minutes were allotted to have the preservice teachers create a visual representation of their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The preservice teachers were given poster board, markers, colored pencils, crayons, pencils, scissors, glue, and magazines to use in the manner that they preferred to visually represented their visions. They were also given the option to create it in a digital fashion on their computers or devices; they were given advance notice to bring a digital device as an option. Some of the preservice teachers chose to create a collage using magazine clips and gluing them onto their poster board. Some of them chose to use markers and colored pencils to create a diagram or images of locations and people. One preservice teacher chose to use her laptop to create a power point presentation. The second thirty minutes were allocated to a “show-and-tell” sharing

portion. Each preservice teacher was given time to hold up their visual and to explain what each figure, drawing, phrase, or image meant and to offer details as to why she included it. During this time, the other preservice teachers were encouraged to ask questions for clarification or to follow up with a comment for the preservice teacher who was sharing her visual. After the show-and-tell portion, the final thirty minutes consisted of a few questions that I posed to the group to allow for more discussion on their visions and thoughts for engaging families in literacy, learning about diverse family literacy practices, and thinking about how those practices can be integrated into the classroom reading instruction.

Data Analysis

Through their course assignments in EDUC 404, the initial 46 elementary education preservice teachers provided data on their teacher visions (i.e., vision statements), their level of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy (i.e., surveys), and reflections from the Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness Association Event (ELCAA) event and family member interview that shed light on their vision development and changes over time. From these initial 46 participants, 34 consented to participate in the study on the last day of class. These 34 preservice teachers consented to allow me to use the course assignments listed above and the opportunity to ask them to participate in interviews and a focus group.

After the semester concluded, I graded the students' assignments and submitted their grades. Once grades were submitted, I began to analyze the vision statements and the Venn diagrams. I developed a data matrix to code the vision statements and Venn diagram. Table 3 below shows an example of my analysis of three preservice teachers'

vision statements and Venn diagram; and I did this coding for each of the 34 preservice teachers who consented to participate in the study.

Table 3: Example of Analysis of Three Preservice Teacher's Vision Statements and Venn Diagram*

<i>Preservice Teacher</i>	<i>Vision of Literacy (school-focused or broad)</i>	<i>Vision of Diversity (one dimension or multiple dimensions)</i>	<i>Vision of Family's Role (school/teacher-centric, partnership-centric)</i>	<i>Vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide classroom reading instruction (level of focus=fuzzy, clear; range=within range, on the periphery)</i>	<i>Changes from Visions #1 to #2</i>
Luciana	Becoming broad: "Using funds of knowledge of my students to drive instruction" "listen and ask questions" "assessment should be given in a variety of ways (oral, written, acting, etc.) and should be given frequently"	Multiple dimensions: personal, academic, language (ELLS)	Partnership-focused: "Parents and family members are the bridge to teaching students new content. Their knowledge will reflect on my students and I need to use that knowledge to make connections to my students in order to instruct them on new content" "role of family-openness and stronger relationships"	Focus=clear Range=within range	Build a stronger vision for a partnership-centric vision of the role of families and their diverse literacy practices in classroom reading instruction
Bella	School-focused: "reading and vocabulary enrichment" "reading levels" "understand material"	One dimension: various types of learners	School/teacher centric: "Parents should be involved, it's up to the teacher to communicate that parents should be involved in their student's education and when it's appropriate, coming to class, reading together."	Focus=Fuzzy Range=in the periphery	No change; family members are to ensure students are reading at home (at least 15 min each night)
Michelle	School-focused: "I will plan my classroom reading instruction using the materials from the book/curriculum" "classroom library"	One dimension: cultures	Mixture: "I want to tie in other cultures and bring in parents and community members" into my classroom; Partnership, but families come to school/classroom and to teacher, not teacher goes to family and community	Focus=Moving from fuzzy Range=Moving from the periphery	Moving to a partnership-focused vision: Vision #1 Holding parents accountable by reading for 30 min and signing agendas; Vision #2 "I want parents and family members to be a part of our classroom, bringing in people to share books and traditions"

*All names listed are pseudonyms.

The green highlight signifies that the preservice teacher had a vision or was moving closer to possessing a vision for identifying diverse family literacy practices and then finding ways to implement those practices into the classroom reading instruction. The yellow highlight represents visions and vision dimensions as developing to become more comprehensive. The red highlight demonstrates visions that seem to be focused from one perspective (i.e., school-focused perspective) or that their visions for using

diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction are “fuzzy” or “within the periphery.” Once I analyzed each of the 34 preservice teachers’ visions and Venn diagrams and coded them in the data matrix based on the criteria, I created a “funds of knowledge” rubric and plotted the 34 preservice teachers on a chart based on the rubric. The rubric is offered below in Table 4.

Table 4: Funds of Knowledge Rubric to Examine Preservice Teachers’ Visions for Using Diverse Family Literacy Practices to Guide Classroom Reading Instruction

Emerging	Developing	Advancing
In his/her vision statements, the preservice teacher shows evidence of <u>either</u> a vision of literacy that extends beyond reading books <u>OR</u> a vision of diversity that includes at least one dimension of students’ needs, strengths, or backgrounds.	In his/her vision statements, the preservice teacher shows evidence of <u>either</u> a vision of literacy that extends beyond reading books <u>OR</u> a vision of diversity that includes at least one dimension of students’ needs, strengths, or backgrounds. The preservice teacher also shows evidence that students and their families possess strengths and resources to contribute to literacy development.	In his/her vision statements, the preservice teacher shows evidence of a vision of literacy that extends beyond reading books <u>AND</u> a vision of diversity that includes at least one dimension of students’ needs, strengths, or backgrounds. The preservice teacher also shows evidence that students and their families possess strengths and resources to contribute to literacy development <u>AND</u> discusses how these funds of knowledge can be used in the classroom reading instruction.
Examples: <i>Literacy</i> vision that extends beyond reading books could include the following: discussion, listening, integrating literacy with students’ backgrounds and interests, having students share their own stories, projects, debates, culturally relevant texts, or inclusion	Examples: Examples from Emerging <u>AND</u> evidence of students’ and families’ strengths and resources could include the following: mentions family members extending the learning outside of the classroom, cites that parents and family members are the bridge to	Examples: Examples from Emerging, Developing, <u>AND</u> evidence of how the preservice teacher envisions using families’ literacy funds of knowledge in the classroom reading instruction. This evidence could include the following: partnership-focused relationships, inviting parents

of how literacy is listening, reading, writing, and speaking and it can be used in locations other than the classroom. <i>Diversity</i> vision includes at least one of the following: culture, student interests, backgrounds, abilities, language, texts as mirrors and windows (or diverse classroom library), traditions, various learning styles, gender, race/ethnicity, or aspects that make each student unique.	new learning, states that the preservice teacher will reach out to family to get to know them and establish relationships, mentions using students and families as resources, or any discussion of parents and families possessing strengths and resources.	or family members into the classroom, creating connections between home and school, or any discussion of how students' home lives play a role in the reading instruction of the classroom.
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After creating the rubric, I went back to the 34 preservice teachers' vision statements (both #1 and #2) and re-evaluated them based on the rubric criteria. What do each of these phases mean? According to the Funds of Knowledge Rubric, emerging visions included aspects of literacy that indicate the preservice teacher is beginning to think about literacy beyond simply reading books *or* dimensions of diversity that shows evidence that they are considering the unique backgrounds and needs of their students and these are naturally embedded in their visions for teaching reading. Emerging visions did not, however, show evidence that the preservice teachers envisioned families as possessing literacy resources or strengths. Because the goal was to examine how preservice teachers envisioned using *diverse family literacy practices* to guide their classroom reading instruction, the aspects of "diversity" and "literacy" found within the vision statements were analyzed first. Preservice teachers had to have a vision of literacy that extended beyond simply reading books *or* visions that featured elements of diversity (e.g., gender, culture, race/ethnicity, etc.) as a foundation to be able to then identify

diverse family literacy practices as strengths and resources. Evidence of a broad view of literacy *or* recognition of diversity were considered to be the foundational elements for a vision of using diverse family literacy practices to guide classroom reading instruction. Once that foundation was established, the next phases in the table could develop from that point. Table 5 provides examples of the evidence from the final vision statements (i.e., Vision Statement #2) that indicate *either* a view of literacy that goes beyond reading books *or* a vision that embeds or intends to address aspects of diversity. The examples are taken from across the five dimensions of their vision statements (i.e., assessment, planning, classroom environment, teacher's role, and family's role), not solely in the dimension around the role of the family in reading instruction.

Table 5: Examples of Criteria for Emerging Visions

<u>Either</u> Visions of Literacy that Goes Beyond Reading Books	<u>Or</u> Visions of Diversity that Includes at Least One Dimension of Students' Needs, Strengths, or Backgrounds
"I envision my role to be helping children grow in their love of reading. Reading is used everywhere and every day , so it'll be important for my students to find enjoyment or greater achievement in it" (Lauren, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).	Reading assessment should be " varied and differentiated " and include " multiple modes " (Carrine, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).
"I would like to have reading groups twice a week and have students have a lot of discussion and discourse " (Cathy, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	Planning should "use data from previous lessons to plan based on student needs " (Linda, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).
For reading assessment, "I think it is the art of creating stories . This would be oral, or written, or (maybe) drawn . Re-describing a story to make it one's own" (Isaac, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).	The teacher should be "excited for reading! I want to read novels with my class, I also want students to read to the class books from home [and in] different languages " (Tammy, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).
"An assessment is not always a written multiple choice exam. The goal is for the teacher to have an understanding of what students understand. I envision offering multiple assessment opportunities that might include written, visual, oral exams and/or even projects " (Valerie, Vision	"I plan to have a classroom environment that strongly supports reading. I want my classroom environment to support every student no matter their level/ability " (Angie, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

Statement #2, 12/6/16).	
“Kids should be able to talk and discuss their readings and even have debates and do projects ” (Christine, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	The classroom environment will have a “huge classroom library with culturally relevant choices ” (Jessica, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).
“I envision assessments in my classroom to be a creative, fun activity involving writing pieces such as books, poems, portfolios, reading incentives, [and] plays ” (Phyllis, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).	“The environment should be comfortable and a good learning environment for all types of learners ” (Bella, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).
My planning will involve “various activities such as Reader’s Theater to help with reading skills” (Jill, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	Planning will be “based off the needs of students , including differentiated instruction for lower level readers and ELL students ” (Eva, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).
	“I want to create a fun and welcoming reading environment. All reading levels and abilities will be valued ” (Rebecca, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).
	The teacher’s role is to “work as a facilitator during discussions [and to] learn about backgrounds ” (Amanda, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

The brief excerpts from the final vision statements presented in Table 5 provide a sense of what “emerging” visions resemble. The preservice teachers with “emerging” visions included either evidence of a view of literacy that goes beyond reading books or evidence of a vision of with aspects of diversity present; these “emerging” visions did not include evidence that they viewed families as having assets that could contribute to the literacy development of the child.

Moving forward in the rubric development, preservice teachers who provided evidence that met the “emerging” criteria but also indicated that they envisioned students and their families as possessing strengths and resources to contribute to literacy development were categorized as having “developing” visions. Just as Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005) suggest that teachers must “come to deeper understandings of the

complexities of students' lives" and that the "practices of households [should be] theorized" (p. 21), the preservice teachers in the "developing" phase portrayed visions of students and their families having literacy resources and strengths. Table 6 provides examples of the evidence from the final vision statements (i.e., Vision Statement #2) that indicate *either* a view of literacy that goes beyond reading books *or* a vision that embeds or intends to address aspects of diversity *and* a view that families possess literacy resources and assets that can contribute to literacy development.

Table 6: Examples of Criteria for Developing Visions

<u>Either</u> Visions of Literacy that Goes Beyond Reading Books	<u>Or</u> Visions of Diversity that Includes at Least One Dimension of Students' Needs, Strengths, or Backgrounds
Vision for planning reading instruction involves "allowing students to write and share their own stories " (Mary, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	"I want to plan reading instruction based off of student needs . Rather than just following curriculum, I'd like to assess what skills my students are weak in and plan accordingly" (Allison, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).
The role of the teacher is to "guide the students, allow students to lead discussion (student-centered classroom)" and " connect learning to other subject areas " (Betty, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	"I plan to use several types of assessments when I teach reading such as guided readings, oral fluency, observations, formative assessments, DRAs, etc. in order to assess my students' reading and writing development. I will plan my reading instruction based on each of my student's individual needs . I want each child to reach their fullest potential in literacy development and this can be done by catering to their needs " (Marnie, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).
"My classroom environment will foster literacy by providing a safe space for learners and including culturally relevant texts, an abundance of literacy centers with activities to support each students particular reading level, and engaging students in active literacy that is integrated with other subjects and tied to students' backgrounds and interests" (Maggie, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	"I will use a variety of resources to enhance my instruction and meet the needs of each learner . My classroom environment will foster literacy by providing a safe space for learners and including culturally relevant texts , an abundance of literacy centers with activities to support each students particular reading level , and engaging students in active literacy that is integrated with other

	subjects and tied to students' backgrounds and interests " (Maggie, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).
	" Differentiating assessments for students can help them" and having " window/mirror texts " (Hannah, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).
<u>AND</u> Evidence that students and their families possess strengths and resources to contribute to literacy development	
"I want to have a good idea of where all my students come from and how I can use their home lives as a resource" (Allison, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). "I will try to reach out and get to know my students' parents/families the first week of school! I will try to meet with each student's parents so I can ask them about their hopes for their child and how they teach literacy at home. I think it's important to try to establish relationships and open communication with parents early on in the beginning of the year" (Mary, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). "I plan to engage families in the classroom by encouraging reading and writing outside of school, inviting family members to be a part of their child's learning, and get to know each student and their cultural background" (Marnie, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). I plan to "incorporate family, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds" (Betty, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). "Parents, family members, and community members are essential for reading instruction because their involvement helps to bridge the home and school connection and ensure students continue to learn and develop key skills both inside and outside the classroom. I envision these members as being actively involved in the learning process" (Maggie, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). "I want [my classroom environment] to be open and fun and encouraging. I want to tie in other cultures and bring in parents and community members. I want parents, family members, and community members to be a part of my classroom. Bringing in people to share books and traditions" (Michelle, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	

The brief excerpts from the final vision statements presented in Table 6 provide a sense of the evidence for what constitutes "developing" visions. The preservice teachers with "developing" visions included either evidence of a view of literacy that goes beyond reading books or evidence of a vision of with aspects of diversity present, and they included evidence that they viewed families as having assets that could contribute to the

literacy development of the child. They did not go a step further to discuss that they would use diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

Finally, to be considered to have an “advancing” vision based on the Funds of Knowledge Rubric, preservice teachers’ visions must have included evidence of a vision of literacy that extends beyond reading books AND a vision of diversity that included at least one dimension of students’ needs, strengths, or backgrounds, and they must have shown evidence that their students and families possess strengths and resources to contribute to literacy development AND discuss how these funds of knowledge can be used in the classroom reading instruction. In their book *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms*, Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005) describe a research project that used a funds of knowledge approach where “teachers were able to think about their classrooms and what they wanted to change, and consider how to use data on funds of knowledge to change their instruction” (p. 5). Their study involved in-service teachers thinking about ways to *change* their instruction and their thinking. Since this study comprised of preservice teachers, the focus was on their visions for *future* teaching, not necessarily changing their current practice of literacy instruction. Table 7 provides examples of the evidence from the final vision statements (i.e., Vision Statement #2) that indicate a view of literacy that goes beyond reading books *and* a vision that embeds or intends to address aspects of diversity. These vision statements also contain evidence of a view that families possess literacy resources and assets that can contribute to literacy development and that they envision using the diverse family literacy assets to help to guide classroom reading instruction.

Table 7: Examples of Criteria for Advancing Visions

Visions of Literacy that Goes Beyond Reading Books <u>AND</u> Visions of Diversity that Includes at Least One Dimension of Students' Needs, Strengths, or Backgrounds	
"The reading/literacy done in my classroom will reflect my students, their cultures, and their interests...I will also put a lot of thought into guided reading and literacy centers and continue to check on what's working and what's not" (Whitney, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).	"I envision using assessment to plan instruction and to make sure I am meeting my students' needs" (Whitney, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).
My role as a teacher is to "support literacy practices at home, as well as introducing new practices to implement" and assessment should be both "formal and informal! (not just written, standardized tests) [and] written, oral (singing, music, read alouds, etc.)" (Lilly, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).	Assessments should include "other languages" and planning should be "differentiated—including accommodations for the levels of all students, culturally relevant, and well thought out to explore possibilities" (Lilly, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).
My classroom environment will be "literacy rich" and I will "encourage students to read frequently and for different purposes." I will have "centers [to] get students moving, working together, student choice built in" (Jen, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	Planning will "use assessments/data/observations" and "differentiate to meet all students' needs" and "leave room for flexibility/responsive teaching" (Jen, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).
"Parents, family members, and community are the bridge to teaching students new content. Their knowledge will reflect on my students and I need to use that knowledge to make connections to my students in order to instruct them on new content" (Luciana, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	"I envision myself using a variety of assessments. I want to create assessments that are useful and attainable for all learners. Assessments should be held frequently to help teachers with instruction but not to label and 'grade' students" (Luciana, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).
"My classroom will be a print-rich classroom... I will plan my reading lessons based off of formative assessment data, my students' interests, etc. ... but also off of my own observations and interactions with families" (Marie, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).	"My classroom will reflect the interests of my students. By reflecting their interests, students will feel a sense of belonging" (Marie, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).
<u>AND</u> Evidence that students and their families possess strengths and resources to contribute to literacy development <u>AND</u> A Vision for Using Diverse Family Literacy Practices to Guide Reading Instruction	

“I envision the role of parents, family members, and community a big part of my instruction. I hope to plan my instruction to reflect where my students live or their culture” (Whitney, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).

My vision is to “get to know parents [and] interview them about home practices/traditions, culture, literacy practices at home, expectations in school.” I also envision “culture projects to learn about our classmates” with a classroom environment that “includes cultures and traditions/practices (especially those within the class)” (Lilly, Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).

I envision family members as “resources to gain insight into student backgrounds, cultures, interests; [we] can support each other to create connection between home and school (home $\leftrightarrow$ teacher)” (Jen, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

“I envision myself having more than one plan available and using my funds of knowledge of my students (academically and personally) to drive instruction. Parents, family members, and community are the bridge to teaching students new content. Their knowledge will reflect on my students and I need to use that knowledge to make connections to my students in order to instruct them on new content” (Luciana, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

“I must get to know my students’ family members and I must become familiar with the community they live in. I envision family members playing a role by sharing their culture and literacy practices. I will use this information to guide instruction and make sure that I am not showing my students that my literacy practices are more worthy than theirs” (Marie, Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

Then I created a chart to indicate where the preservice teachers “scored” on the rubric based on their vision statements. A sample of this chart can be seen in Table 8 below. A completed chart can be found in Chapter 4, one of the findings chapters of this dissertation. Using the Funds of Knowledge Rubric that I created based upon the work of Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005), as well as the vision literature and my theoretical framework (outlined in Chapter 2), I analyzed the vision statements from the first day of class, the vision statements from the final day of class, and the Venn diagrams that the preservice teachers completed to compare and contrast vision statements #1 and #2. From this analysis, I found that 21 preservice teachers showed evidence of an “emerging” funds of knowledge vision, 8 preservice teachers demonstrated a “developing” vision to

identify families' strengths and resources, and 5 portrayed an "advancing" vision toward identifying diverse family literacy practices as resources and using them to guide their classroom reading instruction. Also using the Funds of Knowledge Rubric, I analyzed the initial vision statements to categorize them as "emerging," "developing," or "advancing." I then analyzed the final vision statements to label them as "emerging," "developing," or "advancing." Next, I compared vision statement #1 and #2 for each preservice teacher.

Table 8: Preservice Teachers' Visions Chart*

Emerging	Developing	Advancing
David	Maggie	Luciana

*All names listed are pseudonyms.

Next, I had intended to select six preservice teachers to participate in the interviews and focus group. I wanted to invite two preservice teachers whose visions were in the "Emerging" phase on the rubric, two whose were in the "Developing" phase, and two whose were "Advancing" in order to capture the perspectives of those who possessed elements that demonstrated that they were a) starting down the path to develop a funds of knowledge lens, b) further developing their vision of identifying diverse family literacy practices, or c) continuing to advance and grow their vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. After reviewing the data matrix and rubric chart, I could not decide between two of the preservice teachers who were "advancing" so I invited seven preservice teachers to participate in individual interviews and the focus group.

After an initial review of their ELCAA reflections, I organized the reflections into categories that corresponded with the preservice teachers' visions. For example, the preservice teachers who had "emerging" visions were organized into a group and I then

analyzed their ELCAA reflections. In this section, I present the findings from the ELCAA reflections within each of the three vision categories (i.e., emerging, developing, advancing) and then outline themes that cut across all of the reflections. Four of the 34 preservice teachers were unable to attend either of the ELCAA Saturday events and were given the alternate assignment of watching a video of one of the Saturday events, reviewing the ELCAA Facebook page and website, and then reflecting on the same reflection questions as their peers who were able to attend. The four who were unable to attend either event were Linda, Gillian, Lilly, and David. I excluded these four preservice teachers' reflections because they did not actually attend the event to gain the full experience; thus, my analysis in this section includes 30 reflections.

I began my analysis of the 18 preservice teachers with "emerging" visions by looking for areas in their ELCAA reflections where they discussed their vision and how or if this event contributed to their vision development. I viewed this assignment and experience as an exercise that would contribute to developing their visions toward recognizing diverse family literacy practices and then thinking about ways to plan their reading instruction based on the knowledge and understanding of these literacy practices. Many of the preservice teachers with "emerging" visions expressed in their reflections that the ELCAA event did help to contribute to a vision that sees families as possessing literacy assets; however, it was interesting that this part of their vision development did not show up in their final vision statements.

For the family member interview assignment, students were asked to conduct the interview after they attended the ELCAA event. In this way, they had the opportunity to observe diverse family literacy practices at the ELCAA event followed by time to reflect

on that experience before they interviewed the family member. I designed it in this manner because I wanted all of the preservice teachers to have the ELCAA experience in mind when preparing their interview questions, but also during the interview itself. This would potentially allow them to be more attuned to understanding the nuances of the family's home literacy practices as well as the broad range of ways that families integrate literacy into their everyday lives. For this assignment, I provided the preservice teachers with five questions that they were to ask the family member in their interview. Next, they were tasked with creating five additional questions that they wanted to ask that specific family member (see Appendix D for the assignment directions and questions). The purpose of the family member interview was to offer another experience for the preservice teachers to develop a vision for identifying and using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

The preservice teachers were asked to reflect upon the interview by responding to seven reflection questions. They were specifically asked to avoid any kind of audio or video recording of the interview, but to jot down notes to keep track of the family member's responses or to write down any quotes that stood out to them. Some of them included their notes, but I only analyzed the reflections. I began with the reflections from the preservice teachers who had "emerging" visions. I then analyzed the reflections from the preservice teachers who had "developing" visions, and concluded with an analysis of the reflections from the preservice teachers who had "advancing" visions.

To begin, Table 9 provides an overview of the type of family member each preservice teacher chose to interview, the unique aspects of that family member's background, and the family member's hometown (if included in the interview notes or

reflection). I created tables for each group to capture an overview of the characteristics of each family member chosen to be interviewed for this assignment. The creation of these tables helped me to keep the data organized and to analyze for themes within their reflections that addressed the research questions.

Table 9: Characteristics of Family Members Interviewed (Emerging Group)

Preservice Teacher	Family Member Interviewed	Unique Aspects/Background of Family Member	Birthplace of Family Member
Cathy	Father	Fluent in Vietnamese and English	Vietnam
Tammy	Sister	Fluent in Spanish and English	El Salvador
David	Mother	Latino and Native American heritage	Arizona
Carinne	Mother	Fluent in Spanish and English; Religion is an important part of family's life	Dominican Republic
Amanda	Father	Fluent in Spanish and English	El Salvador
Valerie	Mother	Grew up in White, middle-class home, married into a Latino family	No mention
Jill	Sister	Fluent in Spanish and English; both parents were born in El Salvador	United States
Izzy	Twin Sister	Has an older sister who lives in North Carolina	Texas, United States
Phyllis	Father	Fluent in Hindi and English	Delhi, India
Linda	Mother	Fluent in Spanish; learning English	No mention
Lauren	Mother	Single parent due to husband's passing	Jamaica
Eva	Mother	Single parent, but father is involved in student's life	West Virginia, United States

Bella	Mother	Earned college degree	Pennsylvania, United States
Isaac	Father	Did not include specific, unique aspects of child's father	Baltimore, Maryland
Gillian	Twin Sister	Fluent in Spanish and English	No mention
Rebecca	Mother	Single parent; "very involved in her son's IEP process"	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Angie	Sister	Lived in China; Fluent in Chinese and English	No mention
Jessica	Sister	Family is from Egypt	Maryland, United States
Christine	Mother and Father	Mother was born and raised in Germany and is fluent in German and English; Father is from the U.S. and is fluent in German, Latin, and Spanish	Germany and United States, respectively
<i>Emily*</i>	Mother	Speaks English in the home, but fluent in both Spanish and English	El Salvador
<i>Renee*</i>	Sister	No mention	Laurel, Maryland

*Participated in individual interview and focus group.

As the table above indicates, many of the preservice teachers with emerging visions chose a family member who was also fluent in a language other than English or they were from a location other than the school community. The emphasis on the variety of languages spoken seems to represent a view that language is one of the first aspects to come to these preservice teachers' minds when they think about diversity. As I discuss later in the survey results section, their view of language as a key area of diversity may

play a factor in how prepared they feel to engage diverse families in literacy. I note the focus on language here, but I address it more in the survey findings section.

Similar to the “emerging” preservice teachers’ reflections, I begin with a table (Table 10) that provides an overview of the type of family member each preservice teacher chose to interview, the unique aspects of that family member’s background, and the family member’s hometown (if included in the interview notes or reflection).

Table 10: Characteristics of Family Members Interviewed (Developing Group)

Preservice Teacher	Family Member Interviewed	Unique Aspects/Background of Family Member	Birthplace of Family Member
Marnie	Mother	Fluent in Spanish and English; husband speaks some Thai	Bronx, New York
Betty	Mother	Fluent in Spanish and English; her grandparents are from El Salvador	Washington, D.C. Metro
Maggie	Sister	Her mother is from Bolivia; her father is from El Salvador; can fluently understand Spanish and fluent in English	Silver Spring, Maryland
Allison	Mother	Fluent in Spanish and in English	No mention
Mary	Mother	Fluent in Spanish and English	Guatemala
Hannah	Mother	Her husband was born in Puerto Rico; she went to college at the University of Puerto Rico; fluent in Spanish and English	Baltimore, Maryland
<i>Terri*</i>	Mother	Speaks English in the home, but fluent in both Spanish and English; her mother is Cuban; she noted that she did not attend	No mention

		college	
<i>Michelle*</i>	Father	Fluent in Spanish and English; working to earn his degree in Business Management	Guatemala

*Participated in individual interview and focus group.

Comparable to the preservice teachers who had “emerging” visions, the preservice teachers with “developing” visions also seemed to focus on language variances as an area of diversity. However, in contrast, the preservice teachers with “developing” visions added more description of other aspects that make the family member they interviewed unique. For example, they added details of educational attainment or where other family members were born and raised. In this section, I present the themes that emerged from the reflections written by preservice teachers with “developing” visions about their family member interview experience.

To maintain consistency, I begin with a table (Table 11) that provides an overview of the type of family member each preservice teacher chose to interview, the unique aspects of that family member’s background, and the family member’s hometown (if included in the interview notes or reflection).

Table 11: Characteristics of Family Members Interviewed (Advancing Group)

Preservice Teacher	Family Member Interviewed	Unique Aspects/Background of Family Member	Birthplace of Family Member
Lilly	Twin Sister	Parents speak Spanish; she helps her parents with speaking and writing in English	Bowie, Maryland
Whitney	Brother	His family is originally from Nigeria; he understands different Nigerian languages	Unclear

<i>Jen*</i>	Sister	Her grandfather lives with them	Maryland, United States
<i>Luciana*</i>	Mother	Fluent in both Spanish and English	El Salvador
<i>Marie*</i>	Mother	No mention	No mention

*Participated in individual interview and focus group.

In addition to the in-class assignments (e.g., vision statements, ELCAA reflections, family member interview), I completed individual interviews with seven of the 34 preservice teachers. The interviews conducted by me with the preservice teachers took place on the university campus during the semester following EDUC 404. These semi-structured interviews allowed me to go in-depth in the investigation of preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices to inform their classroom reading instruction. These interviews also provided me with a platform to conduct member checking with these seven preservice teachers after I analyzed their class assignments and vision statements. The focus group also took place on the university campus after the individual interviews were completed. During the focus group, I asked the seven participants to visually represent their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. Some of them chose to create a collage, some drew images on poster board, and one participant put together a power point presentation. After they created their visual representations, we came together for a show-and-tell session to allow each preservice teacher to share the images, drawings, and phrases used and to describe their meanings. The focus group provided deeper insight into their visions, allowed me to assess the challenges to enacting their visions, and offered the opportunity to evaluate the supports they will have to carry out their visions as well. Further, the focus group allowed for triangulation to observe for consistencies in

their visions. The focus group offered another glimpse at their visions to ascertain what their true visions entailed.

I used purposeful sampling to select seven preservice teachers to participate in individual interviews and focus group. Creswell (2013) writes that purposeful sampling means the researcher selects participants “for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (p. 156). The seven preservice teachers selected to participate in individual interviews from the 34 preservice teachers who consented were able to provide me with a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of their teacher visions and perceptions of how prepared they feel to engage diverse families in literacy. This process of collecting data, analyzing it, and then choosing participants based on the emerging themes and patterns allowed me to purposefully sample the participants that provided an understanding of preservice teachers’ visions for engaging families in literacy and teaching reading.

To use Creswell’s (2013) philosophical assumptions, I use in this study an ontological assumption that reality is multiple and viewed through many perspectives. In my findings, I report “different perspectives as themes develop in the findings” (Creswell, 2013, p. 21). Each individual preservice teacher maintains a perspective as to how he or she views his or her classroom reading instruction. By “multiple or different perspectives,” I mean that various perspectives exist across individuals, and in this study, across preservice teachers and how they perceive different topics (e.g., family literacy practices, literacy, diversity, and classroom reading instruction). An understanding of the different perspectives or multiple realities of the visions for classroom reading instruction and other topics held by individual preservice teachers can shed light on how teacher

education programs approach the instruction of these various topics. We know that instruction for both children and adults cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach; thus, it is imperative to investigate the multiple perspectives of individual teachers in order to understand the many ways that reading teacher education and the inclusion of families can be addressed to meet the needs of all preservice teachers.

Creswell outlines interpretive frameworks that fit within certain philosophical assumptions. The interpretive framework that correlates with my ontological perspective is social constructivism. Social constructivism asserts that “multiple realities are constructed through our lived experiences and interactions with others” (Creswell, 2013, p. 36). The preservice teachers reported their reflections about engaging diverse families in literacy, visions for teaching reading, and their intentions for using family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. These will all be constructed based on their own lives and backgrounds and their experiences of interacting with family members. I analyzed the multiple realities represented across the group of preservice teachers as portrayed in their reflections, visions, and experiences to arrive at ways traditional elementary teacher education programs can better prepare preservice teachers to engage diverse families in literacy. I anticipate my findings to have multiple ways to prepare teachers to engage families, not a one-size-fits-all approach per se.

I began my data analysis using Creswell’s (2013) data analysis spiral framework as a guide for the analysis process. Then, I used Saldana’s (2013) coding manual to investigate codes, patterns, and themes based on his process of coding data. Creswell’s (2013) data analysis spiral includes the following steps: 1) organize the data, 2) read and memo the data, 3) describe, classify, and interpret the data, and 4) represent and visualize

the data. I organized my data using the Educational Learning Management System (ELMS) where students uploaded all of their assignments. I used track changes and made comments within each of their assignments that they turned in electronically (i.e., the family member interview and the reflection to the Ethiopian community event). I had hard copies of their first and last teacher vision statements, as well as their Venn diagram graphic organizers. These were collected and sorted alphabetically so that I could compare across the two assignments posted to ELMS. Once I organized alphabetically, I read and memoed each assignment. Although I had already read the assignments through at least one time when I graded them, I read each assignment in its entirety again for memoing purposes. As I read through the assignments, I made notes both by hand and electronically on the side margins or within the text of the assignments to indicate areas where each of my three research questions are addressed. From there, I moved on to step three of the data analysis spiral and engaged in coding. Then, I used methods and strategies for coding based on Saldana's (2013) coding manual. I describe the process for coding below.

The documents collected during fall 2016 (e.g., vision statements, Ethiopian community event reflections, and family member interview reflections) were coded using document analysis. After reading the assignments in their entirety, I first developed a data matrix to analyze the vision statements and the Venn diagrams. Based on my analysis of the survey data, I identified seven preservice teachers to participate in individual interviews. These individual interviews were transcribed verbatim, read in their entirety and coded for themes.

To provide an overview of my data analysis for each data source, the following tables (Tables 12-18), guided by Saldana's (2013) coding manual, offer an at-a-glance view.

Table 12: Data Analysis Vision Statements and Venn Diagrams

Data Source	Analytic Technique	Deductive Codes	Inductive Codes
Vision Statements	• Pre-coding (highlighting and marking aspects that strike me) • Memoing • Descriptive Coding • Data matrix	• Family plays a role/ family does not play a role • Cognitive perspective of teaching reading/ Sociocultural perspective of teaching reading • Reading instruction should be driven by student data (subcodes: the naming of specific assessments)	• InVivo (phrases or quotes used repeatedly, especially by one person)
Venn Diagrams	• Pre-coding (highlighting and marking aspects that strike me) • Memoing • Descriptive Coding • Data matrix	• Visions changed/ visions remained static	• What areas of the vision changed?

Table 13: Data Analysis ELCAA Reflections

Data Source	Analytic Technique	Deductive Codes	Inductive Codes
Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness Event	• Pre-coding (highlighting and marking aspects)	• Visions changed/ visions	• InVivo (phrases or quotes used repeatedly,

Reflections	- that strike me) • Memoing	- remained static • Positive perspective of event/ negative perspective of event	- especially by one person) • What literacy practices did they observe?
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Table 14: Data Analysis Family Member Interview Reflections

Data Source	Analytic Technique	Deductive Codes	Inductive Codes
Family Member Interview Reflections	• Pre-coding (highlighting and marking aspects that strike me) • Memoing	• Categorize by family member (i.e., parent, sibling, aunt/uncle, etc.) • Visions changed/ visions remained static • Asset vs. deficit perspectives	• InVivo (phrases or quotes used repeatedly, especially by one person) • What literacy practices did they observe?

Table 15: Data Analysis Survey

Data Source	Analytic Technique	Deductive Codes	Inductive Codes
Surveys	• Pre-coding (highlighting and marking aspects that strike me) • Memoing	• Categorize by level of preparedness reported	• What has contributed to their level of preparedness?

Table 16: Data Analysis Individual Interviews and Focus Group

Data Source	Analytic Technique	Deductive Codes	Inductive Codes
Individual Interviews and Focus Group	• Pre-coding (highlighting and marking aspects that strike me) • Memoing	• Categorized by role of the family and view of assessment and how it will drive instruction	• InVivo (phrases or quotes used repeatedly, especially by one person)

After the data were described, classified, and interpreted (i.e., coded), I incorporated several ways to represent my findings. I present my findings in three categories of groups (Miles & Huberman, 1994) of preservice teachers based on how they envisioned the role of the families in their reading instruction. In Chapter 5, I present my findings using portraits of preservice teachers within each of those three categorical groups to provide more insight into what the preservice teachers' visions included, how they developed, and their levels of preparedness to engage families. In Chapter 5, I also present each portrait with a theme or a metaphor to allow for imagery and visualization (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). More detail on the representation of the data analysis can be found in Table 17.

The Role of the Researcher

As a White female who both prepared to be a teacher in a traditional teacher education program and currently teaches in a traditional teacher education program, I am aware of the need for teacher education programs to help to prepare preservice teachers to engage diverse families and to recognize their literacy resources and assets. I was interested in exploring how preservice teachers envision working with families from

diverse backgrounds and how teacher education courses can contribute to the shaping of their visions of teaching reading.

Prior to my doctoral studies, I taught in elementary schools for five years in Kansas City, Missouri. I taught third grade for two years and second grade for one year in an urban charter school before teaching fifth and sixth grade in a rural/suburban upper elementary as a reading interventionist. During my years of teaching, I quickly noticed the assets families and community environments brought to the literacy development of my students. On a regular basis, I visited the homes of many of my students in order to learn more about their families, home lives, and communities. I hold the assumption that all families have and continue to build literacy assets that can transfer to the school environment. I recognize that not all teachers, including elementary preservice teachers, hold this same assumption. I also recognize that most teachers will most likely not conduct regular home visits and will probably not engage every family of every student in their classrooms. However, if we can begin to support elementary education preservice teachers to develop a vision for engaging diverse families in literacy and recognizing family literacy practices as valuable tools to guide their classroom reading instruction, they may be more prone to doing more than teachers who have not been supported and prepared to develop that same vision.

My role in this research study is to teach my two sections of reading methods as I would if I were not conducting a research study. One of the ways that I am attempting to maintain “business as usual” is to ensure that I am addressing the teaching standards that elementary education reading teachers need to meet for licensure. This includes teaching research-based reading strategies around the five components of reading (e.g., phonics,

phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension), guided reading tools, assessment tools, and the development of reading lesson plans. In addition to reading strategies, models, and assessments, I consistently incorporate a sociocultural framework and culturally relevant lens to my courses. For example, during a previous fall semester, I asked my students to complete a project that asked them to engage families in literacy. I left this project open ended and gave them many choices, including conducting a parent-teacher conference for reading, creating a website of literacy resources for parents and families, or meeting with a family to learn more about their home and community literacy practices. To ensure that I was creating a syllabus that followed my normal protocol, I sent my syllabus to several program directors, professors, and professional development school (PDS) coordinators to review and provide feedback. Based on the feedback, my syllabus addressed reading standards and incorporated a balanced sociocultural framework. In my reading methods course, I strongly encourage the elementary education preservice teachers to use a sociocultural perspective and to incorporate that lens when developing their visions for teaching reading. Throughout the course of the semester, I also offer several ways for the preservice teachers to develop a wider lens for thinking about families, diversity, and literacy.

In addition to my role of teaching these courses for elementary preservice teachers, I am also the researcher. As a researcher, it is my job to ensure that I am systematically collecting and analyzing data, developing trustworthiness, and identifying my own biases and making my partialities apparent. As mentioned in this chapter, I have planned many ways to collect data in a systematic manner. Data collected in class throughout the semester were analyzed and coded for themes before choosing the

participants who will participate in the focus group and individual interviews. The data analysis of the assignments from the 34 students who consented allowed me to identify a pool of seven participants who will help to answer more completely my research questions. As I am analyzing and coding the data for themes, I will keep a journal of my thoughts, biases, and opinions that I will write after each coding session. Drawing on the suggestion that writing can help us “remember more accurately, understand better, and evaluate what we think more objectively” (Booth, Colomb, & Williams, 2008, p. 13), I intend to write to record my thoughts and review them as a way to identify subjectivities that may emerge. Any apparent biases will be presented in the final dissertation and made transparent to readers.

Credibility

To maintain internal validity of my data analysis, I will use the following strategies: a) triangulation of data, b) peer review, c) memoing, d) maintaining an organized audit trail, e) coding with transparency, and f) member checking (Creswell, 2003). To triangulate my data, I will collect and analyze multiple sources, including multiple in-class assignments and a survey (documents), and individual interviews. I chose to not use any observations because this study is not concerned with the *actions* of the preservice teachers, but their *visions*. Because one single source cannot adequately provide enough information to shed light on a phenomenon, data from several documents and interviews should provide rich and adequate data for me to help me to achieve a strong level of trustworthiness and obtain an accurate account of the preservice teachers’ visions.

In addition to the triangulation of data, I used peer review to ensure that my analysis is consistent and true (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I asked Dr. Melissa Landa to act as my peer reviewer for the ELCAA reflections and the family member interview reflections. Additionally, I maintained a journal to memo my thoughts, biases, and subjectivities throughout the data analysis process. I continued to memo while writing the data analysis and findings chapters of this dissertation. Further, I maintained an organized account of the data, including hard copies of documents and electronic versions. Many of the documents are stored in the university's educational learning management system (ELMS) and are easily accessible. This is important because the organization of data is paramount to the analysis process, as well as the ease of access for me to go back and find documents to verify analysis and interpretation of that data. Throughout the analysis process, I provided my advisor, Jennifer Turner, and a professor who I worked closely with during the fall 2016 semester, Melissa Landa, with my data matrix and had discussions with regards to my data and data analysis process. Melissa Landa also had access to the raw family member interview data and ELCAA reflections because she was added to my class ELMS account at the beginning of the fall 2016 semester. Because she had access to this raw data, she helped in the peer review process when I presented her with preliminary themes based on the data.

Another key way to achieve credibility is to have an organized coding system that is transparent. The tables created with the preliminary and possible codes and analytic techniques demonstrate a level of transparency, but also provide ways to examine and interpret the data in advance. This allows for members of my committee to know a

tentative plan for coding and analysis in advance and to be able to validate my codes through questioning or through examining the data via the audit trail of documents.

Finally, I used member checking as a way to achieve credibility. I asked the seven preservice teachers selected for the individual interviews and focus group to review the key themes of my analysis of their in-class assignments and to inform me if I have accurately interpreted their visions or the meanings within their reflections. Creswell (2003) writes that informants should “serve as a check throughout the analysis process” (p. 204). Thus, before we formally began the interview, I asked each of the seven preservice teachers to “ensure the truth value of the data” (Creswell, 2003, p. 204) collected for each of them leading up to the individual interview. Approximately four days in advance of their scheduled interview, I emailed an attachment of the preliminary themes for each of the seven preservice teachers’ vision statements and Venn diagrams and asked them to review the themes prior to coming to the interview and to let me know at the time of the interview if I had analyzed their vision statements and Venn diagrams accurately. Upon member checking each of the seven sets of themes, all seven preservice teachers said that I had interpreted their vision statements and Venn diagrams accurately.

To summarize a large portion of chapter 3 for the reader, Table 17 offers an at-a-glance overview of the research questions, proposed data sources, and the data analysis information.

Table 17: Data Analysis At-A-Glance

Research Question	Data Source	Data Analysis
1. How do elementary preservice teachers envision diverse family literacy practices playing a role in their future classroom reading	• Teacher Vision Statements (exit tickets #1 and #11) • Ethiopian Literary and Culture Awareness Association Event	• Organize the data • Read and memo • Describe,

instruction?	Reflections (exit ticket #7) • Family Member Interview Reflections • Individual Interviews (seven preservice teachers) • Focus Group (seven preservice teachers)	classify, and interpret the data via identification of codes, categories, and themes • Comparison matrix (Miles & Huberman, 1994) of “deficit visions” and “visions of assets” • Represent with metaphors (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995) for certain themes • Member checks and peer review
2. How do elementary preservice teachers’ visions for using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom reading instruction develop over the course of one semester?	• Teacher Vision Statements (exit tickets #1 and #11) • Venn diagram • Ethiopian Literary and Culture Awareness Association Event Reflections (exit ticket #7) • Family Member Interview Reflections • Individual Interviews and Focus Group (seven preservice teachers)	• Organize the data • Read and memo • Describe, classify, and interpret the data via identification of codes, categories, and themes • Comparison matrix (Miles & Huberman, 1994) of “deficit visions” and “visions of assets” • Represent with metaphors (Hammersley

		& Atkinson, 1995) for certain themes • Member checks and peer review
3. To what extent do elementary preservice teachers feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy? - Throughout their reading methods courses, what has contributed to their level of preparation and the shaping of their visions to engage families in literacy? (e.g., assignments, class lectures, etc.) - What is the likelihood that elementary preservice teachers will enact their visions for recognizing and using diverse family literacy practices in their future reading classrooms? (i.e., How likely are they to do the things from their visions? What barriers exist that would hinder them from enacting their visions?)	• Survey given to all 46 preservice teachers; 34 consented to participate in study, thus, only 34 survey results were available • Individual Interviews (seven preservice teachers)	• Organize the data • Read and memo • Describe, classify, and interpret the data via identification of codes, categories, and themes • Comparison matrix (Miles & Huberman, 1994) of level of preparation based on participants' backgrounds, identity, perspectives, experiences, etc. • Member checks and peer review

Chapter 4

Findings: Collective Preservice Teachers' Visions

This chapter presents the key findings from data collected from elementary preservice teachers over the course of one semester. The first part of this chapter addresses the first research question and describes the elementary preservice teachers' visions for the role of the family in reading instruction and how they see their future reading classrooms based on their final vision statements. Addressing the second research question, the second section of this chapter presents the changes in their visions and how they developed over the course of the semester by outlining the findings from the ELCAA reflections and the family member interview reflections. This chapter concludes by addressing the third research question with the findings from the analysis of the survey given on the last day of class that assessed the preservice teachers' level of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy. To begin, I restate the research questions driving this study.

Research Questions

1. How do elementary preservice teachers envision diverse family literacy practices playing a role in their future classroom reading instruction?
2. How do elementary preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom reading instruction develop over the course of one semester?
3. To what extent do elementary preservice teachers feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy?

- a. What do preservice teachers identify from their reading methods courses as supports to the shaping of their visions to engage families in literacy? (e.g., assignments, class lectures, etc.)
- b. What do preservice teachers foresee as some of the challenges to enacting their visions for recognizing and using diverse family literacy practices in their future classrooms of reading?

Envisioning the Role of the Family in Reading Instruction

This section addresses the first research question: *How do elementary preservice teachers envision diverse family literacy practices playing a role in their future classroom reading instruction?* The core of this dissertation study is anchored in a “funds of knowledge” conceptual perspective. In this section, the preservice teachers’ visions for the role of the family in reading instruction are described in relation to the degree to which they were grounded in a funds of knowledge framework. All of the preservice teachers’ visions were based in a funds of knowledge perspective to some extent. Preservice teachers who had more developed funds of knowledge frameworks held perspectives that families possess valuable literacy resources, and that they perceived those diverse family literacy practices to contribute to their reading instruction. Although they did not explicitly include in their vision statements that they viewed families as having rich literacy assets that they would identify to drive instruction, the preservice teachers who had the least developed funds of knowledge lenses viewed families as having the capabilities of supporting their children by suggesting that they read books before bedtime or to help with at-home activities such as homework.

Table 4 shows the range of visions among the preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The bolded and italicized names (pseudonyms) in the chart denote the seven preservice teachers who participated in the individual interviews and the focus group. Twenty-one preservice teachers showed evidence of an "emerging" funds of knowledge vision, 8 preservice teachers demonstrated a "developing" vision to identify families' strengths and resources, and 5 portrayed an "advancing" vision toward identifying diverse family literacy practices as resources and using them to guide their classroom reading instruction.

Table 4. Preservice Teachers' Visions for Using Diverse Family Literacy Practices to Guide Classroom Reading Instruction

Emerging	Developing	Advancing
<i>Emily</i> ¹ <i>Renee</i> David Eva Isaac Lauren Rebecca Christine Cathy Amanda Jessica Tammy Angie Bella	<i>Terri</i> <i>Michelle</i> Maggie Betty Mary Allison Hannah Marnie	<i>Luciana</i> <i>Marie</i> <i>Jen</i> Lilly Whitney

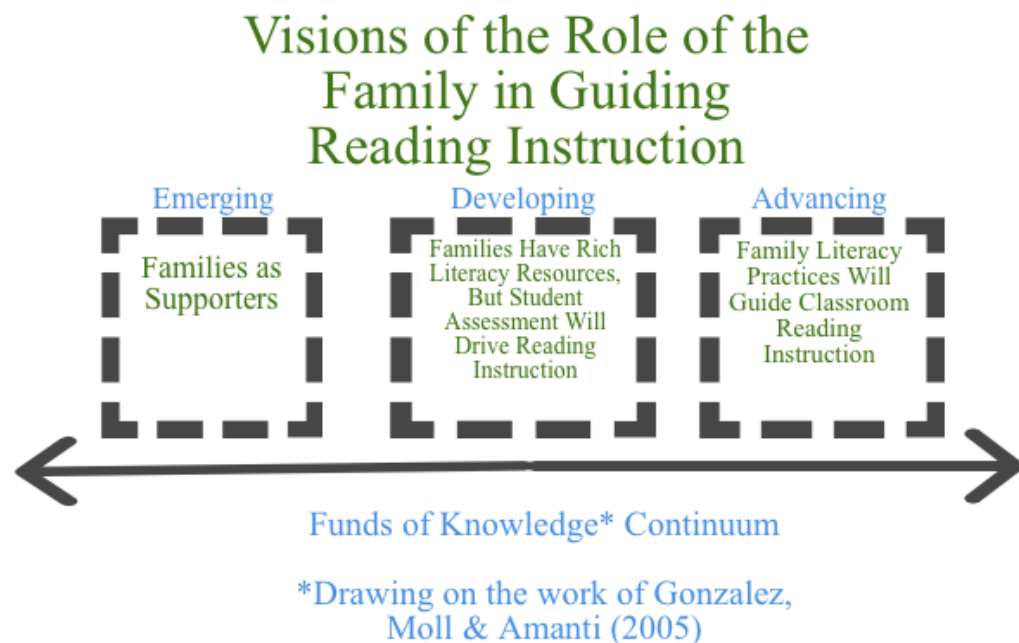
¹ ***Bolded and italicized*** names (pseudonyms) represent the preservice teachers selected to participate in individual interviews and the focus group. These seven participants chose their pseudonyms; I assigned the pseudonyms to the remaining 27 preservice teachers. One of the seven participants provided an identifiable pseudonym, so I assigned a different pseudonym to her as well.

Izzy Valerie Gillian Corinne Phyllis Jill Linda		
<i>Total = 21</i>	<i>Total =8</i>	<i>Total =5</i>

The findings represented in the chart (Table 4) indicate that the majority of the preservice teachers' visions were in the "emerging" phase, nearly one third of their visions were in the "developing" phase, and only a small amount of the visions were in the "advancing" phase. All of the preservice teachers held a "funds of knowledge" perspective in how they viewed families to some extent. However, the preservice teachers differed in the degree to which they perceived families; thus, the bottom double arrow conveys a continuum on which the preservice teachers' visions were plotted. In addition to their funds of knowledge perspectives, the preservice teachers also differed in how they viewed families and their role in their reading instruction. The "emerging" group of preservice teachers primarily viewed family members as supporters by working with children on schoolwork at home or outside of the classroom. This group of preservice teachers also provided evidence in their written work that they held a basic understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy. The "developing" group articulated visions of families as having rich literacy assets, but did not see those diverse family literacy practices as guides to their classroom instruction. The preservice teachers in this group indicated that student literacy assessment data would be the driver of their literacy instruction. Also, in contrast to the "emerging" category, the preservice teachers with "developing" visions conveyed that they went beyond the basic level of culturally relevant teaching and

discussed how they envisioned helping students develop bicultural identities. Lastly, the “advancing” group conveyed visions of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their instruction in a systematic and integral way. Adding a visual representation to the conceptual framework of the findings, Figure 4 below provides an overview of how the findings were framed and interpreted.

Figure 4: Visions of the Role of the Family in Guiding Reading Instruction



In the section below, I describe the preservice teachers’ visions and provide excerpts from the preservice teachers’ vision statements to illustrate the themes of each phase based on their final vision statements from the last day of class.

Visions of Diverse Family Literacy Practices Guiding Literacy Instruction

(Advancing)

Five of the 34 elementary preservice teachers had visions of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. Within their vision statements, ELCAA reflections, and family member interview reflections, the five

preservice teachers who had “advancing” visions demonstrated perspectives that families possess valuable literacy resources, *and* that they perceived those diverse family literacy practices to contribute to their reading instruction. Their final vision statements illustrated how they explicitly envisioned diverse family literacy practices playing a role in their reading instruction by helping to guide it. Also, their reflections from the ELCAA event helped to deepen our understanding of how they identified and viewed diverse family literacy practices. Finally, their reflections of their experiences from interviewing a family member shed light on how they envisioned the role that families will play in their future reading instruction.

Across their final vision statements, the five preservice teachers conveyed visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. As a first example, in the planning dimension of her vision statements, Luciana explicitly wrote, “I envision myself having more than one plan available and using my funds of knowledge of my students (academically and personally) to drive instruction” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). In the role of parents and family dimension, Luciana went on to say, “Parents, family members, and community are the bridge to teaching students new content. Their knowledge will reflect on my students and I need to use that knowledge to make connections to my students in order to instruct them on new content” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Luciana’s vision statements show that she has critically thought about the value that students’ families and communities can bring to her instruction. She also conveys a vision of seeing students’ and their families’ literacy funds of knowledge as a type of assessment data because she notes that she envisions using them to drive her instruction and to help to guide her in planning her instruction.

In this same vein, Lilly cited in her vision statements that she should “get to know parents!” and “interview them about home practices/traditions, culture, literacy practices at home, expectations in school” and to “include all cultures and traditions/practices” in the classroom reading environment including “culture projects to learn about our classmates” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). Lilly’s vision statement illuminate how she plans to learn about families and that she wants to integrate her knowledge of the families into her instruction.

Similarly, Whitney pictured families to guide her teaching, she wrote, “I envision the role of parents, family members, and community [as] a big part of my instruction. I hope to plan my instruction to reflect where my students live or their culture” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). Again, we see the common theme that these preservice teachers envision their knowledge of families helping to guide instruction. Additionally, Jen portrayed a vision of the home and teacher as a partnership of mutual support. She imagined families as “resources to gain insight into student backgrounds, cultures, and interests” and that the teacher and family “can support each other (home ↔ teacher) to create connection between home and school” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). For Jen, she envisioned a consistent partnership developing between her as the teacher and her students’ families in order to support the students through instruction. Lastly, Marie’s vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction is specific and quite profound. She stated,

I must get to know my students’ family members and I must become familiar with the community they live in. I envision family members playing a role by sharing their culture and literacy practices. I will use this

information to guide instruction and make sure that I am not showing my students that my literacy practices are more worthy than theirs (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

In Marie's vision statement, we notice that she first illustrated a vision for learning about her students, their families, and their communities. With the knowledge gained from learning about each family's culture and literacy practices, Marie intends to use that information to drive her instruction.

These five preservice teachers' vision statements indicate that they imagine a reading classroom where students' family literacy practices are naturally and systematically integrated into the literacy curriculum. They mentioned how they would learn about families and their diverse literacy practices and use that new knowledge to guide their teaching. It is a common idea in teacher education, as well as within my reading methods courses, to think about "assessment driving or guiding instruction." Thus, when the preservice teachers reference "guiding instruction" or "driving instruction," it can be interpreted as though they see the construct that is guiding as some form of assessment data or information. The preservice teachers in this "advancing" category had visions of using diverse family literacy practices as additional assessment data to drive their classroom reading instruction; this is the key differentiator between the other two groups of preservice teachers. As presented in the next two sections that describe the other two groups, the "emerging" and "developing" groups, the preservice teachers in those categories did not convey that they envisioned identifying diverse family literacy practices as an additional form of assessment data to help to inform their classroom reading instruction. The preservice teachers in these two categories

emphasized how student literacy assessment data (i.e., benchmarks, running records, etc.) would be the key driver to their instruction—they did not express visions of using diverse family literacy practices as information to help to guide their teaching of reading.

In addition to their final vision statements, their reflections from their experiences at the ELCAA (Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness Association) event provided more insight into their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The findings from the ELCAA reflections offered another vantage point for looking at the preservice teachers' visions. Their reflections showed how they envisioned working with families from a culture different from their own. With only four preservice teachers in this category (one of the five was unable to attend the event), one significant theme emerged from these reflections. Most of their reflections showed evidence of broad visions that involved thinking through a creative and innovative lens (i.e., thinking outside the box). Demonstrating a vision with a creative lens, Luciana's reflection stood out. She observed and noticed cultural aspects that extended beyond the library walls during the ELCAA event that day. She wrote,

Even observing the community as I was anxiously looking for a place to park, I noticed that there was a strong community bond with the Ethiopian culture. There were signs in Amharic in salons and restaurants around the area. This inspired me to create that same community bond within my own future classroom to welcome all cultures that my future students identify with. (ELCAA Reflection, 11/1/16).

Luciana's reflection shows a level of intention in her vision and that she truly has a desire to learn about her students and their families. She went on to include the

following, “After having some time to reflect on this, I think I would use the parents as a resource rather than having them as large participators in a school setting.” (ELCAA Reflection, 11/1/16). In thinking about using parents as resources, Luciana seems to picture herself reaching out to parents and families to learn more about them and their home literacy practices.

The preservice teachers also explicitly emphasized that they viewed families as a resource. For example, Jen wrote,

I can imagine that school might feel overwhelming or unwelcoming for a student who is used to a totally different language and culture at home, so as a teacher, it is my job to ensure that each student feels that their experiences are acknowledged, valued, and incorporated into instruction whenever possible. Again, I believe that parents, family members, and community members can be great resources to help me do this. Ethiopian culture, for example, is one that I am not very familiar with and that I might have trouble finding resources to represent in the classroom. In this case, I could reach out to family/community members to inform me and help me find resources for my students (ELCAA Reflection, 10/29/16).

Jen explicitly reflects upon how she believes families have resources to help guide the planning of her instruction to help students feel as though their home cultures are being recognized. She also acknowledges that there are cultures and backgrounds that she lacks familiarity; given that, she recognizes that she will need to put forth the effort to learn about specific families and their cultures by reaching out to families and learning directly from them.

Further, Marie also expressed a vision for balancing the importance of everyone's family literacy practices, she wrote, "I now also know that parents and community members are eager to engage their children in literacy experiences. Even though these literacy experiences don't directly match up with those that white middle class people are used to, they are still meaningful" (ELCAA Reflection, 10/30/16). This statement shows that she does place value on the diverse literacy practices found outside of the mainstream school norms; and it also illustrates her vision for identifying diverse family literacy practices and finding ways to regularly integrate them into her classroom reading instruction.

With regards to her vision for reading assessment, Whitney wrote, "Taking in a student's culture when making and carrying out an assessment can help them draw from relatable experiences" (ELCAA Reflection, 9/25/16). Aspects of Whitney's reflection highlighted a vision for adapting her reading assessments to meet the needs of her students, but to also help them demonstrate their literacy funds of knowledge by being able to relate to cultural experiences.

In addition to their final vision statements and their ELCAA reflections, their family member interview reflections offered an additional viewpoint to extend our understanding of how they envision learning about families' diverse literacy practices in order to guide their classroom reading instruction. Their reflections illustrate how they intend to build relationships with families through communication and consistent conversations. The relationship-building through open dialogue tended to be the primary way these five preservice teachers planned to learn about families and to engage them in

their future classrooms. A secondary way they envisioned learning about families was by sending home a survey or a questionnaire.

To illustrate the theme of building relationships and partnerships with parents and families, Whitney had a vision for engaging and learning about families through relationships. She wrote, “I plan to learn about the family literacy practices of my future students by doing home visits, bringing parents into the classroom, and having positive and frequent communications with the families of my students” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). In Whitney’s reflection, she articulates a vision for creating consistent and systematic modes of communication with families in order to learn about their home literacy practices.

Along these lines, Lilly pictures herself using mini-conferences to engage families and learn more about their literacy practices. She wrote,

I could also hold a mini-conference in the beginning of the year (during a back-to-school night, or a separate time) to meet with the parents of all students. In this mini-conference, I could conduct a similar interview to learn about literacy at home in regards to each child. Learning about these practices can give me a better idea of how to teach the students while addressing their culture, using practices they are familiar with at home! (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Lilly’s reflection demonstrates a vision for learning about specific family literacy practices through face-to-face dialogue with families that could help to inform her literacy teaching.

As another example of in-person interactions with families, Jen included the following in her reflection,

In my future classroom, I plan to have conversations with students themselves about their interests and experiences outside of school. ... I could have shorter conversations with families during parent-teacher conferences. Although I will not have extended time to interview family members during conferences, I can informally ask a few questions about students' home lives and reading experiences to give myself at least a brief overview of how I can help integrate home and school (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

The theme of asking questions and building in time for conversations with students and families in order to learn more about their lives outside of the classroom, as well as family literacy practices, is expounded upon in Jen's reflection.

Similar to Jen, Marie also mentioned in-person conversations as a way to learn about families. She wrote, "I also plan on having face-to-face conversations with families about literacy in their home during the mandatory parent-teacher conferences at the end of the first quarter" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). This excerpt indicates that Marie envisions using in-person meetings to learn more about home literacy practices.

Four out of the five preservice teachers who had visions of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction noted that they plan to find ways to have in-person conversations with families in order to learn more about their home literacy practices and to build relationships between the home and the school

environments. Also, four out of the five preservice teachers mentioned that they plan to send home surveys or questionnaires as another way to gain insight into the families' literacy practices. Luciana emphasized that she would tailor her surveys to meet the needs of each family. She wrote,

I plan to send home questionnaires with general questions and space for parents/guardians to fill out anything they would like me to know about their child. I also plan on asking what language/dialect the family is most comfortable speaking/writing so that I know in what language to send home forms or important notes. I realize that this will add a lot of time to master since I only know two languages but I think parent/guardian involvement in literacy is so crucial to academic success and comfort (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Luciana's excerpt shows that she has an understanding that families who do not speak English as their first language may need various forms of communication from the school/teacher in order to fully convey their home literacy practices to the teacher. Her quote also shows evidence that she understands that teachers would struggle to integrate home literacy practices into the classroom if teachers do not have a clear idea as to what those home literacy practices entail.

In addition to Luciana's reflection, Marie, Jen, and Lilly mentioned that they would send surveys/questionnaires home, too. Marie planned to send home questions that aligned closely to the questions found in the family member interview assignment. She wrote, "I plan to send home a family literacy survey at the beginning of the [year] that has similar questions to this interview" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

And, Jen wrote, “I could also give surveys about literacy to the students, or send home surveys for families to fill out with their children” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Finally, Lilly also envisioned sending home a survey at the beginning of the school year to learn more about family literacy strategies and practices. Whether it involved meeting with families face-to-face or sending home a survey, all five of these preservice teachers envisioned ways to learn about specific families and their diverse literacy practices as a way to help them plan their reading instruction.

The preservice teachers who had visions of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction were inclined to reflect on ways that they could “think outside of the box,” to creatively consider ways that they could come to learn more about their students’ identities and their students’ families’ backgrounds, and to critique their own way of thinking and develop innovative literacy curriculum. These preservice teachers had visions of pursuing more knowledge about their students’ families in order to make integral connections to their classroom reading instruction. Illustrating how these five preservice teachers had “advancing” visions and were moving to the right direction on the “funds of knowledge” continuum, they all envisioned families as consistent partners in their reading instruction. Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005) discuss the idea of teachers “pivoting” (p.5) from first learning about families from home observations to then considering ways that these family literacy practices could inform their teaching, or to “rethink their classroom practices” (p. 5). The five preservice teachers with “advancing” visions envisioned themselves pivoting by first having a vision of families possessing literacy strengths and resources to also having a vision of using those literacy assets to inform their teaching. These findings show that

preservice teachers can emerge from a teacher education program with visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. In the next section, I present the elementary preservice teachers' visions of families having valuable literacy assets that contribute to literacy development, but they envision student literacy assessments as the key guide to their instruction.

Visions of Family Literacy Assets, Yet Classroom Data Drives Instruction

(Developing)

Eight of the 34 elementary preservice teachers had visions that families possess literacy assets that can contribute to literacy development, yet they did not illustrate in their vision statements that they intend to use those literacy assets to guide their instruction. They envisioned integrating culturally relevant pedagogy into their classrooms by using student literacy assessment as the key driver to their classroom reading instruction. Clearly, these eight preservice teachers viewed families through a “funds of knowledge” lens because they perceived families as having literacy assets. But, they did not demonstrate a vision of using those family literacy resources to guide their reading instruction; in other words, they did not envision themselves pivoting in their instruction based on information gained about diverse family literacy practices. Thus, this group of eight preservice teachers were considered to be in the “developing” category in reference to the “funds of knowledge” continuum presented at the beginning of this chapter. Both this group of eight and the group of five preservice teachers discussed in the first section expressed in their vision statements that families have rich literacy, cultural, and linguistic assets that can contribute to children's literacy development and should be recognized and valued by teachers. These two groups of preservice teachers

differed in how they envisioned using diverse family literacy practices in their classrooms. As previously discussed, the “advancing” group envisioned going one step further by using diverse family literacy practices as additional assessment data to help guide their classroom reading instruction. In contrast, this group of preservice teachers with “developing” visions did not convey that they would use those practices as additional data, but that they would rely on student literacy assessment data obtained within the classroom to guide their classroom instruction.

Within their vision statements and ELCAA reflections, the eight preservice teachers who had “developing” visions demonstrated perspectives that families possess valuable literacy resources. In their written work, they indicated visions that students’ backgrounds and identities should be considered when designing the literacy classroom, but they did not extend their visions to include families and their literacy practices as a guide to instruction, it was focused on the students. Learning more about each of their students and responding to students’ needs shows that these preservice teachers want to understand each student, but they were not clear in that they would connect the families’ literacy practices to their instruction. Basically, they envisioned families through an asset-focused lens, but did not envision their diverse family literacy practices as a guide to their classroom reading instruction. In contrast to the “emerging” group that is discussed in the next section of this chapter, the “developing” group explicitly described in their vision statements that they viewed families as having rich and valuable literacy resources, whereas the “emerging” group did not clearly convey visions of families as possessing literacy assets and resources.

Five of the eight preservice teachers envisioned learning more about their students and their backgrounds and all eight of the preservice teachers pictured responding to students' needs through instruction. Undoubtedly, we want preservice teachers to focus on ways to differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of the individual student, and these preservice teachers indicated visions for doing just that in their future classrooms. The idea of tailoring their instruction based on students and their individual needs represents a "funds of knowledge" approach. However, this study examined how diverse family literacy practices would help to guide instruction, and the focus on family literacy practices as a driver of instruction was not clearly identified by these eight preservice teachers. Although they recognized and valued family literacy assets, one key difference between these eight preservice teachers' visions and the five visions in the first section is that these eight focused more on planning instruction based on the individual student, not emphasizing the families' literacy assets to guide their instruction. In the following paragraphs, examples that exhibit the shared aspects of the preservice teachers who had visions of families possessing literacy assets are provided.

The preservice teachers showed an openness to learn more about students and families and to come to understand the diverse aspects of their students' lives. For instance, Mary's vision for the role of families included the following,

I will try to reach out and get to know my students' parents/families the first week of school. I will try to meet with each student's parents so I can ask them about their hopes for their child and how they teach literacy at home. I think it's important to try to establish relationships and open

communication with parents early on in the beginning of the year (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

In Mary's final vision statement, we see that she wants to learn about families and their literacy practices at home, but she did not articulate that she would use this knowledge of the families to guide her classroom reading instruction. When Mary wrote about her vision for how she would assess and plan her classroom reading instruction, Mary envisioned "informally assessing students by asking comprehension questions during guided reading groups [and] using closing/summarizing activities like we talked about today [in class]!" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16) to gather information on students' literacy needs. In Mary's vision excerpts, we see that she views families through an asset-focused perspective, but saw student assessment data as driving her instruction. While student literacy assessments should drive instruction, diverse family literacy practices can act as additional data to help inform the teaching of literacy.

In addition to Mary's example, another preservice teacher, Allison, included the following in the role of family dimension, "I want to have a good idea of where all my students come from and how I can use their home lives as resources" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Here we read that Allison recognized home literacy practices as resources, but she did not convey that she envisioned using those to guide her reading instruction. While Allison envisioned using her students' "home lives as resources," she did not explicitly write in her vision statement how she would use those resources. Would she use them to guide her instruction? Allison's vision statement was incredibly close to being categorized in the "advancing" group, but since she was not clear in that she would use those resources to guide her classroom reading instruction, her vision was categorized

in the “developing” group. Supporting this categorization, Allison’s vision for assessment to guide her instruction included the following:

I envision assessment as focusing on individual student growth. Students will each have individual goals and will be assessed on those personal growths. Although I will have class goals, I want to focus on individual growth for reading (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

In this excerpt, we see that Allison’s vision for assessment involves student individualization and setting goals for each student. She did not include in her statement that she envisioned identifying students’ family literacy practices as an additional form of information to also guide her planning and instruction.

In the planning dimension of her vision statement, Allison mentioned that she imagined planning her reading instruction based on student needs, she wrote, “I want to plan reading instruction based off of student needs. Rather than just following curriculum, I’d like to assess what skills my students are weak in and plan accordingly” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Although she expressed a perspective of families possessing literacy resources, Allison envisioned the assessment of students’ skills as the guide to her instruction. She did not indicate that her vision included diverse family literacy resources as a driver to her classroom reading instruction.

Similarly, Hannah described a vision of “open communication to let me learn more about my students [that] can be done through surveys/interviews; maybe [families] coming into classroom to help/share about lives/culture” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). In Hannah’s final vision statement, she illustrates that she envisions families as having cultural resources to share and that she wants to learn more about her students. Yet,

Hannah, for instance, wrote that assessments “can be used to inform teaching [and] differentiating assessment for students can help them” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). Hannah also wrote that her lesson planning will include “using data from past exercises/closures to plan future instruction” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). In her vision statement, Hannah did not illustrate that she envisioned diverse family literacy practices played a role in guiding her reading instruction, even though she indicated a vision that recognized that families have literacy assets and resources to offer.

As another example, Marnie envisioned that she will “get to know each student and their cultural background” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). Marnie specified that she envisioned learning more about her students and their cultural backgrounds, which shows that she views her students through a “funds of knowledge” perspective. However, she did not include in her vision statement that she pictured using diverse family literacy practices to guide her reading instruction. Marnie’s vision also included responsive instruction based on multiple student literacy assessments, she wrote,

I plan to use several types of assessments when I teach reading such as guided readings, oral fluency observations, formative assessments, DRAs, etc. in order to assess my students’ reading and writing development. I will plan my reading instruction based on each of my students’ individual needs. I want each child to reach their fullest potential in literacy development and this can be done by catering to their needs (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).

Again, tailoring and differentiating instruction based on students’ needs are best practices that nearly every teacher educator would want to see preservice teachers emphasize;

however, this study examined how preservice teachers envision using diverse family literacy practices as an additional form of data to also guide their classroom reading instruction. Thus, Marnie's vision demonstrates a view of students' backgrounds possessing cultural resources, but her vision did not convey that she would use diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction.

Further, demonstrating that she viewed students through an asset-based lens by wanting to learn more about her students' backgrounds and cultures, Michelle envisioned the following, "I want parents, family members, and community members to be a part of my classroom. Bringing in people to share books and traditions" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Showing a desire to tailor her instruction based on her students' backgrounds, Michelle wrote,

I want to use relevant resources that my students are interested in. I will also make sure to differentiate activities in my planning for all levels. I want [my classroom environment] to be open and fun and encouraging. I want to tie in other cultures and bring in parents and community members" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

In the second excerpt from Michelle's vision statement, we come to understand that Michelle envisioned bringing parents and community members into the classroom, but the planning of her instruction will be based on students' interests and their academic levels. Supporting her view of using student literacy data as the key method of informing her teaching, Michelle included the following in the assessment dimension of her final vision statement, "I will use a variety of different assessments before, during, and after reading in my teaching" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). To use different assessments in

her teaching implies that Michelle views this assessment data as driving her reading instruction.

In addition to wanting to learn more about their students, their vision statements showed a desire to respond to students' instructional needs based on assessments, as well as students' backgrounds and interests. For example, in her vision statements, Terri envisioned "assessment that is accessible for English Language Learners and testing for fluency, rate, prosody, and comprehension, [using] running records and DSA" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Further, Terri pictured herself "us[ing] curriculum as a tool, but us[ing] knowledge of students to make it more engaging, appropriate, etc. for my students" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Terri envisioned using her understanding and knowledge of her students, including their interests and their literacy assessment data (i.e., fluency rate, reading comprehension, spelling skills, etc.) to guide her teaching of reading. Also, Terri wanted "books featuring different cultures, ethnicities, races, etc. for students to feel welcome/respected" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). These excerpts demonstrate that Terri envisions responding to students' needs and backgrounds based on her range of classroom reading assessments; however, she did not include that she envisioned using knowledge of families and their diverse literacy practices as another way to guide her teaching.

As another example of a vision of responsive teaching, Maggie included the following in her vision statement,

I envision using assessments to inform my responsive teaching practices. Assessments will help me to determine the instructional level of my students and what areas they need extra support or enrichment. I will use a

variety of resources to enhance my instruction and meet the needs of each learner. I envision my role as being a facilitator who guides students towards developing their literacy skills at a pace that is suited to their individual learning needs, but will help them to succeed and feel confident in their abilities (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

Maggie also cited the inclusion of “culturally relevant texts” and “active literacy that is integrated with other subjects and tied to students’ backgrounds and interests” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

Additionally, Betty stated that “formative assessments (exit cards, checking for understandings, graphic organizers) should guide instruction. Further, anecdotal notes and running records should also inform instruction—what are student strengths and weaknesses?” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Betty also plans to “incorporate family, cultural/linguistic backgrounds” and to use “culturally relevant texts in classroom library” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

These examples from the preservice teachers’ vision statements show an eagerness to learn about their students’ backgrounds, home lives, and cultures. Although these preservice teachers envisioned learning more about families and revealed that they see families as having literacy and cultural assets, the preservice teachers did not envision diverse family literacy practices playing a role in guiding their instruction. Instead, they envisioned student literacy assessment data as the key driver to the planning of their instruction.

These vision excerpts from all eight of the “developing” preservice teachers demonstrate visions for using responsive teaching practices to teach their future

classroom reading lessons. Moreover, they show an understanding that instruction should be tailored to each students' needs and backgrounds. With regards to the assessment data that they would use to tailor their instruction, they focused specifically on information about the student and less about family literacy information. In their final vision statements, these eight preservice teachers showed a willingness to learn more about their students and their families, specifically their cultural backgrounds. Their desire to learn more about their students' lives demonstrates an openness to learn about each student and their experiences. Although they viewed families through an asset-based perspective and they expressed their intentions to learn more about families, they did not envision using diverse family literacy practices to guide their reading instruction; they envisioned using student literacy assessments to drive their instruction.

Along with their vision statements, their reflections from the ELCAA offer further evidence of their visions for recognizing the literacy assets found within students and their families. The reflections from the preservice teachers who had visions of recognizing literacy assets found within families were specific about the aspects of the Ethiopian culture that they observed at the event as well as how culture is inextricably linked to children's identity. Their reflections indicated that they were intentionally thinking about and contemplating ways to see each individual student and their family as unique people in order to develop a vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. Again, the preservice teachers' "funds of knowledge" perspectives were evident in their ELCAA reflections, particularly in how they illustrated visions of recognizing families' diverse literacy resources. So we see

visions of families having literacy assets, but not that these would help to guide instruction.

To demonstrate this theme of recognizing and valuing students' and families' literacy resources and identities, quotations found in some of the preservice teachers' reflections from the ELCAA event are presented. First, Hannah discussed the character in the story that was read and how that could explicitly relate to the individual children at the event. She wrote, "This experience highlighted the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy and the idea that children should be exposed to texts that are either windows or mirrors of their own lives. While I was watching the students participate on this special day, it looked like they were all very happy and engaged because Tsion was Ethiopian and bilingual just like themselves" (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16). In a later part of her reflection, Hannah went on to write, "I believe it is the role of the teacher to get to know their students in order to better understand them as individuals. If a teacher does not know her students, it would be very difficult to tailor instruction to the needs of the students" (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16). Hannah made key connections and specific observations about the book that was read that day to how she would need to get to know each of her students on an individual level to plan her reading instruction. Also, Hannah's response to the reflection question that asked if the ELCAA event had affected her vision of reading assessment, she focused on student information and did not discuss a vision of using family information to guide her reading instruction. She wrote the following,

This event made me realize that different types of assessment need to be used in order to properly assess a student. For instance, an ESL student may perform better on formative than summative assessments because

there is a language barrier. Just because a student doesn't do well on a written test does not mean that the child is failing. One test should not predetermine whether or not a child will be successful (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).

In addition to Hannah's observation of the specific elements of the text, Mary's reflection was also deeply insightful into thinking about student identity and families' cultures. Mary expressed the following,

I can now certainly see how important it is for the role of the teacher and the role of the family/community members to overlap. Far too often, unfortunately the student's school experiences are very disconnected from their home experiences, which makes it very difficult for students to succeed. I think that this is especially important when the teacher is not from the community that he or she is teaching in. In order for teachers to help the students learn to the fullest extent, teachers need to understand and try to incorporate the students' culture and community into the classroom. Doing this will not only help students to make more connections between what they see at home and what they learn at school, but it will also make them feel more comfortable and included in the classroom environment. It is very important for students to be able to express who they are and identify with their culture both at home and at school (ELCAA Reflection, 10/29/16).

Mary's reflection represents a developing vision that goes beyond the basics of integrating elements of culturally relevant pedagogy into her reading classroom (i.e.,

beyond building a diverse classroom library). Her reflection indicates a view that she intends to build bridges between the home and classroom environment, to build relationships between the families and the teachers, and to ensure that students are able to develop bicultural identities. She notes the disconnects that can easily occur between school and home and understands that teachers can play a critical role in identifying and using families' funds of knowledge. Additionally, with regards to her vision of assessment, Mary expressed that the ELCAA event helped her to see assessments in a slightly different light. She wrote,

After this experience, I definitely have a better understanding of how students can demonstrate their reading ability in different, non-traditional ways. Not all students are able to succeed with traditional standardized reading tests, and these tests are not an accurate representation of students' language ability. Since music and storytelling is a huge part of many students' cultures, a great way to assess your students' language ability is by having them show their linguistic strengths by performing a song, or creating a story (ELCAA Reflection, 10/29/16).

For both Hannah and Mary, the ELCAA helped to expand how they envisioned the role of assessment data and the types of assessments that could be given to students in their future classrooms. These shifts and expansions, however, did not include the idea of using the knowledge gleaned from learning about diverse family literacy practices as additional assessment data to guide their classroom reading instruction.

Offering another example that represents the theme of wanting to learn more about diverse family literacy practices, Michelle's reflection stood out because she

observed a specific literacy practice: storytelling. She identified differences between how stories are told in the United States and how they are told in Ethiopian culture. Again, we see a vision that goes beyond the basic tenets of culturally relevant pedagogy in that Michelle recognized a specific literacy practice of the Ethiopian culture and reflected on how it was similar and different to the culture of storytelling in U.S. classrooms. Michelle wrote,

Ethiopian story telling is so different from what we typically observe in our American classrooms. American story telling focuses on reading the book together: reading the story, looking at the pictures and maybe asking some interactive questions. However Ethiopian story telling is different; the storyteller uses the book more as a script and rather than reading the book with the children the storyteller performs the story for the children. There seems to be much more adlibbing and personal additions to the story. This affected my vision of teaching reading because it made me realize that the standard way of reading a story may not be the norm for some of my students. It is important to understand the different ways to tell stories because the way I tell stories in my class may be unfamiliar to some of my students (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).

Michelle's focus of honing in on the aspect of storytelling and the differences between how stories are share in typical U.S. classrooms and in Ethiopian homes and cultures shows her ability to identify specific components and literacy practices of a particular culture. This also indicates that she is developing a vision for recognizing the specific valuable literacy assets found in families and cultures.

To add one final example to support this theme, Maggie's reflection represented a vision that recognized individual student identity. Similar to Mary and Michelle, Maggie also demonstrated a vision of having a culturally responsive classroom because she focused specifically on students developing bicultural identities and that her instruction should respond to her students' needs and backgrounds. She wrote, "They would point out important information from the text such as key vocabulary words and have the students repeat them in both English and Amharic, strengthening their knowledge and identity within both cultures" (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16). This quote demonstrates that Maggie understands the importance of students developing a bicultural identity and that she recognizes the value of their cultural, literacy, and language assets. In another part of her reflection, Maggie included the following,

Tsion's Life, a story about an Ethiopian girl and her daily life, was read to the children in both Amharic and English. This integrated multiple cultures into the literary experiences and allowed the children, who were also Ethiopian, to make a personal connection with the story. The children were able to share experiences or knowledge they had that related to the story, such as one child describing how he had tried a specific Ethiopian meal when visiting his grandparents. This experience really highlighted how using culturally relevant texts that students can connect with their family and history brings a deeper significance to the experience (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).

Maggie's insight emphasized a focus on the student learning about himself and developing his own identity through a literacy experience (i.e., reading a book). Her

reflection focused on the development of the student from a cultural standpoint as well as building literacy skills. Also, Maggie noted in her reflection how the event changed her view of reading assessment data to drive her instruction. She included the following in her reflection,

Attending this event made me realize that children may be able to learn and interact in multiple languages, but may feel more comfortable using their native language. I noticed the children were able to respond to questions in both English and Amharic, but definitely seemed more excited and engaged when responding to questions spoken in Amharic. ... For my future reading instruction and assessment experiences, I will try to incorporate elements of the individual child's language and culture so they feel recognized and can draw from their personal experiences. I think it is important for educators to take into consideration the native language and cultural background of diverse students when assessing reading development (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).

Here we see how Maggie noted how the event changed her view of assessment, but she emphasized the information obtained from the individual student and she did not include evidence that she envisioned using the knowledge of the family to inform her teaching.

Overall, the preservice teachers' visions zoomed in on the specific aspects of Ethiopian culture and how they could potentially connect to literacy teaching. In these reflection excerpts, we see that these preservice teachers have visions of teaching that go beyond the basic level of culturally responsive teaching, but they did not emphasize that they would use students' diverse family literacy practices as information to help them to

plan their culturally responsive teaching. This is the key difference between the five preservice teachers in the first section because they envisioned integrated culturally relevant pedagogy in their classroom reading instruction, but they saw themselves using information gleaned from their students' families in order to do so.

For these preservice teachers, their visions represent views of families and students who have assets and can play a critical role in the development of literacy. Their visions emphasize the resources, identities, and interests of students and that, as teachers, they intend to foster their students' learning and development. They envisioned bringing in parts of their students' identities, interests, dreams, and backgrounds into their future classrooms, but did not convey that they intend to have family literacy practices help to guide their reading instruction. In the next section, preservice teachers' visions of families as supporters are presented.

Visions of Families as Supporters of the Teacher and the Classroom (Emerging)

Twenty-one of the 34 elementary preservice teachers had visions that families play a supportive role for the teacher and extend what takes place in the literacy classroom. Within their vision statements, ELCAA reflections, and family member interview reflections, the 21 preservice teachers who had "emerging" visions demonstrated perspectives that families should support the work of the teacher and continue the school learning at home. For example, from these 21 preservice teachers' vision statements, nineteen of the preservice teachers were inclined to view families as supporters of what goes on in the classroom, and ten of the preservice teachers concentrated on parents and family members reading books to children at home as a key part of their role and as a way to help their children develop literacy skills.

One of the major themes found in the preservice teachers' visions was the view that family members are supporters of what goes on in the classroom. Although the preservice teachers in this group did not explicitly describe in their visions that they envisioned families as possessing literacy assets, they conveyed a "funds of knowledge" perspective in illustrating visions that they see families supporting and extending the classroom learning. Nineteen of the preservice teachers provided evidence of this theme in their final vision statements; seven of these examples are presented here. An illustration of a view of families supporting the teacher's work was found in Renee's visualization of her future reading classroom. With regards to the role of the family, Renee stated, "Parents and families can attend reading nights at school where different reading activities can be discussed. They can read with their children at home or ask comprehension questions when their child has read a book" (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). Renee's vision shows that she sees families as supporters of the reading that takes place in the classroom or at school (i.e., at reading nights at school). Her vision did not provide evidence that she sees families as having literacy assets that can be used to plan or to guide the classroom reading instruction. Adding another example, Cathy stated, "I want parents and families to understand and know what is being learned in the class so they can help their children at home" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Cathy's statement indicates that she sees family members helping children at home by extending and supporting the classroom instruction. Her vision implies a view that families are not helping their children develop literacy skills at home unless teachers are letting them know about what they are learning at school. In addition to Renee and Cathy, Jill also expressed a similar vision with regards to the role of parents and families. She wrote, "I

want to provide them with resources they can use to work with the students on reading and literacy. They could read fun books with their student” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

Similar to Cathy’s vision, Jill seems to show that she sees families as supporters of the school work and in need of resources from the teacher to practice literacy skills with their children. Further, Phyllis envisioned the role of the family in her classroom reading instruction as follows, “The communication between families and the teacher will be essential in my classroom. Students will be organized with all their homework assignments. I will inform parents of the writing process and my expectations. Weekly newsletters will be sent home with a lot of resources my students can use to better their literacy” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). Phyllis’ vision conveys a one-way communication from the teacher to the family, again, demonstrating that she views families as supporters of her work and instruction in the classroom. Another example of this theme was found in Rebecca’s vision statement, she wrote,

Parents need to be active participants in their children’s schooling. I envision [providing] reading homework that allows children and their parents to read to each other every night. I also envision creating positive relationships with parents by offering materials, support, and strategies that can use to help their child strive in reading (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).

Rebecca’s statement suggests that parents and families can improve reading skills of their children by using resources provided by the teacher and supporting the classroom

instruction by completing homework. Likewise, Jessica included the following in her vision statement,

Ensure their involvement and inclusion: sending home weekly newsletters, activities to do as a family, ways/activities to give back to community, allow times for family to come in and watch/participate, and letters home stating what students did well/accomplished (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16).

Jessica's vision for the role of the family reveals that she envisions the teacher as the source of information in that she wants to keep parents informed of student progress and activities the family can do together. Jessica's vision of inviting family members to come into the classroom to observe and participate suggests that she sees them as watching her and the classroom activities for guidance. As a final example of visions that see parents and families as supporting the work of the classroom, Bella wrote, "Parents should be involved, it's up to the teacher to communicate that parents should be involved in their student's education, and when it's appropriate, coming to class, reading together ..."

(Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Bella's vision excerpt indicates that she sees her role as a teacher as the catalyst for ensuring parent and family involvement and for her to provide opportunities to guarantee that involvement. These seven vision excerpts highlight what the majority of the preservice teachers with "emerging" visions included in their statements—that parents and families should support the teacher and the reading instruction that takes place in the classroom by reading newsletters, helping with homework, using the literacy resources the teacher sent home, and participating in activities prescribed by the school or the teacher.

Secondly, highlighting a view that families should support and extend the learning in the classroom, several of the preservice teachers wrote about how parents and family members should read with their child at home. In this theme, the preservice teachers demonstrate a “funds of knowledge” lens because they envision families reading at home with their children. A deficit perspective would involve the notion that parents and families do not have the ability to read with their children at home. But, this theme expands upon the visions of families as supporters by reading books with their children at home. These visions suggest that the key role family members play involves acting as a supporter by practicing existing reading skills and building on the skills taught by the teacher, not necessarily a key source of literacy instruction.

Ten of the preservice teachers included in their vision statements that they think family members should read with their children, six are presented here. Angie’s vision demonstrates this view, she wrote, “I envision parents, family members, and community members to have a strong role at home reading with students and trying to support them outside of the classroom” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Also, Amanda wrote, “Parents should monitor independent reading at home” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16); and Valerie include that the role of the family is that “parents read with and to students” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Similarly, Gillian wrote, “Parents encourage their kids to read at home” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). Another instance of this view of the role of parents and families includes Lauren’s vision statement; she wrote, “I believe it is the family’s role to read with their child whether it is in English or their native tongue. Any type of reading and repetition will be beneficial to a child” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). Adding to these, Tammy wrote, “Family members’ [roles are to] simply read to

students at home, create an environment where students think reading is important” (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16). Although these statements suggest that the preservice teachers want their students to improve their reading skills outside of the classroom, they also imply that parents and families’ primary way to help is to read books with their children. Some of these statements also indicate that parents and families are not already helping their children to further develop their literacy skills, but that they need the teacher to encourage them or support them.

Overall, these preservice teachers’ visions focus on the role of the teacher to teach literacy within the classroom environment. The preservice teachers also seem to view parents and families as supporters of the teacher and the literacy learning that takes place in the classroom. Although their visions contained foundational starting blocks (i.e., broader views of literacy and recognition of aspects of diversity) for these preservice teachers to begin to recognize diverse family literacy practices as assets and resources, they seemed to have a grounded view of literacy that centered around books (i.e., classroom libraries) and reading books (i.e., parents read with their children at home).

Unlike the first two groups of preservice teachers, for this group of preservice teachers, using diverse family literacy practices to plan their reading instruction did not appear to be on their radar. They concentrated on the literacy learning provided by the teacher in the classroom with parents and family members supporting the work of the teacher and the classroom learning. For example, 19 of the 21 preservice teachers with emerging visions stated in some form that they envision families extending the learning outside of the classroom through activities such as helping with homework, reading books, and using resources provided by the teacher.

In addition to their vision statements, aspects of their visions for the role of the family and their future reading classroom were represented in their ELCAA reflections. After analyzing the 18 preservice teachers' ELCAA reflections (three of the 21 were unable to attend), one key theme became apparent: parents and families could share their culture through classroom read alouds. Many of the ELCAA reflections showed glimpses of preservice teachers who were developing visions toward seeing families as having literacy assets, but the focus of these reflections aligned with their vision statements that highlighted literacy as skills developed in the classroom and arrived at mainly through the reading of books. In the next set of paragraphs, I provide excerpts from some of the preservice teachers' ELCAA reflections supporting this theme as well as the statements that show developing visions toward seeing families as having valuable literacy resources.

A second emerging theme from the preservice teachers' ELCAA reflections involved visions of families coming into the classroom to read a book to the class or to share with the students about that family member's culture and traditions. Again, we can recognize that these preservice teachers hold "funds of knowledge" perspectives in seeing families as positive supports and having assets to share. The way the preservice teachers described family members coming into the classroom conveyed that they viewed family member read alouds and sharing time to be a one-time experience, not a consistent and systematic practice where parents and family members would come on a regular basis. As Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti (2005) note, "a funds of knowledge approach facilitates a systematic and powerful way to represent communities in terms of resources ... and how to harness these resources for classroom teaching" (p. x). Further, these descriptions did

not indicate that they would learn from the family members and integrate those cultural or literacy practices into their own teaching and instruction in a systematic fashion.

The majority of the 18 preservice teachers specifically mentioned in their reflections that parents or family members could help teach students about a variety of cultures by coming into the school and doing a read aloud or speaking to the class. For instance, Bella reflected on the following, “In my future classroom I think students would really enjoy a parent or family member coming in and doing a read aloud in both English and their native language like it was done at the event” (ELCAA Reflection, 11/1/16). Another example of this appeared in Rebecca’s reflection, she wrote, “I think for my classroom it would be important for me to encourage my student’s parents to come in to participate in an interactive read aloud with the children or to come in to share their cultures with all of my students” (ELCAA Reflection, 11/1/16). In her reflection, Renee mentioned that she “can have someone from a different culture come to my classroom and read a story in a different language and then translate it for the students. My students would be able to see how cultures are different and alike.” Adding a final example, Christine wrote in her reflection, “It is important to include family and community members who celebrate particular cultures of study in the classroom as well because it adds to the excitement and builds on the knowledge of the culture” (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16). These examples highlight preservice teachers’ visions for integrating various cultures into their classroom by having parents and family members read a book or share about their cultures. This is an integral building block in the foundation for developing a vision of using diverse family literacy practices to guide classroom reading instruction. An overall interpretation of this theme, however, is that the preservice teachers did not

reflect on ways that they, as teachers, could learn about families' cultural literacy practices to consistently use them in the reading classroom. Having parents and family members come into the classroom to read or share their culture seems to be a one-time or every-so-often activity. Plus, the idea of introducing cultures via parents and families did not specifically identify literacy funds of knowledge, but culture in a general sense.

Overall, the reflections from the preservice teachers who envisioned families as supporters focused on aspects of the school and the classrooms. Only two of the preservice teachers in this category acknowledged that literacy learning takes place at home. Isaac included in his reflection, "I think trying to bring the greater learning community (home and school) together can push students to see that learning is a part of the everyday, not just during school" (ELCAA Reflection, 11/13/16). And, Valerie stated, "A child doesn't just learn at school. They are often bringing what they have learned into the classroom" (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16). These two preservice teachers' reflections stood out as the only two that acknowledged learning as something that can occur beyond the classroom. The remaining 16 preservice teachers focused heavily on how learning, specifically literacy learning, takes place in the classroom and families should support and extend the classroom learning.

Additionally, the preservice teachers appeared to see students' and their families' cultures as a vague idea, as opposed to describing specific aspects of the Ethiopian culture. Their reactions to their observations and experiences at the ELCAA event demonstrated that they had visions of celebrating culture and diversity, but their reflections lacked the specificity of the specific Ethiopian culture and the families who

were present at the event. Table 18 below outlines this theme by presenting quotes from their ELCAA reflections.

Table 18: ELCAA Reflection Quotes Demonstrating Basic Tenants of Culturally Relevant Teaching

Preservice Teacher	Quote from ELCAA Reflection
Bella	“This is a good way for children to learn about different cultures and gain respect and a sense of community for everyone in the classroom” (ELCAA Reflection, 11/1/16).
Eva	“This event really emphasizes the importance of representing diversity through literacy and the differences as well as the similarities amongst cultures. I think I realized how important it is to bring diversity into reading for students to keep them involved but also help the parents feel as if their cultures are being represented and respected in the classroom” (ELCAA Reflection, 10/30/16).
Jessica	My attendance contributed to my vision for teaching reading in regards to being a teacher in that it showed me the importance of having a culturally relevant class, with books that represent a variety of backgrounds, ethnicities, and cultures. It made me realize how important it is to learn about where a student comes from so I can ensure they feel comfortable in our school environment. It would also show them that I care about where they come from. In regards to the role of parents, family members, and community members, my vision for teaching reading changed in that they should be there for their kids when they have questions about their own cultures. When parents are and community members are engaged with kids in regards to their own culture and the culture around them, they can begin to make connections and be proud of where they come from. They can learn even more and share it with the class (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).
Cathy	My attendance contributed to my vision regarding the teacher role significantly. It made me think of the information we learned last semester about having too much “teacher talk time”. Of course it’s important for a teacher to teach because they need to express the

	information but it's even more important for students to have talk time to express themselves and to think aloud critically. It also made me see how important it is for families and parents to support their children in everything school based. Without parent involvement, children are not able to succeed to their highest potential (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).
Phyllis	My attendance contributed to my vision of teaching reading in the classroom because I could experience what the children were experiencing. We were sitting during a circle time discussion where books were being read, cultural songs were being sang, and those languages were being spoken. It was interesting to see multiple children from this same culture come together to celebrate and embrace their culture through reading. A lot of these ideas and activities were taken away from this event and will be used in my future classroom (ELCAA Reflection, 11/2/16).

In Bella's excerpt in Table 18, we read that the ELCAA event helped her see how children could learn about various cultures; this event, however, emphasized the celebration of the specific Ethiopian culture and the Amharic language and nearly all of the children present were from Ethiopian families and heritage. Also, we see in Eva's reflection that she envisioned having cultures represented and respected in her classroom, but she did not make any connections to the specific Ethiopian culture or the Ethiopian families present at the event. In Jessica's example, her understanding of the need for culturally relevant resources and texts is evident; yet, again, we see a general vision of culture with no specific connections to the Ethiopian families who were present that day.

In the reflection from Cathy, we see how she walked away from the ELCAA event with a new understanding of the need for students to be able to have more time for dialogue in the classroom (i.e., "less teacher talk"). Although more "student talk" and less "teacher talk" are what many teacher educators would consider as a best practice, Cathy's

reflection was broad and nonspecific to the cultural literacy practices that were present at the event. And finally, in Phyllis' reflection, she intends to include cultural practices in her classroom, but she did not discuss any specific ideas that she gleaned from the event nor did she include any specific cultural and family literacy practices from that day. She discussed the celebration of culture, singing cultural songs, and how "those languages were being spoken" (ELCAA Reflection, 11/2/16). Phyllis' reflection lacked specificity around the Ethiopian culture and was fairly vague in demonstrating what she learned and how she would implement ideas into her future classroom. These excerpts from the preservice teachers with "emerging" visions demonstrate a distant view of culture and diversity, which contrasts the visions from the other two groups that emphasized the Ethiopian culture, the children's identities, and specific literacy practices that they observed at the event.

As a whole, the preservice teachers who had envisioned family members as supporters had a basic understanding of the concepts of culturally relevant pedagogy. However, based on their reflections, they indicated a generic view of culture in that all students should feel welcomed, be able to share their cultures and backgrounds, and feel respected. Further, their reflections implied that they envisioned incorporating into their future classrooms the activities from the ELCAA in the same exact manner as they were observed at the event. Some of them indicated that they would read a book to the class in English and in another language, just like the books were read in English and in Amharic at the event. This implies that these preservice teachers are willing to glean ideas presented to them, but potentially need to be pushed to think about ways to apply them to

meet the needs of their future classrooms of diverse students and to put their own creative spin on them—not to introduce activities verbatim.

In this section, how the 34 elementary preservice teachers envision diverse family literacy practices playing a role in their future classroom reading instruction were presented. The visions were organized into three groups: 1) the preservice teachers who envisioned using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction; 2) the preservice teachers who recognized that families possess literacy assets, yet viewed student literacy assessment data as the key guide to their classroom reading instruction; and 3) the preservice teachers who viewed family members as supporters of classroom reading instruction by providing literacy support at home. In the next section, the changes and some consistencies found in the preservice teachers' visions from their first vision statements to their final vision statements are presented.

Changes in Visions

This section addresses the second research question: *How do elementary preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom reading instruction develop over the course of one semester?* After comparing the preservice teachers' initial and final vision statements, many of the initial emerging visions remained in the emerging phase when compared to the final vision statements, while some progressed to the developing phase. None of the visions that were initially in the developing phase remained in that phase, but they progressed to advancing. And, two were found to remain consistent by starting and ending in the advancing phase. Table 6 illustrates the changes found in some of the visions, as well as the consistencies found in others.

Table 6. Changes in Preservice Teachers' Visions

Remained Emerging	Emerging to Developing	Remained Developing	Developing to Advancing	Remained Advancing
Emily Renee David Eva Isaac Lauren Rebecca Christine Cathy Amanda Jessica Tammy Angie Bella Izzy Valerie Gillian Corinne Phyllis Jill Linda	Michelle Terri Maggie Marnie Hannah Allison Mary Betty		Luciana Lilly Whitney	Marie Jen
Total = 21	Total = 8	Total = 0	Total = 3	Total = 2

Because I did not include a category labeled “pre-emerging,” the preservice teachers whose visions were considered “emerging” either consistently remained in this category, or they were not quite “emerging” in their initial vision statements. The visions also indicated that none of the preservice teachers started as “developing” and remained in this category. Next, a few examples are provided to describe the changes in the “emerging” to “developing” visions, the “developing to advancing” statements, and the visions that were consistently “advancing.”

To start, the preservice teachers with “developing” visions in their final vision statements were all “emerging” in their initial statements at the beginning of the semester. These findings show significant development over the course of the semester toward a deeper “funds of knowledge” perspective and that they initially did not see families as possessing valuable resources to foster the literacy development of their children. I used the Funds of Knowledge Rubric that I developed (found in Chapter 3) to analyze these changes. One key example of change was found in Mary’s vision statements. In her first statement, she wrote, “I will encourage parents to read with their children at night as much as possible and encourage my students to check out their local and school library to get access to a variety of books that are offered there.” Mary’s first vision focuses on books being the primary route to enhance literacy skills and that it is her role as a teacher to encourage parents to read to their children. In her first vision statement, she did not convey that she envisioned families as having rich and diverse literacy practices that she was interested in learning about. In contrast to this focus, Mary writes in her vision statement on the final day of class that she “will try to reach out and get to know my students’ parents and families the first week of school [and she] will try to meet with each students’ parents so [she] can ask them about their hopes for their child and how they teach literacy at home.” In her second vision statement, we see that Mary envisioned learning more about families, including their hopes and dreams for their children as well as their home literacy practices. Her vision that was initially categorized as “emerging” was moved to “developing” because she showed evidence of wanting to learn more about family literacy practices indicating that she viewed families as having rich literacy assets. Because she did not include that she envisioned using those to drive or guide her

classroom reading instruction, her vision was not categorized as changing to the “advancing” phase of the continuum. The key changes in these two statements demonstrate a change in Mary’s vision for how she views families and that she sees them as having literacy assets to recognize.

Another striking example of change was found in Michelle’s vision statements. In her initial vision, Michelle wrote the following in the role of family dimension: “Holding the community accountable; having students write [in their agendas] to read each day for 30 minutes in their agenda and having their parents sign. Letting students take classroom books home. Quarterly school book logs. All of these factors hold everyone accountable to encourage students’ reading development.” Her first statement shows a view that the teacher needs to hold families accountable for reading with their children, and further it did not include a vision of her seeing families as having valuable literacy resources. Her second vision, however, exhibited a drastic change in her perspective. She wrote, “I want [my classroom literacy environment] to be open and fun and encouraging. I want to tie in other cultures and bring in parents and community members. I want parents, family members, and community members to be a part of our classroom. Bringing in people to share books and traditions.” Michelle shifted from a vision of holding parents and families accountable through book logs to a vision of seeing families and their cultures as valuable assets. These sentences highlight a vision that sees parents and families as having valuable literacy and cultural assets that can be recognized by the teacher and other students.

In addition to the visions transitioning from “emerging” to “developing,” three preservice teachers’ altered their visions over the course of the semester from

“developing” to “advancing.” In her first vision statement, Luciana wrote, “I envision being as open to parents as possible and hope that speaking Spanish will help me to foster stronger relationships with parents of ELLs especially.” This statement shows that she recognized that families possess various language assets and she wants to build partnerships. In her second vision statement, Luciana stated that she wants to “use [the] funds of knowledge of my students (academically and personally) to drive instruction” and that “parents, family members, and community are the bridge to teaching students new content.” She also included that she needs to use the families’ “knowledge to make connections to my students in order to instruct them on new content.” In Luciana’s final vision statement, not only did she use the phrase funds of knowledge but she also described how she would use that knowledge to make connections for her students to new content. Luciana expanded her vision and illustrated that she deepened her understanding of what “funds of knowledge” mean and that she can articulate how to use those to guide her instruction. The changes from her first vision statement to her last vision statement show a movement from a “developing” vision to an “advancing” vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction.

Finally, to demonstrate visions that were consistently “advancing” toward a vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide classroom reading instruction, I include Jen’s vision statements. Initially, Jen envisioned “sharing resources and knowledge/observations about students between home and school” and building a “partnership between families and teachers to provide consistency in book choices, reading strategies, reflecting/discussing reading, etc. between school and home.” This vision shows a two-way street of not only communication between the family and the

teacher, but also of resources being shared in both directions. This vision represents a view that families have literacy assets to be valued and recognized by the teacher. Jen's second vision statement shows consistency in her vision, she wrote that families and teachers "can support each other to create connection between home and school" and families can provide "resources to gain insight into student backgrounds, cultures, and interests." Jen also included the following diagram to show her vision: home $\leftrightarrow$ teacher. Her statements suggest a consistently "advancing" vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction.

To conclude, the changes and consistencies in these vision statements provide several insights. First, the static nature of the "emerging" visions highlight a potential need to integrate more opportunities to help preservice teachers recognize families as having valuable literacy resources. Second, the eight preservice teachers who initially had "emerging" visions and transitioned to "developing" shows that change can occur in a fairly short period of time and that these preservice teachers were receptive to the activities involving families, various literacy practices, and other cultures. Also, the changes from "developing" to "advancing" suggest that preservice teachers can make the shift from recognizing diverse family literacy practices as resources to also considering ways to use those practices to guide their instruction. The consistencies in the "advancing" visions showed promise that these two teachers would continue to envision families as having resources and will seek out ways to plan their reading instruction with those literacy assets in mind.

In this section, I provided an overview of findings based on my analysis of the vision statements (#1 and #2) and the Venn diagrams using the Funds of Knowledge

Rubric. In the next section, I offer descriptions of what the preservice teachers attributed to changes within each vision phase (i.e., emerging, developing, advancing). The two key assignments that contributed to their vision changes included the ELCAA event and the family member interview. The next section begins with the Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness Association (ELCAA) event.

Transformed Visions Through ELCAA Experience

As described earlier in this chapter, the preservice teachers were asked to attend one ELCAA event and to reflect on their observations and experience. The preservice teachers were asked to attend one of these Saturday events either in September or October as a way to learn about another culture (i.e., Ethiopian culture and the Amharic language) and to observe family literacy practices. After they attended one of the ELCAA events, they were given reflection questions to ponder and to then answer via an online discussion post. The major changes in their visions involved one or more of the following: a) changes in their visions for teaching reading, b) changes in how they envision the role of the teacher and/or the role of the family, or c) changes in the development of viewing families as possessing literacy assets and resources.

Changes in Preservice Teachers with Emerging Visions. Many of the preservice teachers with “emerging” visions expressed in their reflections that the ELCAA event did help to contribute to a vision that sees families as possessing literacy assets. Three of the 21 preservice teachers with “emerging” visions were unable to attend the ELCAA event, thus the changes presented here represent 18 out of the 21 preservice teachers. Seventeen of the 18 preservice teachers expressed in their reflections that the ELCAA event affected their vision for teaching reading. The remaining preservice

teacher indicated that the event supported her existing vision. Excerpts from the ELCAA reflections that represent changes in visions are presented in the following paragraphs.

Highlighting how the ELCAA event affected her vision for teaching, Rebecca wrote the following in her reflection,

I think that my attendance at this event contributed to my vision of teaching reading as a teacher because I saw how important [it] is to connect a child's culture to literature. ... I want my future classroom to be inviting and welcoming [of] all different cultures and backgrounds. This event allowed me to see one way of connecting students' lives to the curriculum (ELCAA Reflection, 11/1/16).

Rebecca also reflected on the literacy practices that she observed that day and how they could guide her classroom reading instruction. She wrote the following,

I think for my classroom it would be important for me to encourage my students' parents to come in to participate in an interactive read aloud with the children or to come in to share their cultures with all of my students. For my own literacy practices, I think it would be very beneficial to introduce culture into my classroom. I could do this by reading engaging and interesting books, interactive websites that read audio books, as well as introduce my students to different dances and games that that culture might play (ELCAA Reflection, 11/1/16).

Here, we read how Rebecca was able to observe certain literacy practices at the ELCAA event and to begin to think of how that new knowledge and understanding could help to guide her own literacy teaching.

Another example of change was found in Tammy's reflection, she wrote,

Attending the ELCAA event really opened my eyes to the beauty of diversity. In regards to teaching reading, I believe that students come to the classroom with a unique literacy background. ... I think this event really allowed me to see that just because a child might struggle with English reading instruction, they may be able to comprehend, speak, and read more than just English. That is something that I know I am not capable of. Pretty amazing! (ELCAA Reflection, 9/25/16).

In addition to changing her vision for teaching reading, Tammy mentioned how the ELCAA event helped to change her thoughts about how reading assessments guide reading instruction. She wrote,

After this experience, my thoughts about reading instruction guided by reading assessments have changed. Just because a child scores lower than required for grade level proficiency does not mean that their literacy development is behind. While I understand that students will be taught in English, I think their language background should also be considered when looking at reading assessments. A low scoring test only gives a label, but doesn't give a clear picture of a student's cultural, language, or literacy background (ELCAA Reflection, 9/25/16).

For Tammy, the ELCAA event helped her to see children's lives outside of the classroom, as well as outside of the lens of a classroom literacy assessment. Although she did not include that she envisions using those specific literacy and language practices

found within families to inform her own teaching and the planning of her instruction, she noted that how she viewed reading assessment had shifted.

Emphasizing a change in her vision of engaging family members, Bella included the following in her reflection,

My experience at the Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness [event] affected my vision of teaching reading because I realized how important it was to engage diverse families in my future classroom. ... My attendance contributed to my vision for teaching reading in regards to both the role of the teacher and the roles of parents / family members because it opened my eyes to see how involved community members can be in school activities. In my future classroom, I think students would really enjoy a parent or family member coming in and doing a read aloud in both English and their native language like it was done at the event (ELCAA Reflection, 11/1/16).

Another example of changes in vision was found in Angie's reflection, she wrote,

My experiences at the ELCAA event widened my vision of teaching reading and engaging diverse families. Oftentimes, teachers don't put enough value on students with diverse backgrounds when it comes to reading. One idea that I had was to choose a different language and culture every week and read at least one book in both English and the chosen language, as well as highlight some vocabulary words. This would give students the opportunity to learn about other languages and cultures while still getting reading instruction. There would also be opportunities for

family members to come in to the classroom to share about their culture. My attendance widened my vision of how teachers, family members, and community members work together in regards to reading instruction” (ELCAA Reflection, 10/30/16).

Further, Jill noted in her reflection how her vision changed, she stated,

I realized how important it is to incorporate students’ backgrounds and cultures into reading. This allows for each individual student to feel a sense of belonging in the classroom. They feel that their culture is just as important as the other cultures. ... Before, I did not really think about the option of adding song and dance into my reading instruction. Now, I think that this was an awesome idea. All of the students seemed to be having the time of their lives when they got the chance to dance and sing to the songs. As I have discussed in previous questions, I think that incorporating song and dance into reading instruction is a great way to have student learn about other cultures or relate to their own culture while having fun (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).

Additionally, Amanda stated the following in her reflection to note the changes in her vision,

My attendance contributed to my vision for teaching reading in regards to the following two dimensions of the role of the teacher and the role of the parents, family, and community members. The role of the teacher is to engage students in multiple forms of text, multiple languages and cultures. ... The role of family members is to continue the education that happens

in school. If your child is an ELL student, then it can only help them to continue the education that they are getting at school (ELCAA Reflection, 10/30/16).

Although Amanda conveys that the event contributed to her vision, it appears as though the experience supported her existing vision of families as supporters of the classroom learning. Similar to Amanda's reflection, Valerie noted that the ELCAA event further supported her existing vision. She wrote, "This supports my vision of bringing culturally relevant books and experiences such as music and videos into the classroom and finding opportunities to engage students in reading through topics/subjects that they are interested in" (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).

The changes in their visions based on their ELCAA experiences demonstrated that observing a family literacy event with a diverse array of literacy practices can help preservice teachers foster and develop their visions. As mentioned before, these findings suggest a foundation for building a vision with a funds of knowledge lens, but they seem to need more preparation and development in the area of being able to observe and identify specific aspects of cultures and on an individual basis for each student. For example, many of the preservice teachers reflected on how they could use the practices (e.g., singing, dancing, reading books in both English and another language, etc.) that they observed at the event in the exact same manner in their future classrooms. Although this is a step in the direction of identifying family literacy practices to guide their reading instruction, it elicits the notion that they have not yet formed visions that would deeply reflect on each student's diverse family literacy practices to guide their instruction on a

consistent, systematic, and regular basis. In the next section, the findings from the reflections from the preservice teachers who had “developing” visions are presented.

Changes in Preservice Teachers with Developing Visions. All of the preservice teachers with “developing” visions expressed in their reflections that the ELCAA event did help to contribute to a vision that sees families as possessing literacy assets. Selections from the ELCAA reflections that represent changes in visions are presented in the following paragraphs.

Demonstrating a change in her vision, Hannah expressed how her observations at the ELCAA affected her vision, she wrote,

After attending the ELCAA event, I was able to better envision teaching reading in my future classroom. This experience highlighted the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy and the idea that children should be exposed to texts that are either windows or mirrors of their own lives (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).

In addition to affecting her vision for teaching, her attendance also altered how she envisions her literacy assessments in her future classroom, Hannah included the following in her reflection,

This event made me realize that different types of assessments need to be used in order to properly assess a student. For instance, an ESL student may perform better on formative than summative assessments because there is a language barrier. Just because a student doesn’t do well on a written test does not mean that the child is failing. One test should not

predetermine whether or not a child will be successful (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).

The changes in Hannah's vision through her observations and experiences at the ELCAA event show that she is thinking about how students are commonly assessed (i.e., written, summative assessments) and she appears to be considering ways that she can tap into students' funds of knowledge through formative assessments.

Another example of vision changes was found in Mary's reflection, she wrote,

This experience definitely gave me the opportunity to see first-hand, a new way to teach reading in my classroom. ... This experience affected my vision for engaging diverse families because I now have an idea of what I should do in order to engage my students' cultures into the classroom. ... I can now certainly see how important it is for the role of the teacher and the role of the family/community members to overlap. Far too often, unfortunately the student's school experiences are very disconnected from their home experiences, which makes it very difficult for students to succeed (ELCAA Reflection, 10/29/16).

In addition to Mary seeing the importance of teachers recognizing home literacy practices to teach students, Mary also commented on how her vision of assessment has changed due to the ELCAA event. She wrote,

After this experience, I definitely have a better understanding of how students can demonstrate their reading ability in different, non-traditional ways. Not all students are able to succeed with traditional standardized reading tests, and these tests are not an accurate representation of a

student's language ability. Since music and storytelling are a huge part of many students' cultures, a great way to assess your students' language ability is by having them show their linguistic strengths by performing a song, or creating a story (ELCAA Reflection, 10/29/16).

Mary's experiences at the ELCAA provided her insight into ways that she could recognize students' strengths and teach reading based on students' backgrounds and cultures. This realization indicates that Mary is starting to view her students through a funds of knowledge lens.

In addition to Hannah and Mary's changes in their visions, Maggie's reflection also demonstrated a transformation in her vision for teaching reading and engaging families, she wrote,

My attendance at this event contributed to my vision for the role of the teacher because I was able to observe how they can foster positive literary experiences for diverse students. During the reading, both the Amharic and English teachers made sure to engage the students by asking them questions about their experiences and how they related to the story which guided connections to their Ethiopian culture. They would point out important information from the text such as key vocabulary words and have the students repeat them in both English and Amharic, strengthening their knowledge and identity within both cultures. They would hold a discussion after each page and allow students to share their thoughts, praising those who participated and further promoting a positive atmosphere during the reading. This event also shaped my vision for the

role of parents, family members, and community members because I noticed the children were much more involved in the experience with the support of their family. I saw several children excitedly turning to their parents when they recognized something in the story, and the parents joined in the singing when they watched a video of Ethiopian music. This emphasized the importance of involving the families in the learning experience because they have as much of a role in shaping student engagement and literacy development as teachers do in the classroom. Inviting parents and family members to participate in these types of literacy events is a great way to share rich experiences, build positive relationships and foster a sense of pride within diverse cultures (ELCAA Reflection, 9/26/16).

Maggie's reflection highlighted how she noticed specific literacy practices that were closely tied to the Ethiopian culture and how they contributed to the identity development of the children for both their Ethiopian identity and their American identity. Maggie also noted that she recognizes the value and rich expertise the parents and families provide to the learning process and how she wants to integrate those experiences in her future classroom.

As a final example of change, Terri's reflection demonstrated how the ELCAA event contributed to her vision for the role of the teacher and the role of families in reading instruction, she included the following in her reflection,

My attendance contributed to my vision for teaching in regards to the role of the teacher because, as a teacher, I can expose students to a variety of

different books that portray different languages, dialects, ethnicities, cultures, etc. These books have the possibility of opening up windows and doors for students that other books, featuring Caucasian, middle-class protagonists, for example, might not. It is in the hands of the teacher to select books that are going to engage students *and* tap into their lives outside of the classroom as well. My attendance contributed to my vision for teaching regarding the role of parents, family members and community members. These people were so involved and so excited to be at the event. This made me realize that parents and family members are so valuable to a child's education and should be invited into the classroom, when it is appropriate, to engage in the learning process alongside their child or siblings (ELCAA Reflection, 10/31/16).

Terri's reflection shows how the ELCAA experience helped her shape her vision for her role as a teacher and how it is her responsibility to ensure a diverse array of texts in the classroom. Further, she came to recognize the important role that families can play and that they provide value to children's literacy development.

The changes in visions presented in this section show that one event that provides the opportunity to observe and experience another culture's family literacy practices can greatly impact how preservice teachers envision their future reading classrooms, the roles that teachers play in reading instruction, and the valuable role that parents and family members can play in contributing to the literacy development of children. In this section, the changes in visions found in the ELCAA reflections from preservice teachers who had

“developing” visions were outlined. In the next section, the findings from the reflections from the preservice teachers who had “advancing” visions are offered.

Changes in Preservice Teachers with Advancing Visions. All of the preservice teachers’ reflections with “advancing” visions specifically discussed ways that the event changed their visions for teaching reading. Quotes from the ELCAA reflections that represent changes in visions are presented in the following paragraphs.

Luciana’s reflection indicated that she thought critically about herself as a teacher and considered ways that she could develop, she wrote,

The Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness event was a very eye-opening experience for me. This event was a great window into a culture that I have little to no knowledge about. In the past I have always considered myself to be a very cultural aware individual. Throughout my time at the College of Education, I have come to learn that I am not as culturally aware as I initially thought. Through a simple interactive read-out-loud, I could observe Amharic, the official language of Ethiopia. This event affected my vision of teaching in a very overwhelming manner to be completely honest. There is a remarkable amount of cultures in our world and it's almost impossible to learn them all but after observing the kids' interactions with this read-out-loud, I furthered realized how crucial it is in a classroom. The level of comfort within the children attending the event was incomparable to how it would be had the interactive read-out-loud been only read in English. The other aspect I observed was the level of comfort within parents. I am not sure if the parents knew each other prior

to this event but it was obvious that they were comfortable being involved as their culture and language were being embraced and welcomed in this event. The parents could participate as they sang songs that were familiar to them. I often notice how shy parents tend to be in events such as Back to School Night, primarily due to the language barrier. It was fascinating to see the parents come out of their shells as they realized that there was a Spanish-speaking teacher in the classroom. I want to be able to provide this level of comfort for students and parents regardless of their language and cultural identity (ELCAA Reflection, 11/1/16).

Luciana's insightful reflection into how she was assessing her own level of cultural awareness showed that she is thinking of ways that she could internally change to become a more open and culturally-knowledgeable teacher of reading. She also demonstrated a level of empathy for parents and families in that she wants her future students' families to feel comfortable in a school setting and she believes she could contribute to that comfort level through her ability to communicate with some parents and family members in Spanish, her native language.

Showing an additional paradigm shift, Marie reflected,

After attending the Ethiopian Literacy Culture Awareness Association event, I realized that there isn't a one shoe fits all approach to teaching reading. The number of differences that occurred while both women read the same book aloud was astonishing. It was obvious that the Ethiopian children were more engaged when a woman from their culture read the story in a way that they could relate to. As our classrooms become more

and more diverse each year, it is important to take these different cultural practices into perspective. ... As a future teacher, I now know that stepping away from the traditional reading pedagogy can have a huge impact on my students, especially those from diverse backgrounds (ELCAA Reflection, 10/30/16).

This statement shows that Marie is willing to envision a reading classroom that may differ from classrooms that she has become accustomed to in her student teaching or even her classrooms from when she was an elementary student. Further, Marie also expressed a vision for balancing the importance of everyone's family literacy practices, she wrote, "I now also know that parents and community members are eager to engage their children in literacy experiences. Even though these literacy experiences don't directly match up with those that white middle class people are used to, they are still meaningful" (ELCAA Reflection, 10/30/16). This statement shows that she does place value on the diverse literacy practices found outside of the mainstream school norms.

Another example of vision change was found in Jen's reflection, she wrote,

My attendance at the event made me think about my role, as a teacher, to help bridge students' outside experiences with their school experiences. I can imagine that school might feel overwhelming or unwelcoming for a student who is used to a totally different language and culture at home, so as a teacher, it is my job to ensure that each student feels that their experiences are acknowledged, valued, and incorporated into instruction whenever possible. Again, I believe that parents, family members, and community members can be great resources to help me do this. Ethiopian

culture, for example, is one that I am not very familiar with and that I might have trouble finding resources to represent in the classroom. In this case, I could reach out to family/community members to inform me and help me find resources for my students (ELCAA Reflection, 10/29/16).

Jen's reflection illustrates that she recognized how she can bridge the home and school environments by learning more about family literacy practices and specific cultures. She noted that she was not familiar with the Ethiopian culture and that she could learn about unfamiliar cultures and family literacy practices by reaching out to families.

Across all 30 reflections, nearly all of the preservice teachers expressed changes in their visions for teaching reading. The majority of them noticed how excited the children at the ELCAA event were to learn about vocabulary words in the Amharic language, to hear stories about Ethiopian culture, and to sing songs and dance to Ethiopian music. In addition to wanting engaging classrooms, many of the preservice teachers discussed the benefits of bringing in books and texts to share and celebrate students' cultures. Also, many of the preservice teachers presented the perspective that parents and families can play a key role in helping their children to learn and to read.

Although many of the preservice teachers' ELCAA reflections had common themes across all 30 of them, I noticed a key theme in each group indicating interesting differences between each of them. For example, the preservice teachers with "emerging" visions tended to reflect more on how bringing in children's culture could benefit aspects of classroom management and motivate students to learn literacy within the classroom. The ELCAA event illuminated various ideas and strategies that teachers could use to make their classrooms more engaging. While this shift in their visions is important, this

theme supports the finding that they have a basic understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy that could be expounded upon and developed further.

The preservice teachers with “developing” visions focused less on aspects of the reading classroom and more on the identities of the students. This shift illustrates that these preservice teachers see the importance of coming to understand each individual student and helping them grow and develop their own identities. Although this focus on students and their identities illustrates a significant shift in their visions, this group did not emphasize the family unit as much as they emphasized the individual student. Their visions could be further developed and expanded to also consider the family and their role in helping to shape each students’ identity as well as their literacy development.

And, the preservice teachers with “advancing” visions discussed how the event changed their way of thinking or altered their paradigms for how they view teaching. This group of preservice teachers either expanded upon their existing visions to identify that their experience at the ELCAA event helped to change how they envision teaching reading, or they built on the strong foundation of their existing visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The nuances found in each group can help to identify the areas to hone in on for preservice teachers to continue to move toward visions of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. In this section, how the preservice teachers’ visions changed based on the findings from the ELCAA reflections were presented. In the following section, the vision transformations due to the family member interview experience are offered and discussed.

Altered Visions Through Family Member Interview Assignment

The preservice teachers in EDUC 404 were asked to interview a family member of one of their students from their student-teaching placement. Similar to the ELCAA reflections, I present the family member interview reflections within each of the vision groups (e.g., emerging, developing, advancing). Many of the preservice teachers identified the following changes in their visions based on the family member interview project: a) changes in their development to recognize and identify specific family literacy practices as assets, b) changes in how they envision learning about diverse family literacy practices, or c) changes in their visions for teaching reading. In the next three sections, the vision changes found within each group are presented. The family member interview reflections section concludes with an overview of similarities and differences from the 34 preservice teachers' family member interview reflections as a whole.

Changes in Preservice Teachers with Emerging Visions. The findings from the family member interview reflections echo the findings from the ELCAA reflections in that the majority of the preservice teachers with “emerging” visions indicated that they were developing a vision for identifying diverse family literacy practices with many of them conveying ideas for using those practices in their classroom reading instruction. However, many of the thoughts and ideas found in their reflections did not shine through or show up in their final vision statements.

After analyzing the 21 preservice teachers' reflections within the “emerging” visions category, changes in their visions were found among them. First, nearly all of the preservice teachers wrote that the family member interview greatly impacted and changed their vision for teaching reading. Second, the family member interview allowed

for significant learning opportunities for the preservice teachers with many of them indicating that they gained more insight into the home literacy practices or made them think about the importance of not making assumptions about students and their families.

From the family member interview reflections, seventeen of the preservice teachers in the emerging visions category expressed that the interview changed their visions for teaching reading. Out of the seventeen preservice teachers who indicated that the interview helped to change their visions, Cathy's reflection resonated a significant change in her vision. She described the following:

I grew up in a predominately White community going to a predominately White school. I always thought I would go back to where I grew up on Long Island to teach, but the reality that first year teachers aren't hired there has really sunk in and has made me realize that I need to broaden my horizons when it comes to cultures. After taking all of the classes this semester, going to the ELCAA event, and being in an especially diverse classroom, my vision of teaching has changed tremendously. After this semester, I don't even know if I want to go back to my hometown to teach because it seems so sheltered when compared to the rest of the world (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Cathy's reflection is striking because her vision changed to the point of reconsidering where she wants to teach when she completes her teacher education program. The combined experiences of her 2016 semester have played a significant role in how she envisions teaching reading and where she pictures herself teaching.

Another illustration of a change in vision was found in Emily's reflection. She noted that the family member interview "broadened [her] vision of literacy because [she] sees that it goes far beyond learning to read and write in English" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). In addition to Cathy and Emily's reflections, Tammy noted how the family member interview assignment changed her view of literacy data and how it factors into her instruction. She wrote, "Prior to this interview, I thought that data, like running records, from previous academic years would provide information about a student's literacy development. The family member interview allows a teacher to gain information about the supports students receive outside of school regarding their literacy development" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Tammy's reflection shows how she is coming to view assessment from a different perspective based on her experience interviewing a family member. These excerpts illustrate the various ways the preservice teachers' visions changed due to the family member interview assignment.

Next, the preservice teachers in the "emerging" visions category described that they learned more about the family's home literacy practices and the power of not making assumptions. Carinne's reflection aligns with this theme, she wrote,

From this experience, I learned that you truly never know what a child's home life [is like]. I have been working with David for 3 months now, and have never heard him say a sentence in Spanish. I also never knew that religion was such an important part of his family's life. This shows me the importance of getting to know a student's family (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Adding to this theme, Eva expressed the following:

Something that really sticks out to me about their family literacy practices that I can incorporate in the classroom is teaching students everything that counts as literacy. This mom pointed out that one way that they incorporate literacy is by reading street signs...I think showing students the ways that they can incorporate literacy beyond reading a book can open their eyes to try different things (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

An additional example highlighting what the preservice teachers learned is David's reflection. He wrote, "Having the conversation with Mia's mother at parent conferences really opened up my eyes to the fact that you cannot make assumptions about any student in my class" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). He went on to write, "The information gathered could help me with planning of texts to use in instruction throughout the school year. These could be based on the heritage, interests, or reading habits of the students in my class" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Adding to these illustrations, Cathy wrote, "After speaking with Mr. Le, I learned that Eric is so proud of being Vietnamese. I would have never known this in the classroom because he was never given the opportunity in class to speak about his own culture" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). A final illustration includes Jessica's experience with the family member interview assignment. She wrote, "From this experience, I learned a lot not only about my students, but also about things that may be going on at home that we as teachers do not even know about. For instance, I had no

idea that Ailsa’s parents had recently lost their jobs and were looking for new ones” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). These selections from some of the preservice teachers’ reflections demonstrate the findings of what the preservice teachers learned throughout this exercise of interviewing a family member. Some of the preservice teachers recognized the importance of not making assumptions, while others learned about specific literacy practices naturally taking place in the home. These suggest that the family member interview provided an impactful learning opportunity and that it helped to contribute to the shaping of their visions.

The final theme found in the reflections involved the ways the preservice teachers envisioned learning about and engaging diverse families in their future classrooms. In order to learn about the diverse family literacy practices, many of the preservice teachers cited that they plan to send home surveys/questionnaires to learn more about families or that they intend to have conversations with parents and family members to build relationships and to learn more about the family. One example of this was found in David’s reflection, he wrote, “In my future classroom, I would like to have more open conversations about literacy with students and parents at the beginning of the school year” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Allowing for open dialogue and comfortable conversations can create opportunities to build relationships among families and teachers—something that many of the preservice teachers recognized as a vital avenue to learn about and engage families in literacy. Jessica’s reflection points to this theme of providing more opportunities for dialogue. She wrote, “After this interview, I want to have more of a connection with my students’ families if that is possible. I want to invite them into the classroom and talk to them often. I want to be able to sit down with

them at the beginning of the year to try and understand what their culture is like, what goals they may have for their child, and get to know their family background” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

A final example of this theme was found in Valerie’s reflection. She wrote,

I have thought that sending out weekly letters and communicating with families on a regular basis was already engaging them, but I see how much more room there is to create opportunities for involvement. I’d like to reach out to my students’ families personally to learn about their literacy practices at home and work with them to develop new ideas of ways they can continue to support their child at home and I when they are at school (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

These quotes highlight the preservice teachers’ views of how important it is to learn about families through surveys and/or to have comfortable and insightful conversations on a regular basis. Most of the reflections from the preservice teachers who had “emerging” visions demonstrated a positive, asset-focused view of families and that they were growing towards visions of identifying and using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom reading instruction. In the next section, I include parts of some of the preservice teachers’ reflections that show views of school being the prime, or only, location for literacy learning and that families should support the work of the teacher.

Although these four themes indicate that the majority of the preservice teachers with “emerging” visions are moving in the direction of developing a vision for recognizing and using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading

instruction, some of these preservice teachers seemed to reflect from the view that resources, communication, and guidance should come from the teacher and that school is the main location for literacy learning to occur. For example, Phyllis wrote in her reflection, “I will keep in contact with my parents through weekly emails and weekly phone conversations about their child” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). In another part of her reflection, Phyllis went on to write, “This really encouraged me to get to know my students and to communicate with parents and offer how to work on literacy” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Her reflection demonstrates a vision that it is a teacher’s responsibility to inform parents and family members what goes on at school and to help the family work on literacy skills based on their areas of need. This does not represent a view that families have literacy resources that are naturally occurring in the home that teachers can come to learn more about. Another example of this was found in Amanda’s reflection, she wrote, “In my future classroom, I would love to send newsletters home to parents so that they can know what the current objectives are. If a student is struggling to find the main idea of a passage, the parents should be able to look at the newsletter and know how I taught the students to find the main idea” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Amanda’s reflection included hints of a perspective that recognized family literacy practices as assets, but her overall reflection seemed to stem from the view that parents and families can support the work of the teacher and the learning that takes place at school. Another example includes Rebecca’s reflection, she wrote, “Communicating with parents from the classroom should include the following: Emails, synopses of classroom work that reinforces what teachers are doing in the classroom so it can be reinforced at home, [and] showing parents how to

teach new material that parents are unfamiliar with” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). A final example of a preservice teacher who was more inclined to see school as the primary location for literacy learning includes Gillian’s reflection. She interviewed a sister of one of her students and indicated that the girls speak Spanish at home with their parents, but they speak in English with each other and at school. She reflected on how important it is for the girls’ parents to learn English and to obtain “ideas on how to support their child[ren].” She went on to write, “This interview really helped me to learn more about my student and how she is doing at home with literacy. It made me realize that for her, practicing at home is only doing so much, she is learning more at school and benefitting when she is in the classroom than when she is at home” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Gillian is noting the language differences and how the girls are less likely to practice speaking English at home than at school; however, her reflection highlights a possible view that literacy can only be developed in English. Her reflection aligns with what some of the other preservice teachers included in their family member interview reflections—that learning about families and their backgrounds can help teachers identify what resources need to be sent home, the topics for communication, or how the teacher can teach the parents or family members.

Overall, the themes found in the family member interview reflections from the preservice teachers with “emerging” visions showed promising developments in their visions. It seemed as though the family member interview was a significantly helpful exercise in changing their visions for teaching reading and expanding how they perceived families, areas of diversity, and literacy. It is interesting to note that the preservice mentioned how the ELCAA and the family member interview assignments affected their

visions, and that they provided evidence that they recognized the literacy resources found in families; yet they did not include the changes and developments in their final vision statements. It is also important to note that some of the preservice teachers continued to portray a view that families should support the work of the teacher and to reinforce the learning that takes place at school. This view surfaced in the final vision statements for many of the preservice teachers whose visions were categorized as “emerging.” In the next section, changes in the preservice teachers with “developing” visions are described.

Changes in Preservice Teachers with Developing Visions. After analyzing the eight preservice teachers’ reflections within the “developing” visions category, three key areas of change were evident: 1) all of the preservice teachers indicated that the family member interview significantly impacted and changed their vision for teaching reading; 2) the family member interview provided key learning opportunities for the preservice teachers with many of them noting that they gained more insight into the home literacy practices which made them think of several ways to integrate those practices into their classroom reading instruction; and 3) the interview experience allowed the preservice teachers to consider the families’ hopes and dreams for their children, as well as ways to create open and consistent communication between the teacher and the family.

A key theme to stem from the data was that all eight of the preservice teachers reported that the exercise of interviewing a family member drastically changed their vision for teaching reading, and they were quite descriptive about how their visions changed. For instance, Terri began her reflection by stating the following, “I can truthfully say that I found this family interview to be an incredibly informative, eye

opening and inspiring experience for me” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Later in her reflection she went on to describe her vision changes further:

This interview did change my vision for how I will learn about my students’ family literacy practices. This interview was so beneficial for me, even just as an intern, because I really got to learn and understand how literacy is viewed and incorporated into [his] life outside of the classroom. I can now use this knowledge to inform the decisions that I make in the classroom, with regards to [his] reading and writing (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Terri’s reflection showed her excitement to learn about her student’s family and his home life because she wanted to use that knowledge to inform her decisions in the classroom. Adding to this theme of vision changes, Mary described how she made connections between what she learned at the ELCAA event and what she learned through the family member interview. She noted how the storytelling that she observed at the ELCAA was similar to how the family member she interviewed shares stories. She wrote,

I think that the ELCAA event did change my vision of teaching literacy because it made me more aware of the importance of the passing down of culture in families, especially when it comes to storytelling. I was really happy to hear that [his mom] occasionally reads books to them in Spanish. She said that many of these books are from her home country that she remembers being read when she was a child. I think that this is a really great way to pass down her Guatemalan culture to her children. She talked about how she occasionally shares stories with them about her upbringing

in Guatemala, but then commented on how she would like to do this more often with her children because they really like hearing about her childhood (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Mary demonstrated her ability to synthesize our class exercises (e.g., ELCAA and family member interview) to find common themes among them and to build and develop her vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction.

In her reflection, Maggie also described how the family member interview changed her vision. She wrote, “The family member interview further shaped my vision of teaching literacy. Through this experience in learning about a diverse family, I realized that students are most engaged in reading and writing about topics that they find interesting and can connect to their experiences” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). She noticed the increased level of engagement when a teacher brings students’ lives into the classroom. She went on to reflect on the following:

This made me realize that students should be provided with opportunities to bring knowledge about themselves, their families, and their interests into literacy activities. This makes writing relevant to their lives, develops self-confidence and identity, and promotes a culturally responsive learning environment where students from diverse backgrounds can feel comfortable sharing reading and writing experiences (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

From this second excerpt, Maggie notes the importance of students being able to build their identities both at home and at school and that it is her responsibility to ensure that her students have the opportunities to do that in her classroom.

Adding a concluding example, Michelle mentioned that her vision changed by seeing the importance of “relating school to the real world.” She noted how the father she interviewed was “very straightforward with his daughter” and how “he sets an example by working hard both at his job and also at getting his degree.” Michelle went on to write, “I really think that his great example and work ethic are responsible for [her] success in school. This interview showed me what a powerful tool setting an example is” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). What Michelle seemed to take away from the interview was a level of respect for her student’s father and his significance in her life as a role model. These examples together illustrate how a short, casual interview with one family member can contribute to vision development and to help preservice teachers shift their paradigms and expand their visions.

Another theme to appear in the reflections is that this group of preservice teachers gained deep insight into the family literacy practices of their students and described ways that they could integrate those practices into their classroom reading instruction. Hannah explicitly expressed what she learned from the interview and how she could use that knowledge and information to guide her instruction. She wrote,

When I interviewed [his mom], I felt like I really got to know [him]. For instance, I learned that on weekends he visits his grandparents and goes grocery shopping with his family where he practices reading signs and things around him. Upon learning about this, the next time I saw [him] I

asked about his weekend and if he saw his grandparents and before I could finish my sentence he immediately began to excitedly tell me about everything he did with his grandparents at their house and how he had mofongo (a mashed plantain dish) for dinner with them. This interview really showed me the importance of relevant context for students.

Relevant context from my observations can in fact provided intrinsic motivation for the learner to value literacy in order to communicate and share about their lives and to learn or make connections to other people in texts that are read (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Hannah's vision seemed to expand over the course of this assignment to further consider and identify families' literacy practices and to think about ways to incorporate them into her classroom. At a later point in her reflection, Hannah provides an example of how her student's mother gave her insight into helping him in the classroom. Hannah described her student as having a speech impediment and how she was interested in learning about ways to help him at school. She wrote,

I also learned some strategies about how to support [him] when it comes to instruction. For instance, [he] has a tendency to rush when he speaks to the extent that sometimes what he says cannot be understood. [His mom] taught me how to nonverbally tell him to slow down by basically using my four fingers as a brush onto my other palm. This signals [him] to speak slower and to breathe instead of saying everything in one big breath as a result of overexcitement. This kind of nonverbal communication has helped me immensely in the classroom, and as a result I think it is very

important to engage families to better get to know each individual student in my future classroom (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

These two excerpts from Hannah's reflection show how she specifically acknowledged her student's culture and unique needs and explored ways to integrate his culture and address his needs by learning more from his mom.

Similar to Hannah's reflection, Betty stated the areas of growth and learning for her through the family member interview. She wrote, "Parents can bring their own literacy practices into the classroom. I learned that her child enjoys making cartoons to illustrate and label. I can use this knowledge when planning literacy activities for this particular child" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Further, Maggie pointed out how cultural literacy practices are rarely used in the school curriculum. She included in her reflection, "Building a bridge between home and school is the most effective way to support culturally diverse students in their literacy development. Another thing I learned is that students bring rich cultural and language experiences with them into the classroom, but these are unfortunately rarely integrated into the curriculum" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). The family member interview helped her to see the importance of using diverse family literacy practices to guide her reading instruction. She also expressed how she would ensure that her students' cultures were integrated into her instruction:

To address this in my future instruction, I will strive to understand the individual differences of each student's unique culture and incorporate diverse literature experiences into the curriculum that include both their home languages but also reflect their real life experiences. Literacy

instruction that integrates cultural values provides students with authentic learning conditions that develop positive attitudes towards both their own culture and those of their peers (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Maggie's reflections indicate that she is advancing toward a vision of using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction; however, it is interesting that she did not include this level of specificity or evidence of an "advancing" vision in her final vision statement. Across all of these preservice teachers' reflections, nearly all of them indicated that they learned more about particular family literacy practices and unique aspects within the family and that they would use this knowledge to plan their literacy instruction.

As a final theme of change, the preservice teachers cited ways that they envision that they could learn about and engage families in their future classrooms, including having open and consistent communication and learning about the hopes, dreams, and goals within the family. A key theme found within these eight preservice teachers' reflections was a focus on the hopes, dreams, and goals of the families and how open and consistent communication was how they envision learning about and engaging families. Mary mentioned that she envisions asking questions of parents during the parent-teaching conferences. She cited that the interview helped her see the importance of understanding "your students' individual backgrounds and home literacy practices" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). She also reflected the following, "I noticed that many of the questions that we had to ask in our interview could be quickly asked during a parent-teacher conferences. For example, simply asking each parent what hopes they have for

their child would be a really great way to connect with parents” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). From the interview process, Mary found that her student’s mother expected much from her son. She wrote, “Since she had worked so hard in school to achieve all that she has, I think she has very high expectations for her sons as well” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Mary’s reflection quotes highlight parts of her vision that show that she wants to learn about the parents and families hopes for their children. In addition to Mary’s reflection, Betty pointed out that the mother she interviewed “feels that literacy is essential to be successful in school and beyond” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Like Mary, Hannah noted how parent-teacher conferences can be used more effectively. She wrote, “I feel that parent conference time should be taken advantage of. If time permits, I would like to have a casual interview like I did with [my student’s] family to better get to know my student and their family” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Mary and Hannah both demonstrated visions of having open communication with parents and families to learn more about them, including their hopes for their children. Additionally, Allison noted in her reflection how the mother she interviewed wanted her children to be bilingual and how that was a goal she had for her children. Allison wrote, “She [the mother] said that her ultimate goal for [her daughter] and her son is for them to be really strong in both Spanish and English. This is a great advantage that this family has because both parents are strong in Spanish and English, which can help the children do the same” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). The mother went on to add how “being bilingual is a beneficial skill to have in such a diverse world” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). The excerpts from

Betty and Allison's reflection show how important literacy and language skills are to families and how those were striking aspects they gleaned from the interviews.

In addition to seeking out the hopes and goals of families for the preservice teachers' students, two other preservice teachers focused in on the dreams and career aspirations the family members had for their children. Michelle discussed the high expectations the father she interviewed had for his daughter and how she learned to show respect to him in their interactions. She wrote, "I learned that one of the best strategies in engaging parents in a productive conversation is complementing their student. I also complemented him several times throughout the interview on what a wonderful example he sets for his daughter." She went on to share, "I also gained insight into some of the pressures that my students might feel at home. Most of them are children of immigrants, or immigrants themselves. There is an enormous pressure to achieve the American Dream." Michelle highlights how her new understanding of the importance of open, respectful communication with parents and family members has contributed to the shaping of her vision. I believe this is a powerful example of how conversations and discussions can act as significant learning opportunities and can help to change preservice teachers' visions. As a final example, Terri's reflection illustrated a powerful realization of how much the mother she interviewed wanted her son to be successful and how literacy skills play a critical role in finding that success. Terri wrote,

Together, we talked about her hopes for [him]. It was really touching to hear her response. She said that she wants [him] to be able to go to college and be successful in his life and in order to do this; he needs to be able to read and write. She said, 'He doesn't have to be a doctor, or a lawyer, or a

scientist, but my hope for him is that he can be something that he is proud of.' I certainly agree with her vision related to the importance of teaching literacy—in order for our children to be successful in their future endeavors, it is so, incredibly important that they are literate (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Terri points out how powerful it was for her to learn about his mother's hopes and dreams for him and how this helped to solidify the importance of getting to know families and to understand their visions for their children's futures. Terri concludes this section of her reflection by stating, "I want my future students to be able to achieve their hopes and dreams, like I have been lucky enough to do, and creating a literacy-rich class environment would certainly be a way of guide students toward their desired futures." For Terri, it is important for her to know the hopes and dreams of her students, as well as the families' goals for them, so she can provide a classroom based around the literacy skills they need to find success in their future endeavors. The reflection quotes in this final section show the importance of having open and consistent communication with parents and families and how these preservice teachers in this group noticed how importance of the families' hopes, dreams, and goals for their children.

In this section, I presented the vision changes and developments found in the family member interview reflections of the preservice teachers with "developing" visions. First, all of the preservice teachers indicated that the family member interview significantly impacted and changed their vision for teaching reading. Also, the family member interview provided key learning opportunities for the preservice teachers with many of them noting that they gained more insight into the home literacy practices which

made them think of several ways to integrate those practices into their classroom reading instruction.

To compare and contrast the group of preservice teachers with “emerging” visions to the group of preservice teachers with “developing” visions, overall, both groups expressed similar reasons for why they chose their family member to interview which was that they wanted to learn more about their diverse backgrounds and/or gain a deeper understanding of their home literacy practices. Another parallel included the majority of both groups noting that they learned more about specific literacy practices found within the family they interviewed. Although most of the preservice teachers in the “emerging” visions category reflected on how the family member interview changed their vision, three of the preservice teachers in this group stated that it did not alter their vision. Whereas, all of the eight preservice teachers in the “developing” visions category expressed with great detail the powerful nature of the interview and how it significantly contributed to the shaping of their visions. Next, another contrast between the two groups of preservice teachers involved their explanations of what they would do with the knowledge of diverse family literacy practices in their future classrooms. The preservice teachers who had “developing” visions were incredibly specific in the ways that they could integrate that knowledge into the classroom, with many of them providing explicit examples of how they would use the knowledge gained from their interview within their current student-teaching placements. Perhaps the most striking contrast between the two groups of preservice teachers was found in the ways that they plan to engage families in their future classrooms. Many of the preservice teachers with “emerging” visions cited surveys/questionnaires or some level of conversation to learn more about families so that

they could find the best literacy resources to send home to help them support the learning that takes places in school. However, most of the preservice teachers with “developing” visions thoroughly discussed how they envision open, consistent communication through conversations with parents as the primary way that they would like to engage and to learn about families. This group of preservice teachers also pointed out how they would like to learn about the goals, hopes, and dreams the family has for the student and also that the student has for himself or herself in the future. This finding speaks back to the ELCAA reflections and how the preservice teachers with “developing” visions emphasized the importance of helping students develop their identity and how culture and family backgrounds can play an important role in the development of that identity. Careers and future endeavors can become a key part of one’s identity and it seems as though the preservice teachers with “developing” visions tend to focus more on the students and how teachers can bring out the best in them by integrating their lives and family literacy practices into the reading classroom. Throughout the written assignments of the preservice teachers with “emerging” visions, a common thread of focusing on the classroom learning, how parents and families can support the work of the teacher, and how families need to be given resources from the teacher to support home literacy learning seems to run consistently across their vision statements, ELCAA reflections, and their family member interview reflections. I discuss these findings and the implications of these findings further in Chapter 6. In the next section, I present the findings from the family member interview reflections written by the preservice teachers who had “advancing” visions.

Changes and Consistencies in Preservice Teachers with Advancing Visions.

Across the five preservice teachers' reflections, both changes and consistencies in their visions were evident. One key theme from the reflections was that most of these five preservice teachers conveyed that the family member interview did not change their visions. At first, this was a surprising finding; however, if these preservice teachers were already "advancing" or "developing" in their visions, then this finding speaks to the consistent, grounded nature of their visions. Also, many of them chose a family member who was similar or resonated with their background (i.e., Luciana and Marie), so it is not all that surprising that they indicated that the interview did not significantly alter their visions. To illustrate this finding, I include several quotes from their reflections. Marie noted, "The family member interview didn't change my vision of teaching literacy because the mother I interviewed had very similar views on literacy that my mother had when I was growing up. I think that if I interviewed a different family or family member, my view might have been changed" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Whitney mentioned, "This experience did not change any of my views necessarily, however, I want to spend a lot of time engaging families in literacy practices. I realized that I want a strong home-school connection and that I will find ways to get parents involved in different homework and bringing families into the classroom to teach about culture" (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Like Marie and Whitney, Luciana's reflection echoed their thoughts, she wrote, "Although I really enjoyed the family interview, it was not as eye-opening as I hoped. [Her] family's experiences proved to be more of a mirror for me than a window into a new culture. [Her] family's culture and idea of literacy is as unique as any family's but it was not as different and eye-

opening as observing Ethiopian culture” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). These three preservice teachers’ reflections on their unchanging visions after experiencing the family member interview suggest a steadfast nature to their existing visions. Their vision statements and their written assignments about their visions have consistently shown evidence of a vision with a “funds of knowledge” lens. An argument could be made, however, that they were not as open to the family member interview experience as the ELCAA event. But, their reflections clearly convey the reasons for why they did not think the family member interview helped to change their visions for teaching reading and using diverse family literacy practices to guide their reading instruction.

In contrast to Marie, Luciana, and Whitney, Jen and Lilly both reported that the family member interview played a role in developing their visions for teaching reading. Jen reflected on the following:

The interview also made me want to engage with families and community members as part of my regular instructional practice for literacy. I used to envision myself as a resource for helping families practice literacy at home, and while I do still see myself doing this, I also now see families as great resources to help me incorporate culturally relevant literacy practices into my classroom. Families like [my student’s family], as well as families from a variety of other cultures and backgrounds, may have experiences and ideas about literacy that are different than those that I used in my classroom. I now see it as my job to help bridge this gap by sharing

literacy practices with families as a two-way partnership (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

This excerpt from Jen's reflection shows a powerful transformation from how she formerly viewed her role as a teacher and her interaction with families to now seeing those in a different light.

As another example of this change, Lilly reflected on the following:

This interview also changed my vision on literacy. Although these students participate in literacy activities at home, they really depend on instruction in school in order to improve their literacy skills. Sometimes, parents are not able to assist their children as much as they would like to, due to a language barrier. Because of this, they become incredibly dependent on learning Standard English at school. However, the students discussed in this interview are exposed to literacy at home. For the most part, it is Spanish, but they are also exposed to some English literacy aspects. Because of this, as a teacher, I will have to consider what happens at home in order to differentiate and contribute to the literacy practices at home! I believe the ELCAA event was able to change my vision drastically, but this interview also helped put things into perspective (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

The idea of Lilly being able to "put things into perspective" from her family member interview experience shows how she was able to shape and develop her vision toward using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. The two preservice teachers who reported vision changes provided strong details and

description for how their visions changed. Further, the three preservice teachers who reported no vision changes also provided a strong rationale for why their visions did not change.

Another theme that stemmed from the reflections involved what the five preservice teachers learned from this experience of interviewing a family member. Most of them mentioned how they learned about the importance of a certain phenomenon, such as the importance of communication with parents and families or the importance of meaningful instruction. For example, Jen noted the importance of students having role models and the importance of providing meaningful instruction for her students. She wrote,

Another important thing I learned from talking with [my student's] sister is how important it is for children to have positive role models when it comes to reading motivation. When I asked about [my student's] attitude toward reading and where it comes from, her sister told me that she loves to read, and that this is probably because their parents and grandparents love to read. [My student's] sister also told me that she herself loves to read, and I know that [my student] really looks up to her, so I can see how this could affect her attitude and motivation (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Jen went on to describe how she learned how her reading instruction should be meaningful and purposeful. She reflected,

From this experience, I learned that literacy should have a purpose for students and be meaningful to their lives. I began to consider this after

asking [my student's] sister about the reading and writing activities her family participates in at home. At first, she talked about reading before bed, writing for homework, and other activities that I would expect a student to engage in. However, she also mentioned a few examples that I might not have considered, such as reading cookbooks, writing thank you letters, and writing songs. These activities have purposes other than just to practice reading and writing; they are involved in doing other things that [my student] enjoys. This is an idea I would like to incorporate into my classroom, to help students see the importance of literacy and how it is woven into so many aspects of our lives (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Jen's descriptions of what she learned and took away from her interview with her student's sister shows evidence that she is advancing her vision of using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. In a similar fashion to Jen, Lilly also pointed to how she learned about the importance of providing meaningful literacy instruction. She included in her reflection,

From this experience, I was able to learn about the importance of literacy implementation in school. Although these students practiced literacy at home, this may not always be the case. These students do the best they can at home, but with parents who are not fluent in English, they have difficulty helping them improve their English literacy. However, their Spanish literacy improves because they are constantly exposed to the

language. I can use this by incorporating other languages into my literacy instruction (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Lilly's reflection quote shows that she is build her vision of understanding and recognizing diverse literacy and language practices found within the families of her students to then consider ways to implement those practices or strategies into the reading classroom. In addition to Jen and Lilly, Marie mentioned that she learned about the importance of consistent and open communication with families. She wrote,

This interview made me reconsider how I intend to engage families in literacy once I have my own classroom. This interview made me realize how important communication is to families. While interviewing this family member, I realized how little communication there is between the teachers in my grade and the families. There is an occasional newsletter sent home but it is often outdated and only in English (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

Marie's observations of the lack of communication between the teachers in her student-teaching placement and the school's families indicate that open teacher-family communication is important to her. In addition to these examples, Luciana indicated that she learned about the importance of learning how literacy connects to students' futures. She cited that from this interview she learned "that it is important to always address why literacy is important for [her] students' future. [My student's mother] wants [her daughter] to be successful in this new society so now I know to use this as motivation when teacher [her]." Lastly, Whitney, who interviewed a sibling, quoted Vygotsky's (1978) work who argued that literacy should be taught in a meaningful and authentic

way. Whitney emphasized the importance of his work and to “consider [it] when constructing reading instruction.” Further, she wrote, “My biggest takeaway from the student interview is how important it is to make instruction meaningful in a way that reflects my students’ culture and community.” These examples illustrate how all five of the preservice teachers with “advancing” visions honed in on specific elements that they deemed important and made connections to these aspects and their visions for teaching reading.

To conclude, the reported changes in the preservice teachers’ visions for teaching reading due to the family member interview assignment were different across the groups. In the “emerging” visions group, 18 out of the 21 indicated that the interview altered their visions. The three preservice teachers who mentioned that it did not help to shape their visions seemed to lack a level of openness. For example, Gillian wrote, “The interview did not impact my way of teaching literacy by a lot, but it did support the ELCAA event—hearing the way students prefer to learn definitely guided my ideas on how to teach it from what I have previously seen” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). The most striking part of Gillian’s reflection was that she did not actually attend the ELCAA event, she was one of the preservice teachers who completed an alternate assignment of watching a video recording of the event on the ELCAA’s website. Another example of this was found in Isaac’s reflection. He said that the family member interview did not change his views about literacy because he has had much experience visiting Israel and working with Ethiopian people. He wrote, “A significant portion of my time spent in Israel (I return roughly once a year to my birth land) has been with Ethiopian people; I have learned valuable amounts of information about their culture and heritage.”

He also cited how he has worked in schools before starting his teacher education program and he had “extensive experience communicating with parents” (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16). Gillian and Isaac’s reflections seem to show a static vision that they may regard as “developing” or “advancing” even though their vision statements show evidence of an “emerging” vision. Their reported lack of change in their visions from the family member interview highlight the challenge of continuing to shape visions if the preservice teachers think they have already arrived at a more developed vision. But, it is important to note that the majority of the preservice teachers who had “emerging” visions were open to change and indicated that the interview helped to shape their visions.

In a similar vein, three of the five preservice teachers who had “advancing” visions indicated that the family member interview contributed to a change in their visions; but two of these preservice teachers reported no change in their vision from this exercise. I highlighted Marie and Luciana’s reflections and cited excerpts from their reports in the findings section on the preservice teachers with “advancing” visions. However, it is important to compare the lack of changes reported from the three preservice teachers who had “emerging” visions to the lack of changes reported from the two preservice teachers who had “advancing” visions. While both groups represent a static or stable vision, the group with “advancing” visions provided a strong rationale for why they reported no change. Both Marie and Luciana indicated that they interviewed family members who closely resembled them, and if they had interviewed a family member who would have acted more like a “window” instead of a “mirror,” they thought they would have been more inclined to report a change in their visions. Marie and

Luciana's reflections showed evidence of stable visions, but also pointed to evidence that they were open to learning from families and allowing their visions to continue to develop. Isaac and Gillian's reflections show a static vision, but seem to not include a level of openness to allow their visions to continue to develop.

Perhaps the most striking findings from the family member interview reflections were the reported changes in the visions among the preservice teachers in the "developing" visions group. All eight of the preservice teachers emphatically specified how much the family member interview helped to shape their visions for teaching reading. The findings from their reflections also closely align with the changes found in their vision statements. In the findings section on changes in visions, all eight of the preservice teachers who were categorized as having "developing" visions had "emerging" visions in their first vision statement (#1). Thus, the "developing" visions group seems to be more open to shaping their visions and seem to be more eager to allow experiences to contribute to the development of their visions.

Overall, the group of preservice teachers who had "emerging" visions seemed to remain consistent across their other written assignments in that they had a focus on how they could learn more about families so that they could provide literacy strategies for parents/families to conduct at home or to tailor their resources that they plan to send home. While the focus on teachers providing support and literacy resources to families was consistent across their written work, the family member interview reflections in the "emerging" group tended to show evidence that these preservice teachers were growing and developing their visions for using diverse literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The family member interview assignment helped to develop their

visions by offering them first-hand insight into the life of a family in order to learn more about their home literacy practices. Although the family member interview assignment provided the opportunity for the preservice teachers to develop their visions and come to identify and recognize family literacy practices, the changes did not show up in their final vision statements. Thus, these preservice teachers could have benefited from more support and strategies so that these developments could have been sustainable by showing up in their final vision statements.

Another difference found among the groups of preservice teachers was the emphasis that the preservice teachers who had “developing” visions zoomed in on their desire to learn about the hopes, dreams, and goals each family had for their children. This group of eight preservice teachers explicitly discussed that they wanted to learn about the future career aspirations or goals the families had for their children so that they could help them achieve those dreams. This finding shows that the family member interview assignment provided authentic and meaningful insight into the lives of the family members, including their hopes and dreams for their children. By having one-on-one and in-person conversations with family members, the preservice teachers caught glimpses of what families ultimately want for their children. This helped to shift their visions to seeing families as having literacy resources and assets.

And finally, the group of preservice teachers in the “advancing” visions category seemed to focus on how they could use the family member interview experience as a framework for future interactions with families. Most of them planned to build on the questions or use the experience as a guide to find creative ways and opportunities to learn about families and their home literacy practices in order to bring them into their reading

instruction. Through the experience of interviewing a family member, this group of preservice teachers emerged with a new toolset and more innovative ideas to use to learn more about families. The family member interview assignment contributed to their vision for how they would come to learn about and identify diverse family literacy practices so that they could use them to guide their future classroom reading instruction.

Although the preservice teachers were given the opportunity to interview any family member of their choice, all of them chose to interview either a parent or a sibling. It is understandable that these types of family members are the most accessible and typically the closest family members to students. However, it is interesting to note that no one interviewed an aunt/uncle, grandparent, cousin, or another type of family member. This could suggest that the preservice teachers view “family” through a specific lens and could benefit from more opportunities to interact and engage with other family members.

In the next section, I present how prepared the preservice teachers felt to engage families based on the survey given on the last day of class.

Levels of Preparedness to Engage Diverse Families in Literacy

This section addresses the third research question: *To what extent do elementary preservice teachers feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy?*

- a. *What do preservice teachers identify from their reading methods courses as supports to the shaping of their visions to engage families in literacy? (e.g., assignments, class lectures, etc.)*
- b. *What do preservice teachers foresee as some of the challenges to enacting their visions for recognizing and using diverse family literacy practices in their future classrooms of reading?*

During our final EDUC 404 class session at the end of the semester, I administered a survey using Google forms to understand how the elementary preservice teachers assessed their own levels of preparedness to engage families. Because it was given anonymously, I was unable to match the survey responses to specific preservice teachers and their reflections on the written assignments (e.g., vision statements, ELCAA reflections, family member interview reflections). However, the results from the survey provide insight into the preservice teachers' self-assessed levels of preparedness as a whole, and their comments from the survey offer evidence of areas that contributed to their levels of preparedness—including some of their written reflections from EDUC 404. In this section, the survey results are presented to demonstrate their levels of preparedness to engage families in their future classrooms.

Based on the demographic questions at the beginning of the survey, the 34 preservice teachers who completed the survey and consented to participate in the study ranged in ages from 20 years old to 40 years old. The most common ages were 21 and 22 with nearly 80% of the participants falling into one of these two age categories. Two of the 34 preservice teachers identified as male and 32 of the 34 identified as female. One of the survey questions asked them to list what grade level they preferred to teach upon graduation from the university. The results indicated a range of preferences from teaching 1st grade to 7th grade English when thinking about their first year of teaching. Within this range, most of them preferred to teach lower elementary or middle/upper elementary with an even spread between 1st - 3rd and 3rd - 5th grades.

After answering demographic questions, the preservice teachers were given multiple-choice questions to identify on a scale their level of preparedness to engage

families. The results are presented below in Figures 5-8 and then the findings are discussed.

Figure 5: Preparedness to Engage Families

1. Based on the scale below, how prepared do you feel to engage families?
(click the number that represents your level of preparedness)
(34 responses)

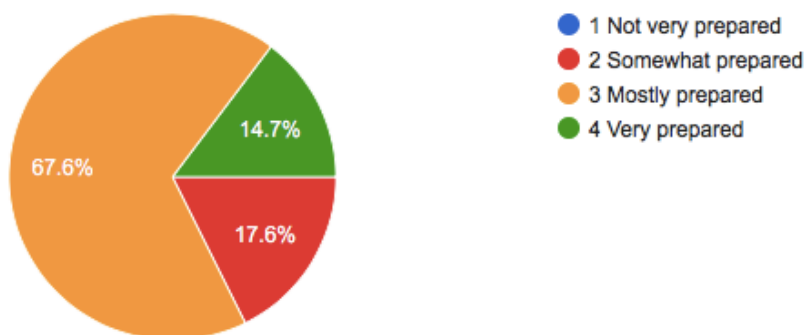
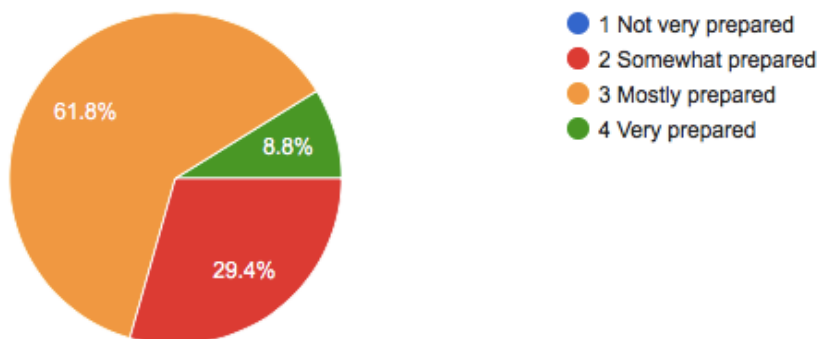


Figure 6: Preparedness to Engage Diverse Families

2. Based on the scale below, how prepared do you feel to engage diverse families?
(click the number that represents your level of preparedness)
(34 responses)



From the results of these four questions, several interesting features were apparent. First, to compare Figure 1 and Figure 2, the preservice teachers indicated that they are more prepared to engage *families* than *diverse families*. More precisely, 82.3% of

the preservice teachers reported that they felt very prepared or mostly prepared to engage families, and 17.6% indicated that they feel somewhat prepared to engage families. To compare those percentages to the levels of preparedness to engage *diverse* families, 70.6% of the preservice teachers felt very prepared or mostly prepared with 29.4% reporting a level of somewhat prepared. While this is not surprising, it does imply that the preservice teachers may feel more comfortable working with and communicating with parents and families who are more like the preservice teachers than they are different.

Figure 7: Preparedness to Engage Families in Literacy

3. Based on the scale below, how prepared do you feel to engage families in literacy? (click the number that represents your level of preparedness)
(34 responses)

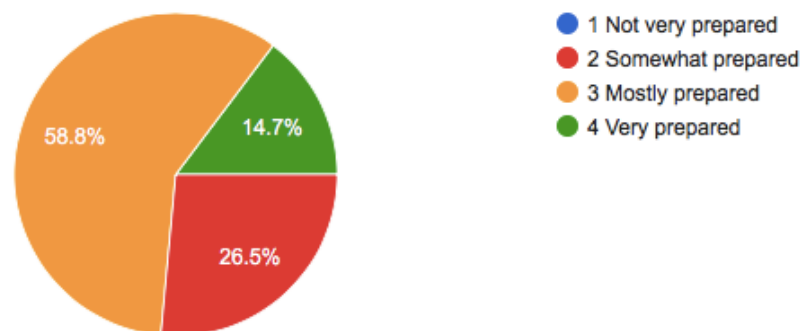
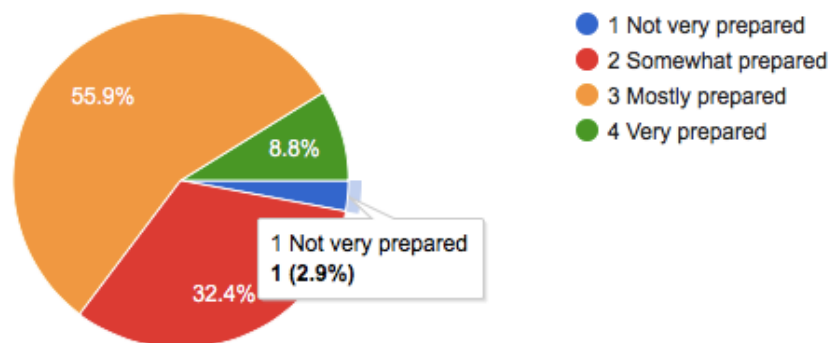


Figure 8: Preparedness to Engage Diverse Families in Literacy

4. Based on the scale below, how prepared do you feel to engage diverse families in literacy? (click the number that represents your level of preparedness)
(34 responses)



Second, to compare Figure 3 and Figure 4, the survey results align closely with the results from Figure 1 and Figure 2 in that the preservice teachers indicated that they are more prepared to engage families in literacy than they are to engage *diverse* families in literacy. Nearly 75% of the preservice teachers reported that they feel very prepared or mostly prepared to engage families in literacy, and the remaining approximately 25% indicated that they are somewhat prepared. With regards to engaging diverse families in literacy, 64.7% noted that they feel very or mostly prepared to engage them in literacy and 35.3% reported that they are somewhat prepared or not very prepared at all to engage them in literacy. In Figure 4, the survey results show one preservice teacher reported that he or she does not feel very prepared to engage diverse families in literacy. This is the only report from the entire survey to rate “not very prepared” for levels of preparedness. To ask preservice teachers to engage diverse families in literacy perhaps can seem

overwhelming because they are contemplating the many facets of diversity and the myriad ways that they could engage families in literacy. It is not surprising that the more that aspects were added to the questions (e.g., diverse families, literacy) the less prepared overall the preservice teachers reported. As noted in the family member interview analysis section in Chapter 3, many of the preservice teachers interviewed a family member who was also fluent in a language other than English and they reflected on the language differences in their written reflections. Some of them also noted how they wished that they could speak another language so that they could communicate more clearly with parents and family members who did not speak English. The language differences were noted in several of the preservice teachers' reflections and this could factor into how they view "diverse" families. If they envision "diverse" families as families who speak different languages, then the findings from the levels of preparedness in the survey seem to correlate. Overall, the levels of preparedness to engage families and diverse families are rather high, which shows promise that the majority of these preservice teachers will leave their teacher education program prepared to engage families. However, the difference in levels of preparedness to engage families and to engage diverse families suggests that approximately 30% of the preservice teachers could benefit from more preparation in working with and engaging families from all backgrounds.

At the end of the survey, the preservice teachers were asked to write in a comments section what they feel has contributed to their level of preparedness. Out of the 34 preservice teachers, 32 of them added in comments. From the 32 participants who commented, 17 of them expressed that the family member interview assignment

significantly contributed to their level of preparedness to engage families because it allowed them to learn more about their students and their families. One of the preservice teachers commented the following, “The family member interview is the one big assignment that really put us into contact with parents to help us understand the way that they wish to communicate with teachers.” Another preservice teacher reported the following,

My favorite assignment was the family interview project. I think as teachers we can make as many assumptions as we want when engaging diversity and different cultures, however, it is very different when you are talking one on one to a parent on their beliefs. It really opened my eyes to what work I have to do in order to be prepared to include all students’ needs.

Adding to these two comments, another preservice teacher wrote, “I think that the family member interview was a great way to learn more about my students’ literacy backgrounds. I learned more about the difficulties that my student deals with regarding language differences.” Additionally, one preservice teacher added, “I will also use some of the questions that we asked in the family member interview to ask the parents of my future students, to learn more about their child and their family’s culture during parent teacher conferences.” This comment illustrates that this preservice teacher is envisioning how to apply some of the concepts from the course assignments in his/her vision for identifying and using diverse family literacy practices. To add a final example, one preservice teacher reported,

I thought the family member interview helped me learn a lot about what parents want out of their child's education in terms of literacy. It was interesting to listen to how much they wanted to be involved and how they integrate what they understand from what their child learns in school into their home literacy practices. Knowing this now, I will try and create more opportunities for parent involvement in the classroom.

Although these comments could portray a range of visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide classroom reading instruction (i.e., emerging, developing, advancing), all four of these comments about the family member interview assignment shows that they found the project to be useful and a learning opportunity for each of the 17 preservice teachers who included a comment about them in the survey.

In contrast to the high number of preservice teachers who found the family member interview assignment to contribute to their levels of preparedness, only six of them noted that the ELCAA event helped to prepare them to engage families. One preservice teacher wrote, "I enjoyed the Ethiopian Library experience, it opened my eyes to working with diverse families." Another preservice teacher indicated that he/she enjoyed the ELCAA event, too, "The ELCAA event and reflection were most beneficial when learning how to engage all families, especially diverse families, in literacy." One of the reasons that the family member interview assignment seemed to have more impact on their levels of preparedness than the ELCAA event could be due to the levels of engagement for the preservice teachers. The ELCAA event offered the preservice teachers the opportunity to observe and to take notes of their observations of the experience. They could participate if they took the initiative to do so, but the overall point

of the event was to offer them another perspective and to provide them with a cultural experience. The family member interview assignment, however, was more of a hands-on experience than the ELCAA event experience. Each preservice teacher was asked to identify a family member of a student in their classroom and arrange a meeting. They were then assigned interview questions from me and tasked with creating additional questions on their own. The family member interview was an active, hands-on experience that was more personalized than the ELCAA event. For these reasons, it makes sense that the majority of the preservice teachers found the family member interview beneficial to increasing their levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy.

In addition to the family member interview assignment and the ELCAA event, five of the preservice teachers commented that class discussions helped to increase their levels of preparedness, two listed their involvement in parent-teacher conferences this year helped them, and two included a discussion about their children's literature class. One preservice teacher wrote, "I thought that I learned a lot through our class discussion on how to include children's diverse literacy backgrounds into our classrooms (and this class aligned really well with much of what we talked about in our language diversity class)." Regarding parent-teacher conferences, one preservice teacher commented,

I thought that sitting in/contributing in the parent teacher conferences really helped me feel more comfortable communicating with parents about literacy, among other subjects. Additionally, the readings about culturally relevant teaching from this year and last year also helped contribute to my level of preparedness.

These comments suggest that discussions and readings about how to incorporate culturally relevant teaching into the classroom have an impact on the levels of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy. Further, opportunities to meet parents and families and interact with them can help preservice teachers feel more comfortable reaching out and communicating with families to get to know them on a deeper level. Lastly, exposure to a wide variety of children's literature and having the opportunity to discuss and reflect upon diverse texts can contribute to the levels of preparedness among preservice teachers.

Finally, 12 of the participants listed that the guided reading case study assignment in my class helped to contribute to their levels of preparedness. Because I did not specifically include in this question that it was asking about family engagement, I think some of the participants read the question as asking them about their overall levels of preparedness to teach reading. The four questions leading up to this final question, I thought, would have made it clear that I was asking about family engagement; however, that was an area that should have been more clear and specific. Thus, nearly half of them included their guided reading case study and most of them discussed how it helped them become more prepared to teach reading. Since a significant amount of participants included the guided reading case study in their comments, I felt it necessary to include it in my survey findings and to discuss why I thought they had included it.

In this final section of Chapter 4, I presented the survey findings and discussed the preservice teachers' self-assessed levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy. I also highlighted the comments from the survey that the preservice teachers included to show what has contributed to their levels of preparedness. These findings

show key differences in the preservice teachers' levels of preparedness to engage families, to engage diverse families, to engage families in literacy, and to engage diverse families in literacy. The distinctions between how prepared they feel to engage families and how prepared they feel to engage diverse families is striking and implies that they could use more guidance and practice to increase their levels, particularly with engaging diverse families. The findings also suggest that some of the preservice teachers could benefit from preparation in further developing their visions for engaging diverse families in literacy and using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

In conclusion, I began Chapter 4 by presenting my findings from my analysis of the preservice teachers' visions using the Funds of Knowledge Rubric and describing the three groups of visions: 1) the preservice teachers who envisioned using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction; 2) the preservice teachers who recognized that families possess literacy assets, but envisioned using student literacy assessment data to guide their classroom reading instruction; and 3) the preservice teachers who view family members as supporters of the literacy instruction in the classroom.

Next, I presented the changes or consistencies in their visions from their vision statements, ELCAA Reflections, and Family Member Interview Reflections. In this section, we learned that the ELCAA experience offered ideas and strategies for engaging families, particularly families from a specific culture—in this case, the Ethiopian culture. Some of the preservice teachers reported that the ELCAA event helped to shift their visions for teaching reading and for how they envision engaging families in their future

classrooms. For other preservice teachers, they indicated that the ELCAA event helped them come to understand specific elements of the Ethiopian culture and identified ways that they could use those newly-discovered literacy practices to guide their reading instruction. In this section, we also learned that the family member interview assignment played a key role in helping to shift and transform visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide classroom reading instruction. Some of the preservice teachers shifted their visions by learning more about a specific family and came to envision that they would learn more about their future students' families. Other preservice teachers attributed the family member interview project to changes in their visions by providing a framework for how they would come to learn about families in the future.

Lastly, I ended the chapter with the survey results that assessed the preservice teachers' levels of preparedness to engage families, including their comments that indicated what helped to contribute to their levels of preparedness to engage families. Most of the preservice teachers (67.6%) indicated that they felt "mostly prepared" to engage families in their future classrooms, with 61.8% reporting that they felt "mostly prepared" to engage diverse families. Further, 58.8% of the preservice teachers mentioned that they felt "mostly prepared" to engage families in literacy, with 55.9% indicating that they felt "mostly prepared" to engage diverse families in literacy. In the next chapter (Chapter 5), I offer a closer look at seven preservice teachers and their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

Chapter 5

Findings: Portraits of Seven Elementary Preservice Teachers' Visions

In this chapter, I zoom in on seven of the 34 preservice teachers to present portraits of each of these seven preservice teachers based on their written class assignments and data from an individual interview and participation in a focus group. To review, the research questions driving this dissertation study are restated. In each of the preservice teachers' portraits, the first two research questions are addressed based on their individual interview and their participation in the focus group. In the final section of this chapter, with the aim of addressing the third research question, the supports and challenges to enacting their visions are identified and discussed.

Research Questions

1. How do elementary preservice teachers envision diverse family literacy practices playing a role in their future classroom reading instruction?
2. How do elementary preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom reading instruction develop over the course of one semester?
3. To what extent do elementary preservice teachers feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy?
 - a. What do preservice teachers identify from their reading methods courses as supports to the shaping of their visions to engage families in literacy? (e.g., assignments, class lectures, etc.)

- b. What do preservice teachers foresee as some of the challenges to enacting their visions for recognizing and using diverse family literacy practices in their future classrooms of reading?

A Deeper Look at Visions of Family Members as Supporters

From the 21 preservice teachers' visions who envisioned family members as supporting the work of the teacher and extending the classroom learning, two preservice teachers were chosen to participate in individual interviews and the focus group. Emily and Renee were invited to participate further in the study. Both Emily and Renee's visions exhibited a focus on the classroom and literacy learning through reading books. Emily's vision for families primarily included her finding resources for them to work on at home. In a close fashion, Renee's vision showed a view of her also needing to give resources to parents, but that parents and families could come to school to attend family reading nights. Their visions did not provide evidence that they perceived families as possessing literacy assets that could be used to plan their reading instruction, so I further examined their visions, changes and consistencies in their visions, and what contributed to the shaping of them.

In the following sections, we meet Emily and Renee, who both have visions of family members playing a supportive role alongside the teacher, beginning with a portrait of Emily.

Emily – The Helper

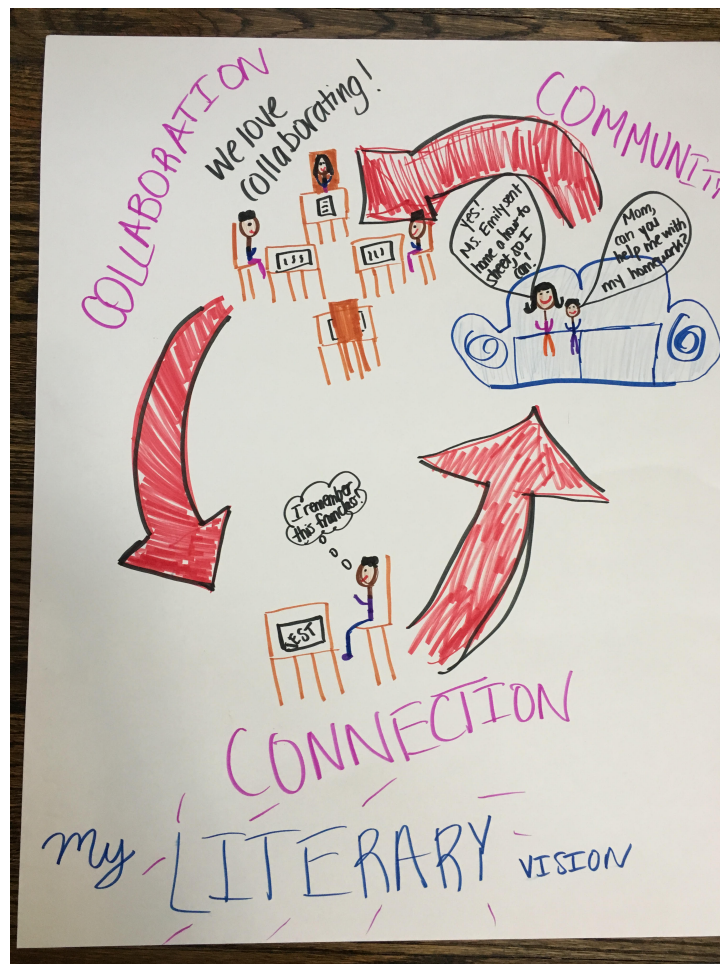
“I would hope that I can forge a relationship where it’s like you see that I’m really just trying to help.” -Emily, Individual Interview, 2/6/17

Emily identified herself as a 21-year-old, Black female and, at the time of the interview, she was finishing her final semester of student teaching in a fourth-grade classroom. During the previous semester, she was an intern in a second-grade placement. Upon graduation, she said that she would prefer to teach third grade. At the core of her vision, Emily envisions herself helping students and families through providing resources and information; and, she views relationships with families as collaborative. In this section, we learn more about Emily and her vision for teaching reading, the experiences that helped to develop her vision, and her levels of preparedness to engage families in her future classroom. We begin with the essence of her vision.

What is the essence of Emily’s vision? The common theme of helping families and students was consistent throughout her written assignments, individual interview, and focus group. During the focus group, the preservice teachers were asked to spend the first 30 minutes creating a visual representation of their vision.

Figure 9. below is Emily's representation of her vision for her future classroom reading instruction.

Figure 9: Emily's Visual Representation of Her Vision for the Role of the Family in Her Reading Instruction



After the preservice teachers finished their vision creations, we gathered in a circle to do a show-and-tell presentation. When it was Emily's turn to share about hers, she said the following:

I want everything to be connected for my students. So, that's why you see the arrows, like I want them to be collaborating in class and like learning from each other. ... And then I talked a lot in my individual interview and

I think in my vision statement, too, about how I want families to not only be informed, but also be involved. So like in the last internship that I was in, my mentor teacher said that when she sent homework home, the top part that kind of gives a practice is not just for the students but also for the parents. And I never thought about it like that. Like the parents can look at that and be like, “Oh, I know how to do it and I can now help you because it says up here how you’re supposed to do it.” So, that’s why for community because I think that that is the best way and it’s up to us as teachers to provide those things. So when your son or your daughter ask, “Can you help me with my homework?” it’s like, “Yeah, I can.” And you can say that with confidence, like you’re giving these families confidence in helping their students do schooling. ... I think all of this builds that student’s confidence because they’re seeing what they’re learning in multiple different ways. And they’re able to make these connections. So that collaboration with community is super important to me and I want it also to feel read to my students (Emily, Focus Group, 2/7/17).

In her description of her vision during the focus group, Emily discussed how the teacher’s role is to provide resources on how to help with homework, and that in doing so, the teacher is helping the students and the parents to build confidence and to be able to work on school-based activities at home. Emily’s description demonstrates that deep down she truly wants to help and to provide as many resources as possible to support families.

Another example that illustrates her vision of helping was found in her family member interview reflection. Emily interviewed the mother of one of her students who speaks both Spanish and English fluently. One key point in her reflection was that Emily wished she could speak Spanish so that she could help students and families in additional ways. She wrote,

To be honest, this interview makes me wish that I knew Spanish. I have the knowledge to teach children how to become literate, and if I knew Spanish, I could incorporate their native tongue into my instruction. ... Since I cannot do so, it makes me want to do more research on programs like the ELCAA event. I could provide families like [my student's] with these resources. If they do not know how to teach their children their native tongue, these programs could provide that (Emily, Family Member Interview, 12/3/16).

Emily's reflection illustrates the theme of helping and how she wants to build up her skillset so she can better serve students and families.

When asked about her vision for working with diverse families and populations, Emily said the following,

My vision is that I can make them feel welcome and make them feel like they know that I'm doing the best for their child and that I'm not trying to pity them, or you know what I mean, make them feel stupid, because I think it's like I really just want to help you, so I would hope that I can forge a relationship where it's like you see that I'm really just trying to help and that you come with any question and I'm not going to judge you.

So that's my vision, is that like, I'll make them feel welcome and make them feel like they can come to me and ask me what they are learning about so that I can help teach them at home (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

Again, we see in this statement that Emily has a desire to help her students and their families. An underlying assumption across her written and verbal statements is that many families need her help (or the help of a teacher) to support their children. The notion that most families need educational support from the school or teacher seems to portray a deficit perspective of families and, for Emily, appears to be a barrier for her to be able to see families as possessing literacy assets and cultural resources on their own. Although Emily's vision carries deficit aspects, her vision stems from her own experiences and shedding light on how her vision developed can help us understand her vision for helping.

How did Emily's vision develop? Emily's vision over the course of the semester remained fairly stable and static, which indicates that the course assignments did not affect her vision in a significant manner. However, her life experiences, especially her own school experiences, were the key contributors to the shaping of her vision. She mentioned that she loved to read in elementary school and recalls learning how to read more proficiently by using the captions on the TV when she would watch her favorite shows. She said she started to use the captions because her dad was "hard of hearing" (Individual Interview, 2/6/17) and that he would need them. Emily also described herself as a first-generation college student, but was not quite sure if she could technically identify as one because her grandmother went to college but her parents did not. Regardless of the technicality, she related more to a first-generation college student based

on her experiences than not. Further, her experience of navigating entry into college and her journey through college without her parents having gone through those same experiences to help her have given her a certain perspective for her teaching career, specifically how she sees herself teaching reading and engaging families.

When asked what experiences or other areas in her life helped to shape her vision for engaging families and learning about their literacy practices, she said,

I think coming from being a student of color and then also seeing other families of color and realizing “wow” like, especially first generation students, first generation until like finished high school, seeing how much, and it sounds bad but how much more we know than our parents, like that is what kind of motivates me to get families more involved because like I feel like our parents do so much to get us into school [college] and then we have all of the knowledge but they don’t have the knowledge. So I think that for me, it’s engaging the families so that the families can learn, too, like use the school as a resource because you can learn because your student is learning. I think my experience as a student of color and I see other students of color and families of color and seeing how much more the student knows than their parent, like that makes me want to engage families because like families learn from it all, too (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

Emily identified the areas that she and her family wanted help throughout her school experiences, and she understands that families have “gaps” where teachers can provide knowledge, guidance, and resources to help fill. Thus, Emily comes from a

perspective where she envisions herself helping her students and families so they can reach their full potential.

Most of the common threads found throughout Emily's written assignments from EDUC 404 in fall 2016 and the interview from early spring 2017 tend to derive from her experiences. For example, ability levels, choice, and purpose ran constant throughout her assignments and her interview statements. She noted how her view of "diversity" has expanded over time. When asked how she defined "diversity" in her interview, she said the following,

Well, for me the first thing that comes to mind is like -- and this is interesting because I think when I was younger I only thought of "diversity" like differences in like race and ethnicity, but I think like now that I've gone through college and like its diversities like diversity in opinions like in ability, and it's like so much more than just race or ethnicity. So I would define it as just like differences, like different people like coming together, I know that's super broad but like different in any area just like being in the same space together (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

In her school experiences, when given a choice, Emily felt as though she learned more and her motivation to read increased. She expressed this perspective in her interview, she said,

I loved to read in elementary school, like outside of school I would always have a book like in the car and everything. My reading experience in elementary were very positive because I had a genuine love to read. In

elementary school it was great because we would get, I felt like we would have more time to just do like free reading, and then as I got older my love for reading kind of decreased because it was more like, “Okay, you have to read this book or like you have to read this textbook” and it wasn’t a choice anymore, it was kind of given to you. I think that’s what I love the most about elementary school reading is that there so much more choice, you just go to the library and pick out whatever and there is DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time, I love the choice in reading in elementary school (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

Emily’s school experiences as a student herself played a critical role in shaping and developing her vision for her future role as a teacher of reading.

In addition to her school experiences, Emily reflected on how she believes she learns best and how that translates into how she wants to help others learn. In her interview, she said, “I feel like for most things, the best way I learn is when someone gives me the resources” (Individual Interview, 2/6/17). We discussed one of the websites presented in EDUC 404 from fall 2016. Emily then went on to add, “Like that probably helped me most because it literally was like, this is what you can do. Stuff like that helps me more than just hearing it or discussing it. Tangible things that I can take back, like websites, has probably helped me the most because it sparks ideas” (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

How prepared is Emily to engage families? When asked to complete a two questions about her levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy, she indicated that she was “somewhat prepared” (level 2 out of 4) to both engage families in literacy

and to engage *diverse* families in literacy. When asked in the interview if she felt prepared to engage families, she said,

I think yes, and then no, only because –and we even had a parent-teacher conference the other day and the parent said, “I don’t feel like I know how to help her,” and like it was because –I’m assuming it’s because like she is learning in English, and she knows Spanish. So I feel like that would be the only like problem, because if there’s a language barrier, that even stops me because I don’t know Spanish. I think it would just require some research, look up different ways that parents can help and be engaged in literacy. And then, I think the best way I guess, the first thing that comes in my mind is encouraging the students to teach their parents, and then like you’re teaching your parents and you’re also learning too because you know you know it because you’re able to teach somebody else (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

Emily’s levels of preparedness seemed to hinge of a specific set of skills that she possesses (i.e., speaking Spanish). She also focused on how she could provide resources to parents, help students act as resources, or be of help herself.

Emily’s vision of family members as supporters of the work of the teacher and as extensions of the school learning closely aligns when we understand her vision of helping and providing resources. She emphasized how her teachers throughout her own school experiences as a student helped her in significant ways to prepare her for college, including the application process and the logistics around being a college student. Her background of using teachers and her school as resources to find her own success plays a

significant role in how she, now as a preservice teacher, sees the roles of teachers and families. Emily envisions using her skills, expertise, experience, and access to resources to help her students and their families find success in education. The idea of her seeing herself as “the helper” to families is supported by her wanting to learn Spanish to add to her skillset so she can be of additional help, and through her mentioning how she wants to provide resources and information to families. Although honorable, her idea of being “the helper” for families seems to hinder her ability to envision families as possessing their own sets of literacy resources and other educational assets. Thus, her vision of families as supporters remained static over the course of the semester. Now, we meet Renee, another preservice teacher with a vision of family members as supporters.

Renee – The Modern Traditionalist

“I just think family is very important when it comes to educating the child. The family has to play an active role in the education process. Whatever chance I get, I will bring families in, whether it be like a back to school reading night. The kids coming in their pajamas and just read, things like that.” -Renee, Individual Interview, 1/30/17

At the time of the interview, Renee, a 25-year-old, Black female was interning in a fifth-grade classroom. She indicated, though, that she would like to teach third grade once she completes her teacher education program. Growing up, Renee described herself as an advanced reader who had positive elementary experiences. For her, parent and family involvement centered around PTA meetings, regular school communication (e.g., notes and report cards sent home), and school-based activities. Now, as a mother of two children, Renee is highly-involved with their school and seeks out communication with

teachers. At the center of her vision, Renee envisions a reading classroom rooted in tradition, but with modern elements (e.g., technology, multimodality, etc.). In this section, we learn more about Renee and her vision for teaching reading, the experiences that helped to develop her vision, and her levels of preparedness to engage families in her future classroom. We begin with the essence of her vision.

What is the essence of Renee's vision? Renee's vision was rooted in traditional school practices, but with some modern changes. Her vision for her future reading classroom was meticulously structured as she cited the schedule of a typical day of what she envisioned her literacy instruction would entail. She said that she would plan her lessons based on the school or district curriculum and use research-based methods. Renee also mentioned that she would like to host family reading nights at school from time to time. Renee's vision to follow the district curriculum and to host families for school reading nights are practices that teachers have done for decades; but she mentions how she can make these age-old practices more engaging for the students. For example, during her individual interview she compared her elementary reading experiences to how she envisions her future reading classrooms. She said,

I think now instead of sending a child to a different classroom, the class is more differentiated in itself, so the teacher accommodates every student as much as possible. And, definitely the difference is like the activities, like we didn't do jigsaws, we didn't have technology. We had guided—I don't know if they would call it guided reading groups—but we had reading groups that got together and talked about the book that we are reading (Renee, Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

Renee discussed the differences between classrooms 10-15 years ago and how she believes classrooms are structured now in her internship placement. She went on to elaborate on how reading groups traditionally were unstructured and students would discuss what happened in each chapter as they read. Now, though, in a modern setting, she said, “Guided reading now is more laid out like we make sure we do vocabulary and then we move on to the reading and things like that” (Individual Interview, 1/30/17). Renee envisions a modern approach to reading groups, yet the central elements of reading groups is still grounded in this approach.

Another illustration of Renee’s vision was found in her individual interview when she discussed how she would invite families into the school and have a communication system between the teacher and the families, but try to make these engaging and use modern technology. She said,

I just think family is very important when it comes to educating the child. The family has to play an active role in the education process. Whatever chance I get, I will bring families in, whether it be like a back-to-school reading night. The kids coming in their pajamas and just read, things like that. Activities or sending home small books that parents can read with their kids I think would be good. You can also have a communication system, whether it’s online or sending newsletters home (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

In this statement, we see that Renee envisions using traditional parent-teacher practices such as inviting them to back-to-school reading nights, but adds an engaging element of having the students come in their pajamas. Further, she envisions a communication

system between the teacher and the families, but adds a modern element of using an online system. The modern twists of adding an engaging, fun element for the kids or an online component show that Renee has contemplated how she can add excitement for students in reading or ways to engage families in communication. However, the core of these practices do not represent a paradigm shift or a new practice—they are essentially the same school traditions with modern elements.

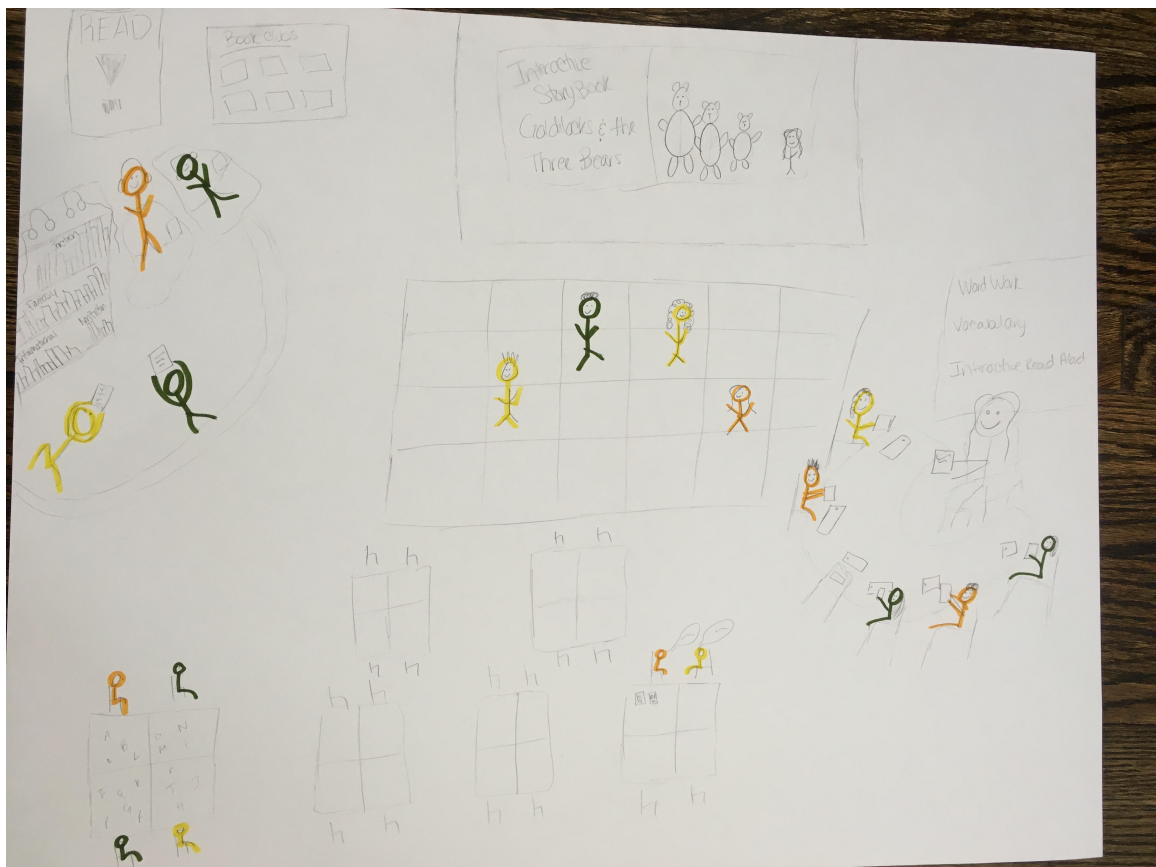
Another example of Renee as the modern traditionalist was found in her ELCAA reflection. She noted that the ELCAA experience offered her “great insight on a different way to teach reading” (ELCAA Reflection, 9/25/16). Yet when she discussed how she would change her reading instruction, it resonated with traditional ways of teaching. She went on to write,

It was interesting to see music incorporated into the read-aloud. This gave the kids time to have fun while reading and also gave them an opportunity to move around instead of sitting down for a long period of time listening to a story. This read-aloud engaged the children and their families. Now when I have my diverse classroom, I will know how to engage families and bring a part of their culture into the classroom (ELCAA Reflection, 9/25/16).

Incorporating music into a read-aloud is not necessarily a new concept in teaching. However, after Renee observed the event and reflected, she felt as though this was a “different way to teach reading” than what she was used to seeing and experiencing.

During the focus group, the preservice teachers were asked to spend the first 30 minutes creating a visual representation of their vision. Figure 10. below is Renee's representation of her vision for her future classroom reading instruction.

Figure 10: Renee's Visual Representation of Her Vision for the Role of the Family in Her Reading Instruction



When it was Renee's turn to share her vision of using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction, she said,

So, I literally drew how I think my classroom would look. So I think a diverse moment in the classroom is when there are centers because you can just reach out to each student individually. So right here I drew the regular guided reading group but they have iPads in front of them. So the

students, you know, do have some type of visibility where they work better on electronics. They can have access to the text and things like that. And then in this center, it's like two students who speak different—well, they speak the same language, but their first language might not be English. So they're coaching one another and learning English together. And then in the library, I'll have like students listening to audio tapes just in case, like I said, they can access the tapes. And this is the interactive story, just in case they're more of a visual learner. Like, if in class, students have a memorable, engaging moment, they're going to bring that moment home and say, "Mom, Dad, Grandma, guess what I did in school today? I used this." And, you know, if you can give parents the resources, like things to do at home as far as electronics and websites to go on to listen to stories, then that encourages literacy at home as well. And I think I'll have a very diverse classroom, so that's how I will meet all of the students of different colors (Renee, Focus Group, 2/7/17).

In Renee's statement, we see how she intends to use reading groups and centers to support various learning styles and literacy needs. But, she envisions embedding technology (i.e., iPads) and multimodal activities into her classroom literacy instruction. Again, we see a vision of using traditional school structures and adding engaging modern elements.

Another excerpt from Renee's interview sheds light on how she envisions the role of the family in reading.

Interviewer: And how do you define family?

Renee: Family. Just a support system that they support you, they care about you, love you, want the best for you. It doesn't have to be blood-related at all.

Interviewer: Okay.

Renee: Because it could just be a group of people that just, you know, share, find time with you and just are there for you. Yeah.

Interviewer: And what do you think their role is when it comes to reading and literacy?

Renee: I think they play a big role. Families should not expect teachers to do it all. I think, you know, it begins before the kids get to school. I think families can read to their children, they can take them to museums and read little science books to them, it's a lot of different things they can do (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

In this conversation, we come to see how Renee defines “family” and how she views family members as support systems. We also come to understand how she envisions their role in literacy development. She pictures families contributing to children's reading skills by reading to them and providing learning opportunities (i.e., museum trips). Yet, it seems as though Renee envisions teachers as contributors to the bulk of the literacy learning, and, by saying that “families should not expect teachers to do it all,” implies that many families will have the same perspective.

Further, we read in Renee's statement how family members support the work of the teacher and how the teacher's role is to offer resources to the family members to encourage literacy in the home. Although she envisions families helping and playing a key role in reading development, Renee's vision seems to have aspects of a deficit lens when it comes to families in that she places emphasis on them needing resources and help from her and less focus on families naturally contributing to the literacy development of

their children. Although Renee's vision conveys some deficit aspects, her vision stems from her own experiences and shedding light on how her vision developed can help us understand her vision seeing families as supporters.

How did Renee's vision develop? Over the course of the semester, Renee's vision remained rather constant. In her first vision statement, she wrote the following about her vision for the role families play in reading instruction, "I would hope parents would be involved in their child's reading. I could give a handout on reading strategies during back to school night that families could use with the students" (Vision Statement #1, 9/3/16). In her final vision statement on the last day of the class, she envisioned,

Parents, family members, and community members can play a huge role in reading instruction. Parents and families can attend reading nights at school where different reading activities can be discussed [and] they can read with their children at home or ask comprehension questions when their child has read a book (Vision Statement #2, 12/7/16).

In both statements, Renee's vision for family members involves them reading with their child at home and using resources from the teacher (e.g., a handout) to support their children. The key difference is that in her second vision statement she discussed parents and families coming to a school reading night. This small change in her vision statement aligns with Renee's teaching strategies being grounded in tradition, yet adding a modern element.

Her life experiences of being a mother played the greatest roles in shaping her vision. When asked about experiences in life that have helped to shape her vision for engaging families, Renee said,

Well, I guess experiences in my life is I'm very involved with my kids at school, like I want to know what they're doing and how they're doing and things like that. And whenever there's an activity going on, I want to be there. So I know it's extremely important for families to be there for their kids and just for kids that would have that support from their family. So I think my life has prepared me for that (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

Renee's experiences and communication with her children's teachers have contributed to how she envisions engaging and communicating with families. As a parent, she wants to know how her children are doing and to know about the ways that she can be involved. This perspective plays a role in how she views her role as a teacher in engaging and communicating with parents and families.

In the interview, Renee also mentioned how her observations of the ELCAA event helped her develop her vision for teaching reading. She said,

It was, well, at the [event], it was interesting seeing how they read and then they would go to music that's from their culture and then they read [again]. And it was just interesting to see how music could be incorporated into the reading. So, I felt like when they would pause from reading and play the music, it gave kids an opportunity to process what they read and they just get a break from reading instead of having to just read, read, read, read. It gave them a chance to move around and get their wiggles out and then go back to reading (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

Here, we see that Renee noticed how the integration of cultural music into a reading lesson can help kids become more engaged in reading and how this strategy could transfer into her literacy block.

How prepared is Renee to engage families? In her pre-interview questionnaire, she noted that she felt “mostly prepared” (3 out of 4) to engage families in literacy and that she was “somewhat prepared” (2 out of 4) to engage *diverse* families in literacy. During the interview, I asked Renee about her answers in her questionnaire. Below is an excerpt from her interview providing insight into the differences in her levels.

Interviewer: So I was going to ask you one thing about your questionnaire. So, you have a 3 for levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy and then you have a 2 for engaging diverse families in literacy. Can you talk about what you were thinking when you saw the word “diverse”? What first came to your mind?

Renee: Cultural differences.

Interviewer: Okay, yes.

Renee: Yeah, I didn’t think about any other differences.

Interviewer: I was wondering if you would say language, but does that, is that what you mean by [cultural differences]?

Renee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, cultural—

Renee: Yeah, by culture and where they’re from and how they talk. But I didn’t think about anything other than that (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

In the conversation above, Renee indicates that cultural and language differences are the key aspects of diversity that make her feel less prepared to engage families, if they

are culturally and linguistically different from Renee's background. This shows that Renee is more prepared to engage families in literacy if they are more similar to her in language and culture. This finding further illustrates the important need for teacher education programs to continue to find ways to develop teachers to prepare them to work with culturally- and linguistically-diverse students and their families.

With regards to experiences and learning opportunities that contributed to her levels of preparedness, she noted that her internship placement and course assignments contributed to her levels of preparedness to engage families. When asked what has contributed to her feeling of being prepared, she said, "I think course assignments have definitely helped, and, well, a fieldtrip like going to the library [ELCAA] and seeing how you can include families into reading. My placement that showed me how kids can be so different when it comes to reading. They can be in the same group but read on totally different levels" (Individual Interview, 1/30/17). For Renee, the ELCAA and course assignments gave her ideas and strategies for integrating her students' cultures into her future reading classroom and engaging families.

For Renee, the idea of her being a "modern traditionalist" is important to consider with regards to her vision for engaging families. Her paradigm for how she sees the role of the family is still rooted in the traditional ways that teachers and schools have viewed parents and families (i.e., parent involvement). From the 1980s to 2007, educational initiatives for parents focused on schools and teachers getting parents involved (Mapp, 2012). With the election of President Obama in 2008, the national education trend shifted from "parent involvement" to "parent and family engagement" (Mapp, 2012). Renee's vision seems to be rooted in the idea of parent involvement, not really engagement. Yet,

for Renee, she seems to believe that she is doing something completely new and different by adding a “modern” element, such as having students come to reading nights in their pajamas or adding in iPads during guided reading. If the elements of the practices are still essentially the same, it is important for preservice teachers like Renee to reflect on how their paradigms have shifted, or if they have more or less remained the same.

For Emily and Renee, their visions of helping families by providing resources stemmed mostly from their experiences in elementary as students. Emily’s experiences of identifying as a first-generation college student and trying to navigate educational systems (e.g., homework, college applications, etc.) with the help of teacher and school staff offered her a perspective that made her want to pay it forward by helping her future students. Renee’s school experiences as a student offered practices (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, reading groups, etc.) for her to reflect upon and to consider ways to make them more modern and engaging for her future students. Although both preservice teachers have visions of helping and making their students’ learning more engaging, they did not seem to view families as possessing a great deal of literacy assets themselves. The central aspects of their visions appeared to act as barriers for them to fully see families as having literacy assets that could be recognized and used to guide their classroom teaching. In the next section, we meet Michelle and Terri, two preservice teachers who recognized the literacy assets in families.

A Closer Look at Visions of Families Possessing Literacy Assets Yet Student Assessments Driving Instruction

From the 8 preservice teachers’ visions that envisioned families as possessing literacy assets but that student assessments would drive instruction, two preservice

teachers were chosen to participate in individual interviews and the focus group. Michelle and Terri were invited to participate further in the study. In contrast to Emily and Renee's visions that remained relatively constant, the unique finding among both Michelle's and Terri's visions was the level of change in their visions from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester. At the beginning of the course, Michelle's vision of the role of the family in reading instruction focused on keeping them accountable and ensuring that book logs were completed and turned in to the teacher. By the end of the semester, Michelle's vision highlighted how she wanted to tie other cultures into her classroom environment and have parents and family members be a part of her classroom. Similarly, Terri's initial vision statement mentioned that "family members [are] expected to monitor child's nightly reading (especially young students)" (Vision Statement #1, 9/6/16). In her final vision statement, Terri emphasized that she would "conference with parents regarding student progress" and "bring in families to read" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Her vision for the role of families in reading shifted from expecting family members to monitor children's reading to recognizing that family members possess valuable resources.

In the following sections, we meet Michelle and Terri, who both envision families as possessing literacy assets, yet did not indicate that they would use those assets to guide their classroom reading instruction. We begin with a portrait of Michelle.

Michelle – Open to Transformation

"I definitely have biases in my head that I know weren't true, but they're still kind of there. And as a teacher, I know that I can't have that. I mean, as a human, I shouldn't have that. But it's just the way society is. And so,

I've really tried to address it all the time and like be conscious of it." –

Michelle, Individual Interview, 2/6/17

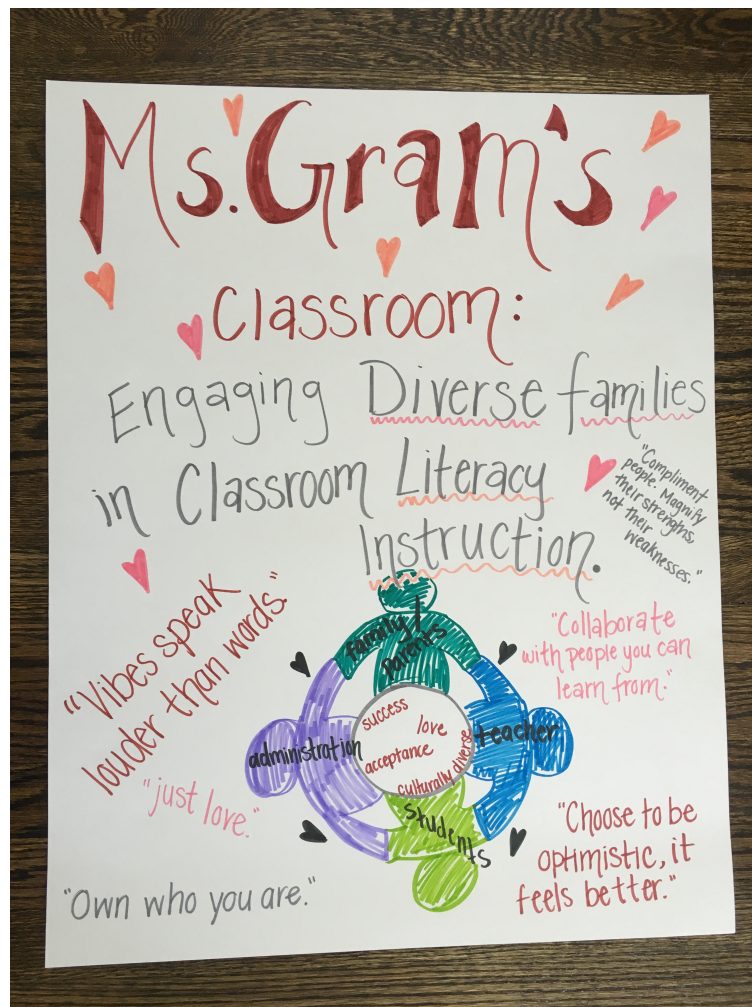
At the time of the interview, Michelle was interning in a fourth-grade classroom and indicated that she would like to teach any grade between first and fourth upon graduation. Michelle identified as a 21-year-old, White female with Jewish heritage. Growing up, Michelle remembered her mom reading to her each night before bed; and as she emerged into an independent reader, she would read every night before going to bed. During her elementary reading experiences, Michelle recalled being behind in reading and, along with her twin sister, having to go see a reading specialist during part of the school day. She mentioned that reading started to click for her while in third grade and then being moved to the above-grade-level reading group. Now, as she prepares for her future classroom, Michelle imagines a structured, yet interactive, reading environment. At the core of her vision for teaching reading, Michelle envisions learning about her students and being open to coming to understand them more deeply. In this section, we learn more about Michelle and her vision for teaching reading, the experiences that helped to develop her vision, and her levels of preparedness to engage families in her future classroom. We begin with the essence of her vision.

What is the essence of Michelle's vision? From the beginning of the semester to the end, Michelle's vision for the role of the family evolved. The evolution of her vision, along with key quotes indicating points in the semester that helped to transform her vision, demonstrates that she is open to transformation. In her first vision statement, Michelle wrote that families and the community should be held "accountable" and that teachers should be "having students write [in their agendas] to read each day for 30

minutes and having their parents sign” (Vision Statement #1, 9/6/16). She also wrote that teachers could “let students take classroom books home and [have] quarterly book logs;” and that “all of these factors hold everyone accountable to encourage students’ reading development” (Vision Statement #1, 9/6/16). In her final vision statement, Michelle wrote, “I want parents, family members, and community members to be a part of my classroom. Bringing in people to share books and traditions” (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). Michelle transitioned from viewing families as needing to be held accountable to foster reading development among their children to envisioning families as possessing literacy assets.

During the focus group, the preservice teachers were asked to spend the first 30 minutes creating a visual representation of their vision. Figure 11. below is Michelle's representation of her vision for her future classroom reading instruction.

Figure 11: Michelle's Visual Representation of Her Vision For the Role of the Family in her Reading Instruction



When Michelle described her visual representation of her vision to the group, she said the following:

My vision, my picture is this little circle of people holding hands. So they're all connected. And the different parts are family and parents,

teachers, students, and then administration. And then in the middle is kind of what we all work towards and the hopes that I have for my classroom. So some words that I put there were success, love, acceptance, and culturally diverse. So my vision came from just that I want a really strong community in my classroom and I think that family should play a huge role in literacy instruction. So when I was labeling the parts, I put family and parents at the top and then teachers, and then students. I think a lot of the time, the students connect their families to the teacher. And I think that's kind of where we lose a lot of our families, whether the kids don't really communicate or the parents don't come like, you know, we're sending letters home through the parents -- I mean through the students. So I want that communication with my families. And then I want the administration also to be involved and support my vision in my classroom. And then I put a lot of different quotes around. So, I drew a lot of hearts because I think that this can kind of be a hard topic in some schools and you want -- and I want to be as positive as possible and just kind of like spread love toward my students and let them know that, you know, my classroom is a safe spot and I love them and, you know, we're here to learn and I accept who you are, you can accept who I am even though we're different. So some of the quotes I put on here was, "Own who you are" because like, you know, diversity, it's beautiful. Compliment people, magnify their strengths, not their weaknesses. That's just something I think that's important as a teacher in general. Collaborate with people you

can learn from. So that one really kind of like, hits a nail on the head with diversity and instruction. I put to be optimistic, it feels better on here too because I think a lot of the time teachers complained a lot about parents and parents complained a lot about teachers. And it's just really bad to get into and then something that I definitely don't want to do as teacher (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Michelle's vision for engaging families stems from a desire to connect, communicate, and collaborate. She recognizes the value of diversity and working with people who have different backgrounds. She also notes the common pitfalls of family-teacher relationships in that negative perspectives can seep in and she wants to avoid complaining and focus on the positive elements of building relationships. When asked about her vision for working with diverse families and diverse populations, Michelle said the following,

I think just really trying to be nice and like open. Having something that goes home either be in English or Spanish so that [families] know what's going on in the classroom. Inviting them in to read and also celebrating their diversity. ... And like sending out a thing and [asking students] to share something about special about their families to our class. Sign up for this spot or this spot. And that's how I --- I just plan to deal with it in like a very open way. ... I think people get offended when you try to act like you know what people have been through, which I don't. So just like being a good listener, honestly, and letting them kind of like if they want to come tell me their opinions (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

Again, we see that openness and understanding form the essence of Michelle's vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. Not only is Michelle open to transforming her vision for teaching, she is also open to understanding her students and their families.

How did Michelle's vision develop? As previously discussed, Michelle's vision changed over the course of the semester. She began the course by writing in her vision statement that families should be held accountable to help their children read outside of the classroom. She concluded the semester with a vision for seeing families as having literacy resources and rich cultural assets. Both the ELCAA event and the family member interview helped Michelle's vision develop. In her ELCAA reflection, Michelle wrote the following,

I really enjoyed observing the Ethiopian storytelling event. Ethiopian storytelling is so different from what we typically observe in our American classrooms. American storytelling focuses on reading the book together: reading the story, looking at the pictures, and maybe asking some interactive questions. However, Ethiopian storytelling is different; the storyteller uses the book more as a script and rather than reading the book with children, the storyteller performs the story for the children. There seems to be much more adlibbing and personal additions to the story. This affected my vision of teaching reading because it made me realize that the standard way of reading a story may not be the norm for some of my students. It is important to understand the different ways to tell stories because the way I tell stories in my class may be unfamiliar to

some of my students. I think a great idea for engaging diverse families in my classroom would be to reach out to immigrant parents for them to share a cultural story with the class (ELCAA Reflection, 10/31/16).

The ELCAA experience seemed to have a significant effect on Michelle's vision, allowing her the opportunity to observe a specific culture's array of literacy practices and identify ways to make them applicable in her teaching. Michelle was one of the few preservice teachers to zoom in on one specific literacy practice, storytelling in her case, and to then consider how that would transfer into her classroom reading instruction.

In addition to the ELCAA, the family member interview assignment also contributed to her vision development. She interviewed one of her student's fathers and indicated that she learned more about her student in the process. In reflecting on what she learned from the overall interview experience, she wrote,

I also gained insight into the types of reading activities that her father participated in when he was a child. This helped me realize that my students' parents were all students at one point in their lives. Their personal experience with schools and teachers definitely impacts how they view my mentor teacher and me. This was a helpful reminder to remind me that some parents may have had more negative experiences growing up and it is important to be sensitive when addressing with parents (Family Member Interview Reflection, 12/3/16).

The family member interview gave Michelle the chance to step into the shoes of the father and to look through the lens of a parent. This change in perspective allowed Michelle to further develop her vision.

These two assignments appeared to contribute the most to Michelle's development over the course of the semester. However, Michelle noted in the interview how her class experiences have also helped her develop her vision. She said, "...the classes are kind of like an idealistic classroom, I think. But then you can talk and like the discussions that we have really helped kind of shape what I have a vision for of my future classroom and like what's important" (Individual Interview, 2/6/17). She also reflected on her personal experiences and how those helped to develop her vision. She noted,

... I'm really reflective on my own point of view. I think it's because I had to go to therapy my senior year of high school, I always think this.

Because when you're in therapy, you have to like talk to no one and you just reflect on everything you think. ... So I think personally that I --- that's where mine comes from where I can just kind of take bits and pieces and realize what's important. I don't know if all interns do that (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

Michelle's past experiences, as well as our semester course projects, contributed to the development of her vision. Her openness to embrace diversity stems from her courses and her teacher education program in general. Her personal experiences of going to therapy sessions in high school shaped her into a reflective person that helped her evolve into a reflective teacher. Next, we come to understand how prepared Michelle is to engage families.

How prepared is Michelle to engage families? In her pre-interview questionnaire, Michelle reported that she was "mostly prepared" (3 out of a scale of 4) to engage families in literacy and that she was also "mostly prepared" to engage *diverse* families in

literacy. Out of the seven focal participants, Michelle was the only one to indicate “mostly prepared” on both questions. When asked in the individual interview if she felt prepared to engage families, she said,

I think so. One of the things I want to do is have parent volunteers come in. And maybe every Friday, or every other Friday, read a story or talk about something. In my classroom right now, we write a letter home. We have a weekly newsletter. So that’s the way I’d like involving families. But, like they don’t really have a role in the classroom, it’s just kind of like, “This is what we’re doing in the classroom. Let me tell you about it.” So, I would want in my own classroom to be more in that. And I think that I am prepared to do that. We’ve talked a lot about that. And just trying to be empathetic to their busy schedules especially in this area like my parents are working multiple jobs, so that makes a lot of sense like you have to be non-judgmental and just kind of like open to what they do. I think I’m prepared. And like I said, I really, when I start teaching, want to make that a big part of my classroom if I can (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

Michelle recognized that engaging families must consist of more than simply communicating, so she envisions parents and families coming into the classroom to volunteer. Although she pictures parents and families volunteering in her future classroom, she went on to discuss a barrier to bringing families into the classroom. In the county where she is finishing her student teaching placement, Michelle cited the volunteer paperwork, fingerprinting, and fees as barriers to families participating in the

classroom, or even on field trips. In reference to fingerprinting, she said, "...it costs like \$80 so none of the parents want to do it" (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

For Michelle, a key way to engage families is to get them involved in the school, particularly in the classroom as a volunteer. Though, she noted that if family members could not pay for the volunteer application, then she would ask her students to have their parents tell them a story and then they come to class and share it.

During the individual interview, Michelle was asked what experiences have contributed to her level of preparedness to engage families. She mentioned the following experiences have contributed to her preparedness: a) her teacher education program, b) the family member interview assignment, and c) another course about teaching language and the variations of language. She began by discussing her teacher education experiences:

So many topics and so many of our classes is about diversity and like learning to reach all of your students and where they come from. So, it's just always on my mind now, like it's kind of ingrained in me like, okay, diversity, every culture needs to be represented in the library just like things like that, that I never would have thought of before coming -- like being in the college of education. And like witnessing how the different professors interact with us and how you guys engage us. That's definitely like set an example, too. And then with our internships as well, that's another example of maybe what not to do or how you could do more, or like what they do to engage families and kind of like what it's like in the real world because parents can't always come in. So, that's definitely --

the college of Ed does a really good job with that, like talking about diversity and just like all those issues in general. Like I've really feel prepared in that area (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

Michelle pointed out how she felt as though the teacher education program prepared her to teach and work with diverse populations and to ensure representation of her students in her instruction, emphasizing the deep-rooted nature of having a culturally responsive lens.

In addition to her teacher education experiences, Michelle also mentioned the family member interview assignment and how it helped her apply what she learned about working with families. She said,

The family member interview, for sure, just like that just kind of applied everything that we had learned into dealing with families. Because it's interestingly, when you're thinking about interviewing someone, you're thinking like, "Okay, I'm going to ask these questions and they're going to answer this way." And it's really not like that. Like it's more like a conversation and you don't want to be rude and like jotting things down and I'd never done that before until I did the interview. And like my dad was late and so I had to rush and I'm like -- so it was much -- it was very interesting. But then, I still got what I wanted and I got the information and I could email him with follow-up stuff, but that definitely prepared me for like actually talking to parents (Individual Interview, 2/6/17).

For Michelle, the family member interview allowed her the opportunity to have a conversation with a parent and to gain experience in actually engaging a family member.

She was able to learn more about her student and her student's family, but also become more comfortable in speaking with a parent, which helped to contribute to her level of preparedness to engage families.

Finally, a course about language variations and how to teach aspects of language increased Michelle's levels of preparedness to engage families and to engage diverse families in literacy. In reference to this course, Michelle said the following,

This past semester, [another professor's] class was really great, too. She was fab. Like her class, she talks so much about how you speak and like Ebonics. And I didn't even know what that was until that class. Like that's pretty bad. And so, I'm like I didn't even realize that Ebonics was like African-American language, like syntax. And like, you can't just go and like speak Ebonics like you have -- it's like learned and it's the way of speaking the same way and like a dialect. And, that really opened my eyes and really made me -- like because I definitely have biases in my head that I know weren't true but they're still kind of there. And as a teacher, I know that I can't have that. I mean, as a human, I shouldn't have that. But like it's just like the way society is. And so, I've really tried to address it all the time and like be conscious of it. And I think her class did such a good job because when I'm interviewing these parents and they say something that's like grammatically incorrect, I'm like, "I can't judge them for that." Like, "They're from another country", or like, "That's how they speak at home." Like when my kids speak grammatically incorrect to me, like they're just -- I never correct them anymore because it doesn't

matter. And like I think it's so beautiful that she -- like that's stuck in my head and she did such a good job.

Similar to the family member interview, her language variations course offered Michelle glimpses into other people's lives and perspectives. Throughout these three areas, Michelle was very receptive to change and open to being transformed as a teacher.

Michelle was one of the few preservice teachers whose vision transformed from "emerging" at the beginning of the semester to "developing" by the end of it. This change can be attributed, in part, to Michelle's willingness and desire to be open to change and transformation. Michelle's vision of seeing families as possessing valuable literacy resources significantly developed over the course of the semester, due in part in to her openness to transform as a teacher. She attributed her fall 2016 coursework and her overall teacher education experiences to contributing to her vision development. Michelle's willingness to learn, grow, and change should be recognized by teacher educators and used to help preservice teachers, like Michelle, develop their vision for teaching reading through a funds of knowledge lens. The course design and vision development opportunities coupled with Michelle's openness to transform helped to change Michelle's vision for engaging families throughout the semester. Now, we meet Terri, another preservice teacher with a vision of family members as having valuable literacy assets.

Terri – Finding the Balance

“I feel like curriculum and what the principal ... wants you to do can put a barrier on what you want to do. So I feel like finding the balance between getting all that stuff accomplished while also like coming up with fun ways to incorporate reading.” -Terri, Individual Interview, 1/31/17

Terri is a 21-year-old White female who, at the time of the interview, was interning as a student teacher in a first grade classroom. When asked what grade level she prefers to teach once she completes her teacher education program, she said she would like to teach first grade, second grade, or third grade. Growing up, Terri went to a “predominantly White, privileged elementary school” (Individual Interview, 1/31/17) where she recalls having silent reading, book fairs, and book projects, and specifically felt as though the teachers emphasized independent silent reading. She noted that she never really enjoyed reading and struggled to find books that would keep her interest; yet she remembers being a fast reader, but sometimes lacking the comprehension needed to fully understand what she read. She also recollects the teachers and parents having strong communication, with teachers informing parents of any learning issues that they observed in students. For example, Terri mentioned that her twin sister had difficulties in math and reading and her teachers made her mom aware of their observations. Terri described her hometown as a wealthy “small suburban town” where “a lot of the moms stay home with their children and dads I guess” (Individual Interview, 1/31/17). She went on to add, “It was a very competitive town, lots of kids going to Ivy League Schools and other really good schools. I think it’s just competition and also parents wanting their children to succeed, and teachers being aware of that also” (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

What is the essence of Terri's vision? Throughout her written class assignments, the interview, and the focus group, Terri's vision showed a deep appreciation for diversity and emphasized the need for diverse texts (i.e., windows and mirrors), a diverse classroom library with books featuring "characters of different genders, ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, etc." (Vision Statement #1, 9/6/16), and "assessment that is accessible for English Language Learners" (Vision Statement #2, 12/6/16). She understands that her future students will all have unique aspects and come from diverse backgrounds, and she envisions her future classroom to be designed to address the distinctive characteristics of each of her students. Her vision for literacy and instruction stems from a school-based perspective, and she envisions trying to balance the ways to meet the diverse learning needs of all of her students while also adhering to the school literacy curricula.

During the focus group, the preservice teachers were asked to spend the first 30 minutes creating a visual representation of their vision. In contrast to the other six participants who used poster board to represent their visions, Terri created a power point presentation to visually represent her vision.

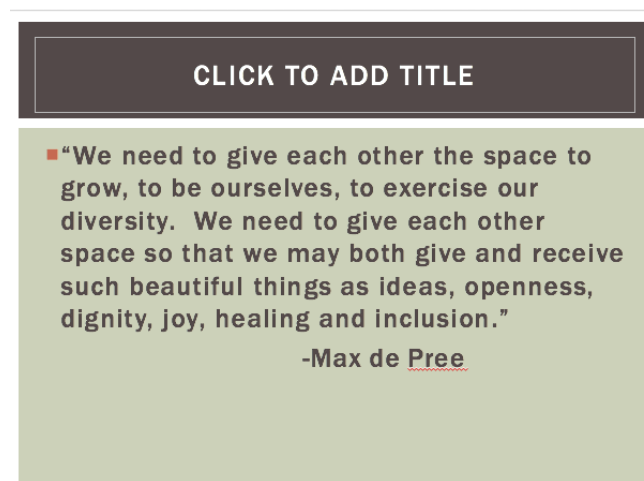
Figure 12. below is Terri's representation of her vision for her future classroom reading instruction.

Figure 12: Terri's Visual Representation of her Vision for the Role of the Family in her Reading Instruction

Slide 1



Slide 2



During the show-and-tell portion of the focus group, Terri began by explaining her slides, starting with the second slide. First, she mentioned that she found the quote online during her work time during the focus group. She read the quote and then explained her thoughts with regards to Slide 3.

Slide 3

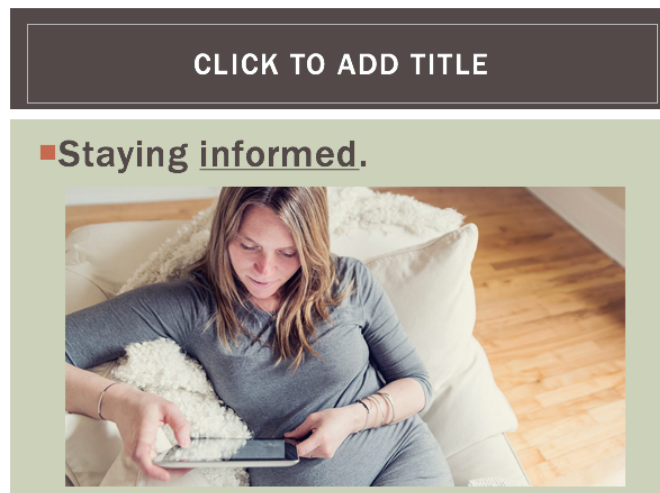


In her explanation of her ideas around her third slide, Terri shared the following in the focus group:

So I just included some of my main ideas relating to diverse families. So, my first one is instilling confidence among all family members. I think it's really important for teachers that one of the first steps is making the family members feel like they have the ability to speak up for their rights, or communicate with the teacher. So, if they don't feel comfortable coming into the classroom or speaking with the teacher, everything from that point on isn't going to work. So I think really setting this up right from the beginning is important for teachers to do (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Here, Terri conveys that it is the teacher's responsibility to make sure that parents and family members feel comfortable and confident with regards to their relationship with the school and the teacher. Thus, Terri's vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction starts with building confidence among the family members. She then moved on to describe her fourth slide.

Slide 4



Terri shared about her fourth slide using the following words:

Staying informed. As teachers, each year we're going to get new classes of students and I think going out of our way to kind of just learn about different cultures, like read books, read articles, like there's so many resources out there that even if we just read something once a week, we learn about different cultures. And I think that your job as a teacher is kind of to stay informed about diversity in different students (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

In her description of this idea from slide 4, Terri illustrates that she envisions herself staying informed about various cultures, especially the cultures present in her

classroom each year. The interesting aspect of this description is that Terri emphasized that she would get a new class each year as a teacher, but instead of asking questions of the families of her students each year and building relationships with parents and families in order to learn more about her students' specific cultures, she envisions reading books and articles. This emphasis indicates that she recognizes the importance of learning about her students' cultures and backgrounds each year, but plans to seek external sources (e.g., books, articles, online resources, etc.) to learn about her students.

Slide 5



Next, Terri shared about her fifth slide. She said,

So also keeping the families informed. This kind of when you think – this is a different situation but [it] made me think back to an IEP meeting that I sat in on a few weeks ago and how the special education teachers kind of gave parents pamphlets and things like these are other resources that you can have in your community. So just making sure that the families feel like up-to-date or that they have these resources if they need them (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Terri's description of how she envisions keeping families informed aligns with how she envisions keeping herself informed: reading information from written text. Regular, on-going communication and dialogue with families in order to learn more about their home literacy practices is not how Terri envisions informing herself; nor is conversation and relationship-building the way Terri envisions keeping families informed. This is interesting because Terri expressed how she wants to engage diverse families and embrace the unique aspects of her students, but she is not emphasizing conversations and relationships as the way to carry out those initiatives.

Slide 6



In addition to keeping herself and families informed, Terri stressed the importance of teachers being proactive. In her explanation of this part of her vision, she discussed how the use of translators can be one way to be proactive and to plan in advance to be accommodating to parents and families. Terri said,

Also, translators, we have translators at our school that can totally help parents and make the communication and interactions a lot easier for English for other language speakers. I think this is important in teaching,

just being proactive and stay in contact with all families. If you see a student behind or anything just making sure to reach out to parents even if it might be a little more difficult to get in touch or to translate, things like that. It's important (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

In this description, Terri's elementary experiences are echoed. She mentioned that her elementary teachers were quick to inform parents of learning issues or other problems; and here, we see that Terri would follow suit and be proactive about letting parents know if their child is falling behind. This illustrates how the core of her vision is to find the balance. Terri sought to find the balance between her vision for working with families from her existing internship experiences and her own background experiences in elementary where she observed her teachers reaching out to families.

Slide 7

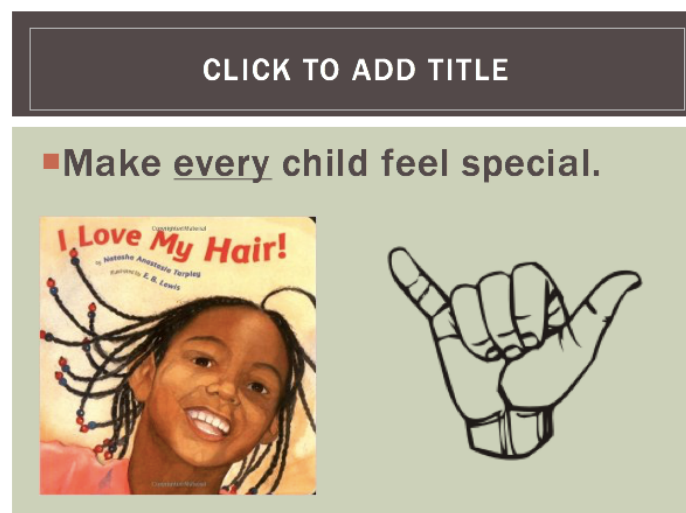


In her description of her next aspect of her vision, she referred back to how she would keep families informed. Here she mentioned how having a classroom blog could help her keep families updated on what is going on in the classroom. She said,

I think it will be really cool to have a classroom blog just for all parents to stay informed and I don't know how exactly this relates to diverse families but just keeping –once again, keeping families informed and you could even use like –it would be easier for parents to translate it written out, they can just copy and paste it, things like that. So I think that will be cool (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

In this example, we see another balancing act for Terri's vision. Part of her vision is rooted in a school-based perspective where what is going on in the classroom is important for parents to know, but does not highlight that what is going on in the home and within the family unit is important for the teacher to know. Yet, Terri continues to refer back to diverse families and the importance of teachers offering translating tools. So, on one hand, Terri highlights that she wants to engage diverse families, but on the other hand, she envisions engaging them through a school-focused lens.

Slide 8



Next, Terri described her images and her text from her eighth slide. She used the following words:

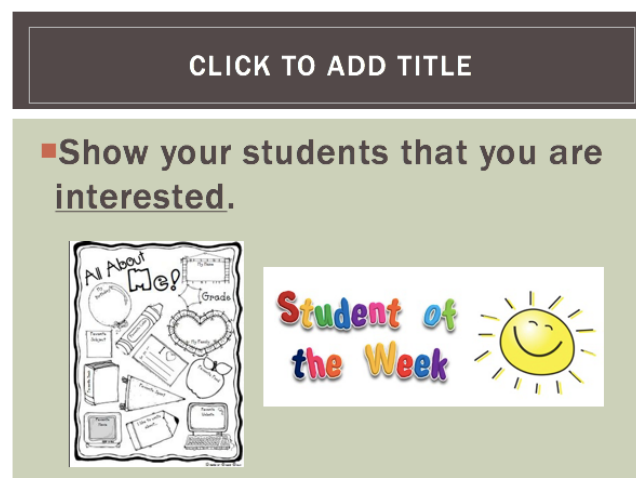
Make every child feel special. I think I talked about this in our class, but I read this book last semester like students for writing fundamentals and one of my students was really able to relate to this book and it was kind of very eye-opening because we have learned about creating a diverse classroom library and that was one instance where I really saw come into play like everything ... this means like me too in sign language. So she was constantly doing that and she could just relate to the pain of getting your hair braided and I just thought it was so inspiring and cool to see (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

In her interview, Terri shared about her experience with one of her students, an African American girl who strongly related to the book *I Love My Hair*. Terri reflected on this experience in the interview and also added a visual to her presentation during the focus group. In the interview she said the following:

So I feel like finding the balance between getting all that stuff accomplished while also like coming up with fun ways to incorporate reading. ... Especially text that the kids can relate to, like this year one of the girls [in my class], she's an African American student and we read a book in the writing fundamentals unit called *I Love My Hair* and it just spoke to her basically. My [mentor] teacher was saying how it hurts when her mom does her hair and [the student] was like "Oh yeah, like sometimes it hurts." Even though no other kid in the class really knew, it was cool for them to see how [the student] could relate to the book (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Terri envisioned connecting with her students and learning more about ways that she could learn about each child and make them feel special and to help them relate to certain texts. But, she indicated that she would need to find ways to meet the curriculum demands and other teacher responsibilities while also making her reading instruction engaging and bringing in each students' backgrounds and interests. She discussed these ideas further in her final presentation slide.

Slide 9



In her final slide, Terri shared the part of her vision that involved showing students that teachers are interested in them. She described the final slide in the following words:

Show your students that you are interested. So like one easy, fairly easy way, I think to do this is like student of the week or an all about me pamphlet that you send out at the beginning of the year. Like, these are things that you can learn about their favorite color, their favorite place to go, and you can kind of get to know your students on another level. So, just every student has and loves different things and this is an easy way to

find out these things and kind of just like...students love to hear that you're interested in their life and, "Oh, you went to Ocean City this summer?" you can just relate to them on a level where it's cool for them.

Although Terri mentioned having informal conversations with her students to ask them about their interests or to learn more about them, her vision for consistently showing students that she is interested involves classroom-based activities such as "Student of the Week" or "All About Me" pamphlets. The classroom-based activities demonstrate the school-based perspective of her vision, but her desire to learn more about her students illustrates her vision for wanting to make all of her students with diverse backgrounds feel special.

At the core of her vision, Terri recognizes the many unique aspects of not only her existing students in her student-teaching placement, but also of her future students. She also realizes that curriculum demands of a teacher and what her future principal may expect of her are elements of her position that she may have to juggle in order to find the balance to also engage all of her students and their families in ways that she would like to engage them. She is also trying to find the balance between what worked for family engagement in her hometown and what will work for a classroom of students from a diverse array of backgrounds that she could potentially find herself teaching in next year. Next, we read about how Terri's vision developed.

How did Terri's vision develop? For Terri, her student-teaching placement experiences have helped her develop her vision. During the focus group, she noted how her vision had been shaped "from comparing [her] elementary educational experiences to the experiences [she's] had in placements" (Focus Group, 2/7/17). She classified her

elementary education as lacking diversity and her placement experiences have allowed her to engage students and families from a variety of backgrounds. She said,

I come from a very –I mean, I guess there was diversity, but not in regards to different races and different ethnicities, it's kind of like, a lot of students just like me. And then I come to [the University] and I see these schools around [the] county and things and how diverse and different they are from my own experience, so that has been really helpful for me because not only it is making me realize that I want to teach in that situation where I'm in now, but it has made me just a lot more aware. ... So it's just cool that's been really helpful for me to have all these different placement experiences (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Throughout the focus group and the interview, Terri referenced how her internship experiences have truly shaped her vision. One key way that she has developed her vision was to reflect on her elementary experiences in her hometown and to compare and contrast those experiences to her current student-teaching experiences. When asked what her current internship placement looked like, Terri shared,

I'm in a first grade autism inclusion classroom. ... We have 18 students and I believe four of them...no five of them now have IEPs [Individualized Education Plans]. And one of them has the IQ of a two-year-old. Our classroom, the general education kids, we're lucky because they're well behaved and for the most part on grade level, and some above, some are below, but it's not—we don't have any ESL kids because we have the autism inclusion. ... [The racial makeup is] predominantly

Latino and then we have three African American students, and I guess one White student. ... And one girl, she's—I think her father is Italian, and her mother is Chinese (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Terri described her student-teaching classroom as diverse because she has students who differ in their reading levels, students from multiple races and ethnicities, students who have parents from other countries, and students who speak other languages in addition to English. In discussing how her vision developed, she shared how her placement helped her to readjust her assumptions about the families in her school community. She shared the following,

Because I learned from the parent-teacher conferences, when I was coming into [the school], I was making my own assumptions about what the parents would be like. But I noticed that a lot of them like even if they can't speak English at home and stuff, or one parent can, for example, one mom came in and was all concerned that her daughter wouldn't get her homework completed because her husband only speaks Spanish. So, they do have these concerns that I just made other assumptions about (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Terri's internship experiences allowed her to interact with families from backgrounds and communities that she had not thoroughly interacted with prior to her placement. These experiences offered her the opportunity to learn about different families and to reflect on her own presuppositions and then to rethink her vision for engaging diverse families in her future classroom. In addition to her placement, her teacher

education courses offered more opportunities to grow and reflect in order to develop her vision. She said,

A lot of things bring me back to ... [the] class about language. And just how I can't use my experiences growing up to be the basis of my knowledge about students and even I think we read an article about how different cultures discipline their children differently. So, maybe in one culture, because I think I read in the article like if you say I love the say so and so is doing this, I forget what it was, but it was that the teacher might not realize that that's favored in our society or stuff. ... Yeah, and the different ways that parents discipline kids at home and things and just you have to think, put yourself in a million different shoes (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Terri's course about language variations also discussed the many different cultural practices some families may possess. She took that information and insight to heart and reflected on how she could be more culturally aware and knowledgeable. She added,

And trying to be as knowledgeable as you can about different cultures and being as open and just making the families feel like you're there for them. Because I'm sure as a parent who can't speak English for example, that's really stressful because deep down you obviously want the best for your child (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

In addition to her overall internship experiences and her coursework, Terri mentioned that parent-teacher conferences helped to develop her vision. She said,

I'm really glad that I was able to see that happen. One, because it's really nerve-racking and I saw the way my teacher approached it. It's not really a stressful thing. She had all of the things she wanted laid out and the parents came in. And it wasn't really a high-stress environment. It was just informing the parents. So I'm glad I got to see that and helped. She went over their DRA level, their sight words, their reading level, and she provided them with websites and things like that. So that was helpful to see how she engaged the parents well (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

On top of being able to observe her mentor teacher conduct the parent-teacher conferences, Terri was able to perform one with one of her student's mothers, as well. She said that helped her develop her vision for engaging families. She also attributed the family member interview assignment to helping to develop her vision and noted that she interviewed the same mother whom she conducted the parent-teacher conference. Next, we learn about Terri's levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy.

How prepared is Terri to engage families? When asked how prepared she felt to engage families in literacy, Terri categorized her level of preparedness as a 3 (mostly prepared) out of 4-point scale. When asked how prepared she felt to engage *diverse* families in literacy, she labeled herself a 2 (somewhat prepared) out of a 4-point scale. Throughout her interview and the focus group, Terri frequently referenced language differences and noted the importance of using translators or translation tools to communicate with families. From this, Terri seems to mostly associate "diverse families" with "families whose native language is not English." This association could be the key

reason for the differences in levels of preparedness to engage families and to engage *diverse* families in literacy.

During the individual interview, Terri was asked to further describe her level of preparedness to engage families. She said,

I haven't seen that much engagement in my classroom, but based on my experiences growing up, because I don't know exactly where I want to teach, if I taught in a place similar to where I grew up, there's no doubt that you have to be engaging yourself with the families like they're probably calling the teacher twice a week. So, you have to just address each parent and home like I even think it would be cool to set up like a classroom blog or something to show what we're doing in the class. And, if I were to teach somewhere like [where I'm student-teaching], I mean, there are some families that reach out, but it's mostly like we're reaching out to them (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Again, we see Terri trying to find a balance between her own experiences growing up and her internship experiences with families that seem to differ from her hometown. Further, Terri added to her response by putting herself in a parent's shoes and what she believes they would want from a teacher. She said,

As a parent, I would want to know if my child is struggling or if there's something I can do to help my child. And I understand that a lot of parents, in [my internship school community] at least, work multiple jobs. And I feel like giving them the option to help is important, like you can just make assumptions that this family does not want to know. So, I guess,

just reaching out if you have concerns or if you know of ways that you can help their child as opposed to just letting problems get worse and just making assumptions that might not be true (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

In this quote, we see how Terri envisions using strategies for family engagement that were used in her own school experiences in her hometown and applying those to her vision for her future classroom. Overall, Terri recognized that many ideas and strategies exist for engaging families and the best way to become better at working with families is to simply try. At the end of the interview, these were her final thoughts:

I mean, I just think overall that every teacher is going to have a different way to engage families. Obviously, there are a lot of ways that you can do it and a lot of teachers probably do similar things to what I've said. But there's not one right way, but I think the one right way is that you're at least trying to do it in your classroom and you're making an effort to make learning accessible for all kids (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Although she did not indicate that she was 100% prepared to engage families, Terri recognized that many strategies, ideas, and best practices exist to engage families and to help students from diverse backgrounds to learn in the classroom. Further, she realized that teachers must find the balance among all those strategies; and for her, it meant simply putting forth the effort and doing the best she can.

In this section, we learned more about Michelle and Terri's visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. Both preservice teachers recognized that families possess literacy assets, but envisioned using in-class student literacy assessments to guide their classroom reading instruction. Over

the course of the semester, Michelle and Terri's visions evolved and developed from initially seeing families as supporters of the teacher to viewing them as possessing resources to foster literacy development among their children. Both preservice teachers wrestled with new ideas and concepts they observed in their internship placements and coursework, and they also reflected on other life experiences that helped to shape their visions. Michelle was open to change and transformation, indicating that she wanted to always be conscious of her assumptions and biases. Also open to change, Terri recognized the tension between her own experiences in elementary and her internship experiences and aimed to find the balance.

These vision portraits are important for teacher educators to ponder because they provide insight into what many preservice teachers experience within their teacher education programs. Being more cognizant of the preservice teachers who are willing to change and open to being transformed throughout their program can allow teacher educators to help develop their visions for teaching reading and using diverse family literacy practices to guide their future classroom reading instruction.

In the next section, we closely examine three preservice teachers who had strong and clear visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

A Deeper Understanding of Visions of Using Diverse Family Literacy Practices to Guide Classroom Reading Instruction

In this final section, we meet three preservice teachers who all had visions of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction: Marie, Luciana, and Jen. In each portrait, we discover key characteristics of each

preservice teacher, including what lies at the core of their visions. We begin by learning about Marie and her vision.

Marie – Introspective and Confident

“I would really like to learn more about the populations especially like in the areas I’m teaching in. Like I know in this area it’s a lot of Hispanic families [that] are moving in. I know where my cousin lives in Minnesota, [there are] a lot of Somalian families. And I feel like I’ve grown to really like to learn [about] the Hispanic culture starting when I was in middle school. So I feel pretty confident...but if I were to move to Minnesota, I don’t know anything about the Somalian culture, so that’s something I would have to learn.” –Marie, Individual Interview, 1/31/17

At the time of the interview, Marie, a 22-year-old White female, was interning in a first-grade classroom and indicated that she would like to teach any grade between first and third upon graduation. In speaking of her childhood, Marie recalls reading with her “parents all the time” and that she “was forced to read for 20 minutes” (Individual Interview, 1/31/17). Her parents would set a timer and let her sit anywhere in the house during her 20 minutes. She confessed that she would usually just stare out the window and that she usually would not actually read. With regards to her teachers engaging her family in literacy, she remembered back-to-school nights that focused on literacy (e.g., literacy fairs) and that these would occur once or twice per year. She remembered her teachers being very open to parents and families and being willing to come and talk to them. Marie mentioned several times throughout the interview that she believes how each person is raised and their childhood really helps to shape who they are and who they

grow into as adults. In Marie's portrait, we see how she believes her experiences have helped to shape her vision. We begin with learning more about the essence of her vision.

What is the essence of Marie's vision? At the core of Marie's vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide and inform her classroom reading instruction lies introspection and confidence. Over time, Marie has developed a vision through experience with diverse students and then reflecting on those experiences. She demonstrated the ability to think critically about her experiences and to identify where she is confident in her abilities and then also areas in which she would like more knowledge and insight. For example, during the interview when asked about her vision for working with diverse families, Marie shared the following:

I would really like to learn more about the populations especially like in the areas I'm teaching in. Like I know in this area it's a lot of Hispanic families are moving in. I know where my cousin lives in Minnesota, a lot of Somalian families. And I feel like I've grown to really like to learn the Hispanic culture starting when I was in middle school. So I feel pretty confident, not pretty confident, but I feel like I know more than some people. But if I were to move to Minnesota, I don't know anything about the Somalian culture, so that's something I would have to learn"

(Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

This excerpt shows how Marie feels confident in knowing quite a bit about the Hispanic culture, but demonstrates her level of introspection in her ability to identify certain cultures in which she lacks knowledge and familiarity.

Another example of Marie demonstrating her level of introspection and reflection was found in her interview. When asked to describe her vision for using family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction, Marie said the following:

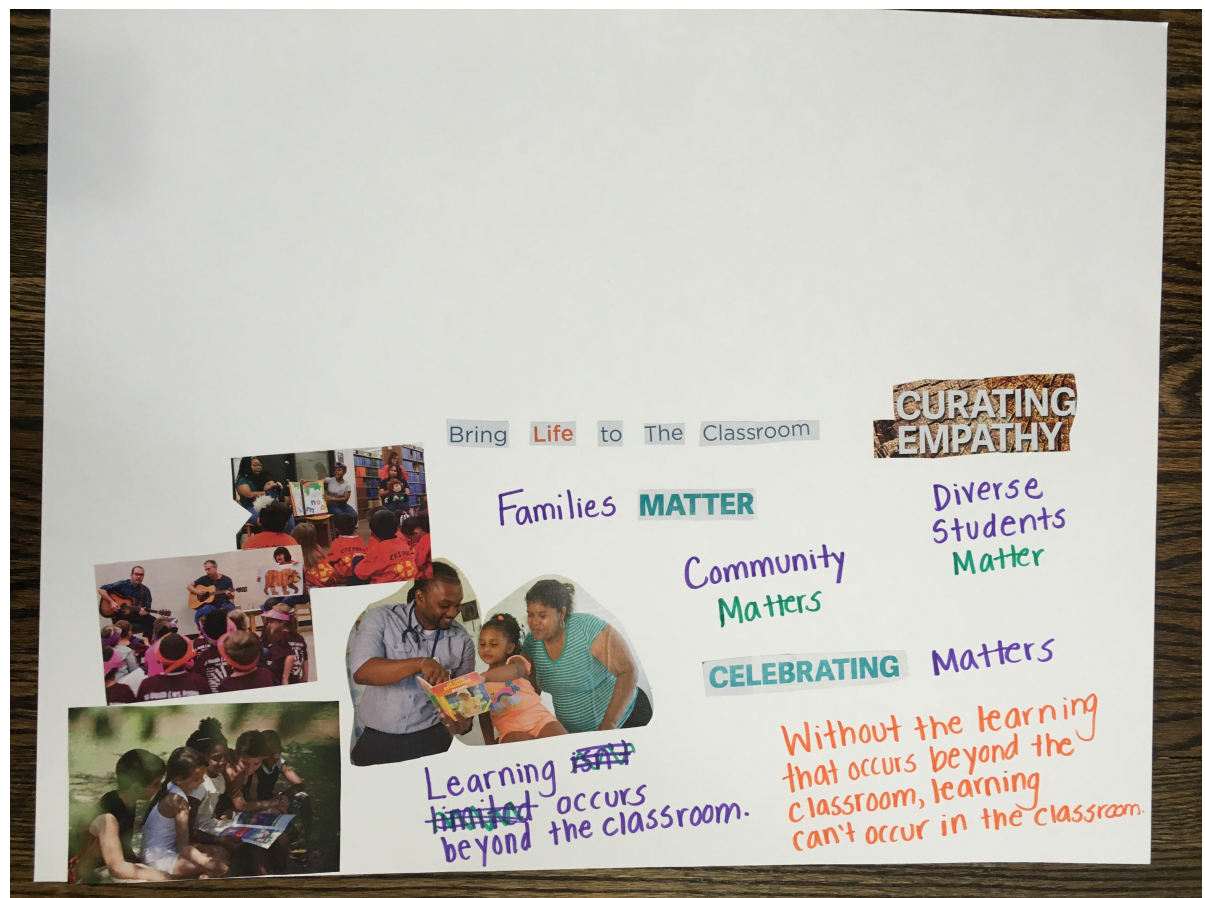
I feel like it will definitely help my patience, because sometimes I get a little impatient. But then I have to step back and realize like the way my students are learning isn't the way I learned. They don't necessarily have private tutors, people that sit down with them every night for three hours to do one piece of paper. But I guess just really keeping that in mind and then from that point be able to go into things like what are my students interested in, what are my students' strengths? Like taking what I know about their culture, how do they communicate, so like what might their writing look like, what might their speaking look like, what might it look like when they listen? ... I would like to think, are all my students being reached? And I wouldn't think are Hispanic students because I wouldn't like generalize it, but I would think this way, whoever learns [this way] does this lesson fit them? And if it doesn't, then we need to step back and maybe like add in something or cut something out" (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

In this excerpt, Marie illustrates how she envisions learning about her students and their cultural backgrounds through a literacy lens and then planning her lessons designed to their diverse backgrounds. She indicates a level of confidence in that she can plan lessons designed to her diverse classroom, but that she understands where she will

need to learn more about her students and reflect on how their cultures and backgrounds factor into her literacy planning.

Further, during the focus group, each preservice teacher shared and described the visions that they had created. Figure 13. below is Marie's visual representation of her vision for her future classroom reading instruction.

Figure 13: Marie's Visual Representation of her Vision for Using Diverse Family Literacy Practices to Guide Her Classroom Reading Instruction



Marie shared the following with the focus group to describe her vision:

So, the main point here was to bring life to the classroom even though that's the smallest text. I have a huge belief that learning obviously occurs

beyond the classroom and without learning that occurs beyond the classroom it can't occur within the classroom. So without the true support of families, the community, and everyone else, real learning---learning won't go to its full potential for students. Like learning will occur, but it won't go to where it can go. And I found these pictures that show unique learning situations like these two events. So it looks like—this one looks like it could be out of a public library or at a school library. This one looks like—it might be in a gym or something. This diversity to learning from each other like reading a book together and showing the community. And then this is a picture from—I think it was a doctor's office, the nurse reading with the family. So I thought that was really important. I wrote stuff like families matter, community matters, diverse students matter. And when I say diverse students, it's all students. So it's not just like our students that are culturally different than me or look different than me. It's all students because all students have multiple layers, like an onion. I said celebrating matters. Celebrating our families, celebrating our community, celebrating each other, it's a huge part of literacy. And then of course we want to create empathy for one another (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Marie's description of her visual representation of her vision illustrates that she has reflected on the role families play and how learning occurs outside of the classroom. Her explanation also indicates that she has thought deeply about the idea of diversity and that she needs to address all aspects of diversity when planning her literacy lessons. Further, her account shows that she envisions taking a positive approach and working

with families by celebrating them. After Marie shared her initial description, the other preservice teachers were given time to ask questions or to provide comments. Below is the follow-up discussion to Marie's sharing of her vision:

Emily: When I first saw celebrating matters, I mean, I thought like celebrating students in the classroom. But, I like how you said celebrating with families, because that's super important to like celebrate the hard work that families do, you know.

Marie: And I think you can often maybe like forget how hard these families are working. I mean there's always like these assumptions that these families don't come to the school events like they just really could care less or they're not involved in their child's education. But I think it's important to like step away from that and really celebrate them, celebrate their accomplishment, celebrate their pride for their child and their love and their uniqueness.

Terri: I also think it's important that you identified that all students are diverse and ... you would recognize ... every student is unique. So I think that's really important.

In this exchange, Marie is able to emphasize the aspects of her vision that show that she has contemplated the assumptions placed on some of the families at her placement school and that she envisions celebrating them and building partnerships with them in order to use their diverse family literacy practices to inform her classroom reading instruction. Later in the focus group, the preservice teachers were asked to identify one word that most closely defined their visions. Marie said, "I think my one word would be empathy. Just creating empathy between your students, between yourself and family, between yourself and students. ... Just the whole love, further to like having that feeling and being able to do things like out of empathy for one another" (Focus

Group, 2/7/17). The idea that Marie used the word empathy indicates her level of introspection. Empathy requires one to be able to put oneself in another person's situation, to see from another person's perspective. Marie's vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her reading instruction is rooted in her ability to step into the shoes of each family and to learn more about their literacy practices by envisioning life from their perspective.

From the interview and focus group, we see illustrations of Marie's confidence for learning about families and a clear vision for understanding the unique aspects of her students and their families. She exemplifies a level of introspection in that she has considered the broad nature of literacy and that it occurs beyond the classroom as well as in the classroom. These characteristics are important for teacher educators to note in order to tap into these characteristics when preservice teachers demonstrate them. In this section, we learned about Marie's vision and what lies at the core of it; next, we read about how her vision was shaped and developed.

How did Marie's vision develop? Marie attributed her life experiences, teacher education experiences, course assignments, and tutoring to the development of her vision. When asked during the focus group what had contributed to the shaping of their visions, Marie shared the following:

When I was in elementary school ... which the part I was at was like predominately White upper middle class. But then as I moved to my middle school and then to high school which is now the most diverse city in the United States apparently, according to this one website—one website that people put all over Facebook. I don't know, like I felt like

growing up I was like I got this, I understand the diverse [range of] people. My mom always pushed me to have diverse friendships, to accept all, to invite anyone over who I want to have over and stuff like that, but then when I go into my placement I had such a different view now, like being more mature, being an adult, like taking everything from the University like what they've taught us and my life experience, I feel like that's really like it shaped me. So, even though I've thought I had it all together just like having that added boost has really made a difference (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Again, we see Marie's level of introspection in her thinking back on her own K-12 experiences and identifying that while she had many experiences with diverse people, she still had more to learn. We also come to understand some of the experiences that have shaped her vision, including her life and teacher education experiences.

Further, during the individual interview, Marie shared about specific course assignments that have helped to develop her vision. She shared the following,

So definitely the one you made us do last semester [the family member interview assignment], that was so helpful to really reach out to someone. And the person I chose, it was because at my placement there was an assigned social studies teacher. This mom was like, "I want my kid to have a teacher, so she would come in and observe." But I remember one day she walked in and she was observing me. I was like, "Who's this?" And it was a parent. ... So it was really nice engaging with her. And she was happy, she was like, "Yes, I'll come. I really want to get to know who

is in my child's classroom." She told me all the stuff about her child and it was so enlightening to know. I didn't know she came from a private school. I didn't know she was adopted. I didn't know she didn't like to finish reading books, like I didn't know all this stuff so that assignment was like, wow, I know I could learn so much from people. I'm trying to think if there were any other assignments engaging with families. I really don't think there are, which kind of makes me sad, but I really don't think there are (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Because Marie is so introspective, she felt as though she gained a lot of insight and knowledge about how to engage families and how to learn more about her student through the family member interview assignment. This excerpt illustrates how much she was able to learn about the student by engaging the parent. Classroom teachers can learn a great deal about their students throughout the school year, but this underscores a deeper level of learning about students gained through parent engagement. Additionally, this excerpt highlights the effectiveness of teacher education course assignments that focus on providing preservice teachers with experience in parent and family engagement. Marie notes how much more she could have developed if she had been provided with more family engagement assignments over the course of her teacher education program.

Lastly, Marie attributed her experience with tutoring as another factor in shaping her vision. When asked what other experiences outside of her teacher education program have helped to shape her vision for engaging families and learning about their literacy practices, Marie said,

Definitely tutoring. This girl I've tutored for the third year, it's very interesting how her family used literacy. The mom is from Ukraine and the dad is from Bolivia and they both immigrated here and went to school here. And it's very, I don't know, they want her to excel but they help her from a distance. And I'm trying to like teach the mom some of the things I'm learning like she needs to be interested in the books [that her daughter is reading]. But the mom is like, "I want her to read the classics." And I'm like, "Well, no, that's not where she should be right now." It's just been interesting to watch how like, yeah, just how they want her to do everything but they stay at a distance. ... I guess [their view of literacy] is school-dependent but then it's also like they hire me to come in. So it's like part of the thing the mom has told me is the way she learned in Ukraine is different than here [in the U.S.] so that's kind of why there's a distance. And I can see that's why there might be a distance like between my students and their parents (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Marie's experience in working with one student with two parents from two different countries and cultures allowed her to have open conversations with the parents to understand their background and views of teaching literacy. When Marie discussed the idea of "distance" between the parents and the children, she means that some parents may take a hands-off approach to teaching their children reading skills based on their culture and background. In this scenario, the mom relied on academic reading tutors and the school to instruct her daughter in reading, yet she wanted to ensure her daughter was receiving the education she felt was best (i.e., reading the classics). For Marie, her ability

to try to understand where the mom was coming from with regards to literacy instruction allowed her not only to shape her vision, but also to build a stronger relationship with the family and offer literacy instruction more suited to the child's cultural family background. Her tutoring experience also allowed her to build her confidence in working with other families in the future. Next, we learn about Marie's levels of preparedness to engage families.

How prepared is Marie to engage families? During the interview, Marie described herself as "mostly prepared" (3 on a 4-point scale) to engage families in literacy. She also described herself as "somewhat prepared" (2 on a 4-point scale) to engage diverse families in literacy. When asked to describe her level of preparedness to engage families, Marie said,

I'm a little nervous to reach out to families, but I know there's the thing with time you'll feel more able to reach out. But, I feel like even if you don't call them on the phone or have a face-to-face meeting, there are other ways. Like sending home the newsletters, I would love to do a monthly newsletter and have resources at back-to-school night, like give them resources, tell them where to go, keep open communication, I think I could. I seem to build the confidence in it. And I'd really like to do that this semester. So when I go to [my future] classroom, I know it's my class and who else are they going to talk to? (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Marie recognizes the areas where she felt comfortable and the areas where she felt nervous. For example, she indicated that she felt nervous to reach out to families, but that she would gain confidence with time and practice. And, she mentioned that she would

find other ways to keep open communication to engage families. At several points throughout the individual interview, Marie noted that she has not observed a lot of family outreach in her placement. She noted, “I guess it’s why I’m so kind of hesitant because there is not a lot of outreach” (Individual Interview, 1/31/17). Toward the end of the interview, Marie reiterated the lack of outreach at her school and how this affected her level of preparedness to engage families. She said,

I guess I just wish that there was more, like I wish I had seen more of an outreach. Because I feel like I’d be so much more prepared if I had experienced outreaching parents and actually saw the school actually outreaching, like doing that, because I hear all the time, like teachers are so busy, we don’t need one more thing. ... But I feel like families are so left in the dark. And it really makes me sad ... It’s just, like I feel like a lot of missed opportunities.

For Marie, she believed that she would have been much more prepared to engage families if she had more opportunities to observe parent and family outreach in her student-teaching placement, or if she had more opportunities to engage families via course assignments within her teacher education program. This finding is important for teacher educators and school administrators to recognize and to find more ways to integrate family engagement activities in teacher education programs and within schools, respectively.

In this section, we took a closer look at a Marie’s vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. Marie’s characteristics of introspection to consider areas that she needs to gain more knowledge and familiarity and

her confidence in the abilities and competencies that she has mastered play a significant role in how she came to have a vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. The experiences Marie has encountered throughout her life are similar to the other preservice teachers, yet she has reflected on those experiences and has tried to view situations from the perspective of others. In the next section, we dive deeper in Luciana's vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction as well as the key characteristics that lie at the core of her vision.

Luciana – “Just Ask”

“No one really asked me how to pronounce my name or tried asking me anything about where I was from.” –Luciana, Individual Interview, 1/30/17

At the time of the interview, Luciana, a 22-year-old female, was interning in a second-grade classroom and reported that she preferred to teach third or fourth grade upon graduation from the teacher education program. She described herself as Hispanic and discussed her experience of immigrating to the United States from Peru when she was five years old. Her childhood experiences in being placed in ESL classes and feeling as though her culture was not being recognized have played a significant role in shaping her vision and her perspective on teaching. She noted that she felt as though her teachers were trying to assimilate her into the U.S. culture emphasizing that she believed “they took me away from my culture” (Individual Interview, 1/30/17). Her elementary reading experiences focused on learning English and she stressed several times that she wished her teachers would have just asked about her, especially how to pronounce her name. For

Luciana, she recognized how hurtful it was for her to not feel as though her culture and her identity were acknowledged by her teachers throughout her own elementary school experiences. Luciana's vision for learning about her students and their families stemmed from her reflection on her childhood and how she had wished that her teachers and peers had just asked about her. In this section, we learn more about Luciana and her vision for teaching reading, the experiences that helped to develop her vision, and her levels of preparedness to engage families in her future classroom. We begin with the essence of her vision.

What is the essence of Luciana's vision? Luciana was the only preservice teacher to use the term "funds of knowledge" in her vision statement. Not only was her vision deeply rooted in a funds of knowledge framework, she was able to articulate what tapping into families' literacy assets actually entailed. At the core of her vision, Luciana envisions learning as much as she can about her students, their backgrounds, and their families by asking about them. Throughout the interview and the focus group, Luciana indicated at several points that she envisions showing an interest in her students' cultural backgrounds, which from her perspective is in contrast to what she felt that her teachers did for her. For example, below is an excerpt from the beginning of the interview with Luciana.

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit about your classroom reading experiences when you were in elementary.

Luciana: When I was in elementary, I had a fairly acculturated experience. I think that's -- or assimilated. I always forget the difference. When they took me away from my culture, that's assimilation.

Interviewer: Well, yeah, yeah. They're trying to --

Luciana: Yeah, so as soon as I went in, no one really asked me how to pronounce my name or tried asking me anything about where I was from. It was basically just like, "Get in here, learn English and let's go from there." My reading experiences weren't very culturally appropriate. I had a lot of just, "Go to ESOL, learn English. Let's not talk about where you're from." Because of that, I lost a lot of my Spanish. Now, I have trouble communicating with families or translating more than I think I should be just because my teachers were always telling me like, "English, English, English." I think I had a very structured, old-fashioned experience of reading but yeah.

Interviewer: How old were you when you moved?

Luciana: I came in January and I was five and my birthday is in March, so I was about to turn six, so fairly young.

Interviewer: A very critical time for you to keep your native language.

Luciana: Yeah.

Interviewer: Would you say that was teachers, like all teachers at your school in general or was there one that was kind of like, "No, like please be yourself."

Luciana: Not really. I think all of them were they had their best interest at heart. I think overall, they just thought like she's going to be successful when she learns English. But it was never seen as a strength. My first ESOL teacher Miss P. was a little more helpful but then my second ESOL teacher, she was Asian so she had an Asian accent. I was like all over my place. My ESOL teacher spoke to me with an Asian accent so I had a semi-Asian accent because I would mimic her and then my reading teachers would just tell me that was wrong. It was a lot of back and forth just because I had to catch up so much. I

don't think any of them really stopped to talk about Spanish or Peru or anything like that (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

In this exchange, Luciana described her early educational experiences in the United States and how she felt as though her culture and identity went unnoticed by her teachers. Although she recognized that her teachers probably had the best intentions, she shared how the emphasis on her learning English and not tapping into her strength of speaking Spanish was detrimental to her identity development and her ability to remain fluent in Spanish. Because of this, Luciana wants to ensure that her future students feel a sense of inclusion and that their identities are embraced.

Adding another example, in the interview, Luciana was asked what she believes her teachers could have differently to reach out to her parents and to learn more about her family; this was her response,

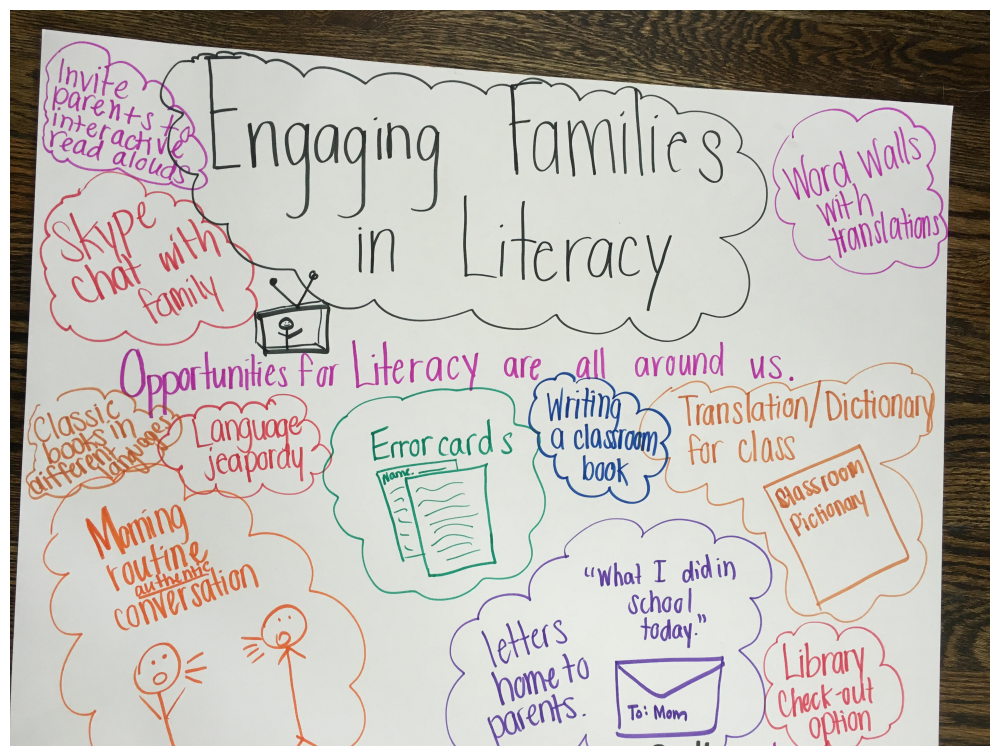
I think just asking, because I think a lot of the times people feel restricted because of language. And I don't think that's ever the main issue. I don't think I would ever personally be offended that you don't speak Spanish or offended that you don't know anything about Peru. But I think the fact that they didn't ask, like no one ever asked me how to say my last name, which is a tough one, I understand it's not something easy, but no one ever asked. I think that was the biggest issue (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

Again, we read a common theme for Luciana's vision that was shaped by her own experiences. She believed the key barrier to her teachers building a relationship and learning more about Luciana's identity was the fact that they did not ask about her background or her life in Peru. Because of this, Luciana's vision is grounded in asking

questions of her students and their families in order to get to know them and embrace their diverse literacy and language practices.

Further, during the focus group, each preservice teacher shared and described the visions that they had created. Figure 14. below is Luciana's visual representation of her vision for her future classroom reading instruction.

Figure 14: Luciana's Visual Representation of her Vision for Using Diverse Family Literacy Practices to Guide Her Classroom Reading Instruction



In describing her visual representation with the focus group of preservice teachers, Luciana shared the following:

So I took mine like in a different direction kind of. I did like things we can do in our classrooms. ... So I put opportunities for literacy are all around us ... I did letters home from and to parents. So writing like, "What I did in school today," just creating that like authentic conversation and there's

no really any format you have to write in. It's just like writing about one thing they learned and sending it home. I usually let my students write in whatever language they want just because they're sending it home so it's not really like affecting me in anyway. Translation dictionary for class. So just having like a dictionary for the entire classroom where students can bring in words if like in their morning time, they wanted like write about a word and then find the translation and put it in the dictionary and the students can all have access to that in the classroom. Library checkout option which I know a lot of teachers don't do because they don't trust their students to, but at the end of the day, it's a book and it can give the students a way more memorable experience than just losing a book, that's sucks, but it's alright. Writing a classroom book. So writing about who the classroom is, what their interests are, who are like friend, like the students in my class writing comic book together right now, so like I gave them some extra time at the end of the day to write that. Language jeopardy which we saw [in our language variation] class which like they talked about like Ebonics and going from Ebonics to Standard English and like talking, having that conversation. Word walls and translations and pictures, and inviting parents to interactive read alouds. I think that's super important, if like parents are doing like parent pickup, they can come in like 30 minutes before we read the story at end and we can be part of it. So I think a lot of time we just don't want parents in the classroom, which I totally I get, some parents are rude and some parents just like criticize

everything you do. But you can't push them away. They're going to be there no matter what you do, you can send letters home and say don't come or like, let's not meet up for a conference but they're the kid's parent or grandparents or aunts or uncles so they're going to be around. Skype chatting with family, like I know family members a lot of people have Skype just to talk to people at home or in a different country. So, they probably have a Skype account so that's probably an option. Reading like classics in different languages to students so like reading like a Dr. *Seuss book*. ... Yeah, like those classics like fairy tales and stuff. And then morning routine I would love to have a morning routine where there is just like they can talk to each other. They can present like what they did at home, if someone wants to come up like their parents got a new job or like their sister just got into college or something, I just think those authentic conversations are so important. And I didn't add home visits but I just think home visits should be like a thing. We never see them anymore but, like I never got to see home visits [modeled in my placement] so I don't know anyone who did that I knew of. So that's really important (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

In Luciana's description of her visual representation of her vision, she described the many activities she would integrate into her future classroom reading instruction. First, she recognized the broad nature of literacy and how opportunities for literacy exist all around us. Also, she emphasized the need for time allotted throughout each school day for authentic conversations between the students and with the teachers for students to

share about their home lives and their interests and backgrounds. Next, she envisioned parents and family members coming in to do interactive read alouds on a regular basis (i.e., when they are doing parent pick up), not just one time throughout the year. In addition to parents coming into the classroom, she pictured herself Skyping with parents and families and doing home visits to learn more about families, even though she did not see home visits modeled for her in her student-teaching placement. And lastly, she noted the importance of understanding language differences and offering time to have conversations around language. To this point, she recommended having a class translation dictionary, word walls with translations, language jeopardy to discuss various dialects, and allowing her students to write in their language of choice when writing letters to family members at home.

In response to her vision description, Michelle noted that she liked the language jeopardy game and how she agreed with Luciana that it is important to have conversations around the different ways we speak, including both various dialects and different languages. Michelle went on to add,

You're obviously an advocate for ELL kids because you went through that experience. And I just think that's so important. And I think that all of us are kind of like that because of the [teacher education] program we've been through. But so many teachers I find, you now, like it's such a negative thing, "Oh, that kid is an ELL." And it really bothers me. And it shows, it rubs off on the student, too (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Here we see how one of Luciana's colleagues understands where her vision originates and recognizes the importance of valuing students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Finally, toward the end of the focus group, the preservice teachers were asked to summarize their visions into one word. When it was Luciana's turn to share, she said the following:

I was going to say authentic. Just because I think there's such a structured view of school and how it should look like. And we just need to bring in those practices from home and the way that students speak and the way that they communicate with their families into the classroom (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Luciana envisions her future classroom to be guided by her students and their home lives and backgrounds. She pictures herself creating an authentic classroom around conversations and building relationships with students and their families so that she can use their diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. In the next section, we read about how Luciana's vision developed.

How did Luciana's vision develop? For Luciana, her vision for her future classroom were shaped by her family experiences growing up, her level of self-reflection of her personal experiences, and her teacher education program.

To begin, Luciana provided insight into how her vision developed and discussed her childhood and family experiences and how they have shaped her vision. She said,

I think just being an immigrant has helped so much. And then my little brother has autism so I've been to a lot of his IEP meetings because my parents had no idea. I was like, "I'm a sophomore education major, let's figure this out." I was put in that environment very, very young and continued on with my brother. That definitely helped and just seeing like

the home side of like how my parents struggled with the frustration of not knowing the language as adults, it's I'm sure very frustrating for them. I can't imagine being in a situation where I feel powerless because of it. That's definitely helped because I can see where they're coming from. And I think that motivates me, too, if it was a different language, like learn a little bit more about that language in order to communicate with them. I think just family experience ... and knowing how important it is to speak to families and connect with them in a bigger level than just, "Here's your report card, sign it" (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

Because of Luciana's experiences growing up and her experiences within her family, she understands the perspective of families who are immigrants, speak a native language other than English, and are not familiar with the special education process in the United States. Her vision developed, in part, by reflecting on these experiences and being able to put herself in other people's shoes and see situations from their perspectives as well.

In addition to her family experiences, Luciana noted how her personal experiences have played a significant role in shaping her vision. During the focus group, she added the following to the dialogue with her peers:

And just like generally reflecting on your own experiences and how you grow up. Like there's nothing wrong with how anyone grows up, no matter where they're from, no matter their status or their socioeconomic status, anything like that. But it's just when you reflect on that I think that's the most important part as a teacher. I like to promote that in our

students to like reflect on ourselves and see how we're different from others, see how we're alike ... (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Again, we see how Luciana discussed her childhood experiences and encourages thoughtful reflection in order to understand one's own identity and how that shapes one's vision for teaching and learning. During the interview, Luciana shared more about how self-reflection and her background have helped to shape her vision. She said, "I think it's a lot of self-reflection. ... Just asking and self-reflection and realizing that like no one is attacking you for your identity just as no one should attack anyone for their identity" (Individual Interview, 1/30/17). Her vision is grounded in the belief that teachers should embrace their students' identities and students should never feel as though they are attacked for being themselves.

As a final example of this theme, Luciana shared about how her perspective helped develop her vision. She said,

I think as a minority, I get a different perspective from it because I'm used to the criticism and I'm used to the judgment. At this point, if anyone says anything, I mean it's still hard, but I have a stronger shield for it. I think that's why it's difficult for other individuals and teachers especially to not feel completely scared because the exposure to that culture and different things is shocking. Like sometimes it's a scary realization when you don't know and it's a scary time. I think just asking. I don't know a different way than just asking (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

The theme of “just ask” was prevalent throughout Luciana’s interview and her responses in the focus group. She envisions learning about her students by asking questions and building in time for conversations and dialogue in the classroom.

When asked what has contributed to the shaping of her vision during the focus group, Luciana shared about her experiences within the teacher education program. She said,

I think the program ... it’s created an environment where you can feel comfortable having those really uncomfortable conversations. ... I think we’ve done a lot of that in ways sometimes that we didn’t want to have and ways that were more constructive and productive, but it really prepared us to have those conversations which we’re going to have to end up having with parents (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Luciana recognized that conversations with parents and family members are not always going to be easy, yet she felt as though her teacher education program prepared her to have positive interactions with parents and families.

For Luciana, her vision was primarily shaped by her own experiences and her ability to carefully reflect on those experiences. She identified how she felt when her identity and culture were not recognized, thus, she envisions a classroom where all of her students’ backgrounds and families are acknowledged. She pictures herself asking many questions of her students and their families in order to learn more about their home literacy practices so they can help to guide her classroom reading instruction. Next, we discover Luciana’s levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy.

How prepared is Luciana to engage families? During the interview, Luciana indicated that she was “somewhat prepared” (a level 2 on a 4-point scale) to engage families in literacy. Similarly, she described her level of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy as “somewhat prepared” as well. When asked if she felt prepared to engage families, Luciana said, “Yes and no” (Individual Interview, 1/30/17). She went on to elaborate,

Back-to-school night, it helped a lot that I was bilingual. A lot of parents came over to me just because they were so relieved that someone spoke Spanish. But at the same time, I didn’t know what I was saying. I was like I’m here, but I felt more like a translator than a teacher which is difficult to do because then a lot of teachers ask me to translate for them so it became this whole thing. Also you know, because it’s difficult to just separate the, I’m the translator versus I’m a teacher thing which I think I’m going to have difficulty balancing the two (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

In contrast to the other preservice teachers who viewed language differences as one of the reasons for not being prepared to engage diverse families, Luciana’s bilingual abilities allow her to interact and engage with Spanish-speaking families. Her fear is that she will struggle to also be seen by the families as a teacher. She did note, however, that she may feel a little more balance in that regard when she has her own classroom. Her role at the time was a student teacher, which can sometimes revert to a support role.

Luciana was asked what has contributed to her level of being “somewhat prepared,” she reported the following:

I think exposure. I think the College of Education has really given us different, like a lot of exposure to different classrooms. Because we started with the three-hour tutoring thing and then we keep going and then junior year was two days a week and now it goes up a lot higher. We see a lot of different classrooms. I like the balance of seeing a real classroom and being in methods courses where it's like, "We're going to give you the perfect classroom." And then you go and then you're like, "I have no idea how to implement any of this." It's a nice balance because in methods, it's a very idealistic like, "If you do this, all your children will learn," which is not a bad thing, but it's just the only way that it can be taught. And then you go in your classroom and you try to put at least 60% of what you learned into it and hope for the best. I think that's why I feel prepared because I've seen both sides (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

Luciana attributed the balance of her methods courses with the field placements as one of the key reasons that she felt "somewhat prepared" to engage families. The mixture of learning about strategies and best practices in her coursework and the real-world exposure of the diverse nature of the classroom helped her identify and practice ways to teach students and engage families. Because Luciana noted that she was not fully prepared to engage families, I asked her what she believed the teacher education program could add to help her become more prepared to work with families. She responded,

Maybe more attendance in the past, like back-to-school nights or things like that. I know with the three-hour tutoring thing, maybe going to those back-to-school nights and seeing how the teachers interact with those

parents. Because I know with my last year, I only went Mondays and Wednesdays and then I didn't do much else. I didn't really see any parents; I didn't really do much. Maybe exposure to IEP meetings and 504s because I've only really seen one or two I think. And then that's a huge deal that a lot of people don't get to see depending on where their placement is. Maybe attending those (Individual Interview, 1/30/17).

Although Luciana attributed her student-teaching placement and coursework experiences to helping her become more prepared to engage families, she also identified ways the teacher education program could be designed to help preservice teachers more prepared upon graduation from the program. Providing preservice teachers with more opportunities to interact and engage with parents and families in a school setting are important insights gained from Luciana's description of her levels of preparedness.

In this section, we dove deeper into Luciana's vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. We learned that the essence of her vision was rooted in the practice of just asking about her students and their families in order to learn more about their identities as well as their diverse literacy and language practices. Her childhood education experiences of moving to the United States from Peru at the young age of five years old helped to shape her vision and to recognize the importance of asking questions. Her vision was developed through critical and thoughtful reflection of her own education experiences, her personal and familial experiences, and her teacher education program. She indicated that she felt "somewhat prepared" to engage families and believed her teacher education program successfully integrated methods courses and student-teaching placement experiences; yet, she believed more

opportunities exist within the teacher education program to help preservice teachers become more prepared to engage families. In the next section, we meet the final preservice teacher, Jen, and learn about her vision, vision development, and levels of preparedness to engage families.

Jen – Connecting Home and School

“I think the most important part of mine ... [is] the connection between home and school because I feel like if there’s a disconnect between what students are hearing or doing or learning at home and to school, it’s going to be such a barrier. Just having teachers and families be a team is going to be the best way to help children succeed.” –Jen, Focus Group, 2/7/17

At the time of the interview, Jen, a 21-year-old White female, was interning in a third-grade classroom and reported that she preferred to teach third or fourth grade upon graduation from the teacher education program. When she was an elementary student, she attended diverse school that “pulled from a lot of different surrounding areas” (Individual Interview, 1/31/17). Jen has two younger sisters and she recalled reading to them as well as reading to and with her parents each night before bed. She remembered going to the library on a regular basis and having a “bookmobile ... that would come and it would park right across the street from [her] house” (Individual Interview, 1/31/17). She noted that it was a consistent routine for her family to pick out books from the bookmobile every time it arrived across the street.

In thinking back to how her teachers engaged her family in literacy, she mentioned that her teachers would send books home and her teacher would let her parents know to expect the books. One aspect that she remembers most is that she has always

loved reading. She said, “I feel like my teachers did a great job with me at least helping me find books I was interested in reading, and kind of sparking a love of reading and learning in me” (Individual Interview, 1/31/17). Her positive elementary school experiences have played a role in shaping her vision, as well as her ability to recognize her culture and reflect on how it factored into her learning. For example, she described her classroom reading experiences as follows:

I did go to a fairly diverse elementary school. I don’t really remember if that was reflected in the materials we read. I might remember better if I weren’t kind of like from the mainstream culture. I feel like if I saw myself reflected in the kind of text using the materials used in literacy, then that’s why I don’t remember. ... I don’t know if that would have been different if I weren’t from like the mainstream sort of culture and my race and culture kind of matched most of my teachers. I kind of, now that I think about it, wonder if it would have been different. But for me, I had a really positive view of literacy and a good experience when I was in elementary school (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Jen’s ability to reflect on the ways her elementary reading experiences may have been slightly different from her peers whose background did not align with the mainstream culture has helped to shape her vision for teaching reading and using diverse family literacy practices to guide her future classroom reading instruction. She recognized the value in aligning her literacy curriculum to the backgrounds and cultures her future students will bring to the classroom. With this, she realized the importance of collaborating with families to ensure that the home and the school are connected for

students. In this section, we learn about the core of Jen's vision, how it was developed, and her levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy. We begin with the essence of her vision.

What is the essence of Jen's vision? At the center of Jen's vision is the desire to connect and collaborate. When asked how she envisions planning for her reading instruction time, she said,

Something I really like about the school I'm placed in now is that planning is very collaborative among all the teachers and I love that because I like being able to hear the other perspectives of other teachers because, I mean, a lot of the time, I could think of one way to teach the lesson and it might be a perfectly fine way, but getting input from everyone and kind of talking through everything, I think really helps you be able to look at it more closely and from different perspectives and kind of get different ideas. So I definitely hope to be working in a school where that's the kind of environment where planning is collaborative (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Jen envisions her planning time to be collaborative and believes that she can learn from her colleagues. She understands that gaining information and ideas from a variety of perspectives can have an impact on her teaching and on her students. In addition to collaborating with her teaching peers, she also envisions collaborating with families to help to bridge the home and the school environments. When asked to describe the most important part of her vision, Jen shared,

I think the most important part of mine, and something that stuck out from a lot of everyone else's representations is just the connection between home and school because I feel like if there's a disconnect between what students are hearing or doing or learning at home and to school, it's going to be such a barrier. Just having teachers and families be a team is going to be the best way to help children succeed (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

In this excerpt, we read that Jen identified the connection between home and school as the most important aspect of her vision. She envisions developing partnerships with families so they can form a team to help the children succeed in literacy and beyond.

During the focus group, the preservice teachers were asked to spend the first 30 minutes creating a visual representation of their vision. Figure 15. below is Jen's representation of her vision for her future classroom reading instruction.

Figure 15: Jen's Visual Representation of Her Vision for Using Diverse Family Literacy Practices to Guide Her Classroom Reading Instruction



Jen used the following words to describe her visual representation of her vision,

This is my visual. So, I drew the school over here and then the community or families over here. And I drew paths in between the homes and the school with like an arrow going both ways between because one of the things that I talked about in my vision statement that I thought it was

really important was like not just the teacher communicating information to the parents but also parents being able to communicate information to the teacher and kind of a back and forth learning from each other.

Experience because I think what I've seen a lot at my school and in my classroom is like us just sending information home to parents and the parents just kind of accepting the information but I think it's really important like a child's family is who they spend pretty much all of their time with outside of school and like families have known this child for their whole life. So there's so much you can learn about the child and their background and their interest and things from their family. So that's what that kind of represents. Then another thing that we talked about in my interview that I wanted to bring into the visual is that we kind of talked about what a family is or like what family means. So I try to draw different groups like in this one, I tried to draw grandparents and in this one, there's like maybe an aunt, or a family friend that's close because I don't think it just has to be like the mom and dad that the teachers communicating with. I think it's important to have a relationship with whoever has a prominent role in the child's life. And I also drew phone and computer just like to highlight that there's different ways that I think you can communicate with families, like Terri was saying, a blog or phone calls or letters. And then in the classroom itself, I tried to represent kind of a diverse view of literacy because something else we talked about in my individual session was what literacy means. So I have students writing,

students on the computers, students talking to each other and students reading. So I kind of try to represent them doing a diverse range of things and working together and then like a classroom library, that like all the different colors are supposed to represent kind of diverse range of books and resources for students to kind of represent their diverse backgrounds and interests (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

In her drawing, one can notice the arrows on the paths go both directions, between home and school. Jen emphasized that communication will go both ways in her future relationships with families, not just from the teacher to the families. In Jen's vision, we also see the broad nature of her view of families, literacy, and diversity. For her, the idea of family can include aunts, uncles, grandparents, and close family friends, as well as parents. Additionally, Jen illustrated how literacy can involve more than reading books, but can include digital literacies, discussion among students, and writing to communicate. Further, Jen described diversity as including various backgrounds and interests to indicate a wide view of diversity. In her interview, Jen described her vision for working with diverse families and populations. She said,

So as I was saying before, my hope is to be able to reach out to families, obviously, to diverse families if I have a diverse group of students. And to kind of invite them to teach me both about their student and how they learn and things like that. And also about their culture and what language they speak at home, where they're from. And I think that is really important because we have students in my class that I didn't even realize didn't leave in the United States for their whole life until some -- we

watched a video or something where it came up and they were like, “Oh, when I used to live in Ethiopia.” And I was like, “Oh my gosh, I didn’t even realize he used to live Ethiopia.” I think definitely a big part of my vision is to talk to students and their families and just find out, you know, kind of what their growing up has been like, what their home life is like, what their culture and their background is like. And another part of my vision is that I think it would be awesome to have families come into the classroom. We’ve had parents come in and observe but I’ve also seen in other places that I’ve worked in like parents come in and read stories to kids. And, I think that would be really cool if you have a diverse class of kids to have, you know, a family come read a book that’s important -- or a family member come read a book that’s important to their family, or to their culture or their child. And then also, of course, for me too, kind of the way I traditionally thought about it, I think still applies. But for it to be a big part for me to communicate information to parents as well about things they can do at home (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

From her description of her vision for working with diverse families and populations, we see that Jen envisions seeking out opportunities for families to teach her about their children. Her example of not knowing that one of her students grew up in Ethiopia highlighted for her the importance of learning about the backgrounds of her students and what their culture and family background include. In the next section, we discover how Jen’s vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction developed.

How did Jen's vision develop? Jen attributes her coursework and her experience working with children throughout her life to the development of her vision. When asked to share what has contributed to her vision development, she said,

I definitely think our last semester literacy course was probably the biggest place where I've kind of formed the vision of how I would like to do that [engage families] from just because it was a topic that we actually focused on a lot. So I feel like I kind of learned—I kind of developed a vision that it's kind of up to me to reach out to families, and that I can learn from families and from reaching out to families just as much as they can learn from me (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Here we see how the emphasis on family engagement and recognizing families' funds of knowledge helped Jen develop a vision for engaging families and using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. She also demonstrates how she came to the realization that she could learn from families and they could learn from her, in a mutually beneficial way. Additionally, Jen cited course work from early in her teacher education program as a contributor to her vision development. She said,

Well, kind of within course work but outside of the semester at the children's literature course we took. ... That was one of my favorite courses I've ever taken and it wasn't even -- I think it was my first semester of my freshman year of college so it was in the very beginning. But I loved that course and it wasn't what I was expected because when you hear children's literature, it's just like, "Oh, we're going to be looking at picture books." But, it was -- we really looked so much into cultural

relevance and thus being so early in my teacher education. It was kind of my first exposure to it so it was kind of like a light bulb going off in my head when I was hearing it. But we talked a lot about the importance of cultural relevance. And I think we did talk -- we did touch on reaching out to families and learning about -- the importance of learning about students and their families and bringing that into the classroom. So that definitely -- and if nothing else that really sparked my interests and kind of showed me the importance of learning more about it (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

In this excerpt, Jen shows how her vision was initiated early on in her teacher education program and further developed and expanded upon through the remainder of it. Being exposed to culturally relevant pedagogy early on in the teacher education program helped to lay the foundation for her to build upon as she progressed throughout the program and took other classes. In addition to course work, Jen's experience with children over a significant period of time has also helped to develop her vision. She noted,

Yeah. And then I've kind of worked with kids my whole -- I mean, on my whole life. But as long as I've been old enough to volunteer and work with kids, I've always tried to, I've been a camp counselor and volunteered in schools and things like that. And, the areas that I've volunteered and worked in and the organizations I've worked with, there was always a very diverse group of children that I was working with and a lot of kids that had backgrounds different from myself. So, I think that, too, helped it when I was learning about things like that in my course work. It was something to draw on, to kind of look back and think,

“Okay, I can see where I’ve been in a situation where it would have been really important to learn.” You know, it would have been helpful to learn about the child’s background and talk to their family and learn about how things work at home and their experiences at home. So, I think that was important to kind of drawn on as I started learning in course work (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

For Jen, the combination of her course work and her lengthy experience working with children have significantly contributed to the development of her vision for using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. Next, we extend our understanding of how prepared Jen felt to engage families in literacy.

How prepared is Jen to engage families? During the interview, Jen indicated that she was “somewhat prepared” (a level 2 on a 4-point scale) to engage families in literacy. Similarly, she described her level of preparedness to engage *diverse* families in literacy as “somewhat prepared” as well. When asked in the interview if she felt prepared to engage families, she said,

Similar to what I was saying before, I feel like I have kind of a vision and ideas of how I would like to do that. But, it’s going to take time to actually try out different things and experience it before I feel extremely comfortable with it. But I definitely feel like I am prepared with ideas of how to do that (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Jen recognized the reality that family engagement takes time and practice, but she recognized that she has ideas and a vision for how she would go about engaging families.

In explaining what has contributed to her levels of preparedness, Jen reported that her literacy course, EDUC 404, especially the family member interview assignment, and her mentor teacher have played the largest roles in preparing her to engage families. She shared the following,

I definitely think our last semester literacy course was probably the biggest place where I've kind of formed the vision of how I would like to do that from just because it was a topic that we actually focused on a lot. So I feel like I kind of learned—I kind of developed a vision that it's kind of up to me to reach out to families, and that I can learn from families and from reaching out to families just as much as they can learn from me. I feel like before I had kind of heard and learned that it was important for me to be communicating to parents, you know, what we're doing in class, how their child is doing, things like that, things they could do at home to help their child. But I didn't really see it so much as a two-way street where they could communicate with me about, you know, how their child likes to read at home and what their child likes to do at home, and things like that. So I think—especially the family member interview assignment, even outside of, you know, specific answers I was given, just the idea to do something like that, to reach out to a family member and ask questions like that kind of gave me that idea. And I also think outside of course work, my mentor does a good job of communicating with parents and reaching out to parents. She's very big into technology so she has like a Twitter, blog, where she posts things and parents can follow and respond,

and things like that. And she's been really great about inviting parents in to observe the classroom and to meet, and phone calls, and things like that. I think she's been a good model for me to see the way she communicates and interacts with parents and the way she asks questions just as much as she's telling things. So I think that's the biggest thing I've learned from—both from course work and from my mentor.

In addition to her course work and her relationship with and observations of her mentor teacher, Jen's placement school also played in a role in preparing her to engage families in literacy. She shared how her placement school hosted family nights and how the administration supported family engagement. She said,

Yeah, so the school I'm at has a sister school that's K through two and my school is three through five. And they partner together and they do a bunch of different events throughout, kind of like family nights throughout the year. There's a family literacy night, there's a math night, a technology night. The PTA sets them up and the PTA and the administration invite parents and teachers to come in. And, I think that's a -- it's kind of a good neutral setting where it's not the teacher inviting a parent in or the parent inviting the teacher and it's kind of a neutral thing where families can come and teachers can come and kind of discuss and learn together. That's something else that I would like to either see at the school I'm working in the future or possibly look into establishing in a school I'm looking at because I think that's important as well in kind of starting conversations

and communicating information back and forth between parents and families (Individual Interview, 1/31/17).

Jen's levels of preparedness to engage families were impacted by her coursework, her mentor teacher, and her placement school's emphasis on parent and family engagement.

For Jen, her vision of connecting home and school laid the foundation for her to envision using diverse family literacy practices to guide her classroom reading instruction. She noticed how learning about families and their diverse literacy practices and then integrating those into the school environment was a natural way to connect the home and school for her future students. Her vision conveys that she envisions the relationship between teachers and families as a partnership where both teachers and families have expertise and knowledge to share.

In this last section, we explored the visions of three preservice teachers: Marie, Luciana, and Jen. All three preservice teachers recognized that families possess literacy assets and discussed how they envision using those assets to guide their instruction. Marie and Jen's visions remained constant over the course of the semester, indicating that they both came into the semester with visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their reading instruction and fostered it throughout the course experiences. Luciana's initial vision showed that she viewed families as possessing literacy resources and assets, but did not convey a vision for using those resources in her instruction. By the end of the semester, in her final vision statement, Luciana explicitly stated that she envisioned using families' funds of knowledge to guide her reading instruction. For all three of these preservice teachers, their own elementary education experiences as students

as well as other childhood experiences contributed to the shaping of their visions. One common characteristic across all three of them included their keen sense of critical reflection and their abilities to consistently consider how specific experiences shaped their visions. For example, Luciana's experiences of growing up in Peru and speaking Spanish to moving to the United States where she felt her teachers did not recognize and value her cultural and linguistic background were key experiences that she reflected upon and shaped her vision for her future classroom. Additionally, Jen's critical reflection of growing up in a diverse school yet being a part of the mainstream culture allowed her to think about the many ways to plan responsive teaching practices and integrate the diverse backgrounds of her future students into her literacy instruction.

These vision portraits are important for teacher educators to ponder because they provide insight into what many preservice teachers experience within their teacher education programs. Being aware of the preservice teachers who possess visions of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction can allow teacher educators to identify these visions, help to foster and develop them further, and to use them as examples for other preservice teachers.

In the next section, the supports that helped to shape the visions of the seven focal participants and the assets and challenges they foresee in their future classrooms to helping them enact their visions are outlined.

Supports and Challenges

In this final findings section, the resources for support and the challenges to enacting their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction are identified and discussed. These findings address the third research

question guiding this dissertation study: *To what extent do elementary preservice teachers feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy?*

- a. *What do preservice teachers identify from their reading methods courses as supports to the shaping of their visions to engage families in literacy? (e.g., assignments, class lectures, etc.)*
- b. *What do preservice teachers foresee as some of the challenges to enacting their visions for recognizing and using diverse family literacy practices in their future classrooms of reading?*

Supports that Shaped Their Visions

During the focus group, the seven preservice teachers discussed and identified key experiences that contributed to the shaping of their visions. The three significant supports were the following: a) their teacher education program, b) their internship placements, and c) their personal experiences and backgrounds. As these components were identified and shared, others' heads nodded with agreement and participants added their thoughts as well. The following paragraphs offer key quotes from the preservice teachers to support these themes.

First, the preservice teachers recognized their teacher education program at the University as a significant contributor to the shaping of their visions. For example, Michelle emphasized how the teacher education program helped her build a culturally responsive lens and how it now comes naturally to her. She said the following:

I would say our education here, like all of our classes have definitely contributed to making your classroom culturally diverse. We're also culturally aware now. I was saying in my individual interview how it's

kind of ingrained in me now, like I'm constantly thinking about how to be culturally responsive in my classroom, which I think is amazing. So I just think like the whole experience kind of leads into our vision (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Luciana built on what Michelle said by noting how the teacher education program provided the arena to have “uncomfortable conversations” (Focus Group, 2/7/17) around addressing teacher bias and how to work through those biases when teaching. Adding to the focus group conversation, Luciana said,

Kind of going off of what Michelle was saying, I think the program ... has created an environment where you can feel comfortable having those really uncomfortable conversations. I think we've done a lot of that in ways sometimes that we didn't want to have and ways that are more constructive and productive, but it really prepared us to have those conversations which we're going to have to end up having with parents. Because those things are going to come up or with the administration or with other teachers in their grade level teams ... who have biases about or stereotypes about students who will make assumptions and those conversations aren't comfortable to have on both ends (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

These two excerpts from Michelle and Luciana show that the teacher education program, as a whole, has helped them to develop visions of teaching with a culturally responsive framework.

In addition to the teacher education program, the preservice teachers also identified their internship placements as another area that has enhanced their visions. Terri commented on how she has been able to compare her own elementary experiences to her internship placement experiences and then reflect on how those experiences help her vision for teaching reading to evolve. For instance, Terri added the following to the discussion:

For me, a lot of it has come from comparing my elementary educational experiences to the experiences that I've had in placements because I come from a very (long pause)—I mean, I guess there was diversity but not in regards to difference races and different ethnicities. It's kind of like, a lot of students just like me. And then I come to [the University] and I see like these schools around [the county] and things and how diverse and different they are from my experience. So that has been really helpful for me because not only is it making me realize that I want to teach in that situation where I'm in now, but it has made me just a lot more aware. I mean I would say my friends who aren't in elementary education, they don't really have an — I don't know if they have an image of what it's like outside — as far as elementary school. So it's just cool and that's been really helpful for me to have all these different placement experiences (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Terri's description of how she has been able to compare and contrast her own school experiences with her student teaching experiences offer us insight into how powerful it can be to interact and engage with a diverse array of students, schools, and communities.

Similar to Terri, Renee also noted how her placement contributed to the shaping of her vision. She responded to Terri's statement by adding,

Yeah, I agree. Placements help because at first I would think of diversity like race and ethnicity, but now it's like it's more than that. It's like kids who can't – kids who might have an IEP or 504 plans and thinks like that. So it's just different kinds of students (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Terri and Renee's internship experiences allowed them to garner insight into the actual lives of students who come from a variety of backgrounds. These experiences gave them the opportunities to reflect and to think about what they could imagine for their future classrooms.

Stemming from the internship placement experience, Emily noted how her student teaching placement allowed her to interact with families and the community in order to continue to develop her vision. She added the following to the discussion:

I think also speaking in the community and family aspects like seeing parent-teacher conferences, and things like that, in talking to students about what they feel like their parents don't have, it makes me want to provide that in my classroom because I've seen how it affects the students' learning when their family members are not involved or engaged. So, it makes me want to do more so that my students feel connected in those class moments (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

The three quotes from Terri, Renee, and Emily indicate that the internship placement plays a critical role in their development as teachers, particularly the development of their visions for teaching reading. For many of the preservice teachers,

their placements are vastly different from their childhood elementary schools which allows them to gain insight into the lives of others that are different from their own.

Lastly, the third support to helping to shape their visions involved their personal experiences and backgrounds. As represented in their portraits, their childhood experiences and personal backgrounds play key roles in shaping them as teachers. Marie described how her experience shaped her, she said,

When I was in elementary school, I had a very similar situation [to Terri], but as I moved out of my community ... which the part I was in was predominately White, upper middle class. But then as I moved to my middle school and then high school which is now the most diverse city in the United States, apparently, according to this one website. I don't know, I felt like growing up I was like I know this, I understand the diverse people. My mom always pushed me to have diverse friendships, to accept all, to invite anyone over that I want to have over and stuff like that, but then when I go into my placement I had such a different view, like being more mature, being an adult, like taking everything from the University and what they've taught us and my life experience. I feel like that's really what shaped me. So, even though I've thought I had it all together, just like having that added boost, it's really made a difference (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

For Marie, her life experiences played a significant role in shaping her, but she concluded that it was the amalgamation of those experiences, her internship placements, and her coursework at the University that have truly shaped her vision for teaching reading.

Luciana chimed in to add on to Marie's thoughts about life experiences, she said,

And just generally reflecting on your own experiences and how you grow up. Like there's nothing wrong with how anyone grows up, no matter where they're from, no matter their status or their socioeconomic status, anything like that. But it's just when you reflect on that I think that's the most important part as a teacher. I like to promote that in our students to reflect on ourselves and see how we're different from others, see how we're alike, and those things I think the program also helped us with (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Marie's and Luciana's descriptions of how they perceived and reflected upon their own life experiences provide us with a glimpse into how teacher visions can be developed. Luciana's points about reflecting is critical to how visions are shaped and developed, emphasizing the importance of thinking critically and reflecting on experiences and how they contribute to images of their future classrooms.

In this section, we learned about the three main contributors to the shaping of the preservice teachers' visions for teaching. First, the teacher education program played a significant role in developing their culturally responsive frameworks for teaching. Second, their internship placements offered opportunities to engage diverse classrooms and communities and to reflect on how their placement schools may be similar to or different from their childhood schooling experiences. Third, we learned that the preservice teachers viewed their personal life experiences and backgrounds to play a key role in shaping their visions for teaching and for developing them as teachers and mature adults. These findings help us understand the key places of opportunity to help preservice

teachers to develop over the course of their teacher education programs. In the next section, the assets to helping the preservice teachers enact their visions in their future classrooms are presented.

Assets to Enacting Their Visions

During the focus group, the following questions were posed to the preservice teachers: *What supports do you foresee in enacting your visions? So think about next year, you're in your first year of teaching, do you foresee specific people, resources, or tools that would help you?* In their responses, three themes stood out: a) their networks from their teacher education program would act as supports to rely on once they are in their first year of teaching, b) their teaching peers and partners in their first school as an in-service teacher would provide support, and c) the administration at their schools as first-year teachers could be an asset to helping them carry out their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The three themes are described further in the next set of paragraphs.

To begin, the preservice teachers initially thought of the people who have helped them throughout their teacher education program. Luciana was the first to share her thoughts to the posed questions. She said,

I think each other. I think we have a cohort, and have been together for so long and we've been hearing each other's opinions about what we think about our own education philosophies and stuff. And that's such a good network to have, like just all of us we're all going to be teachers so I think that's just so important to keep track of, and it's impossible for me to talk

to anyone else about teaching. ... Like networking and even methods professors [to stay in touch with] (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Luciana envisioned her network of peers and methods professors to be a support system that she could tap into once she becomes a first-year teacher. Because they had shared a similar experience of going through the teacher education program together, Luciana believes that her peers understand teaching and the challenges that come with it. As Luciana was speaking, many heads were nodding in agreement. As she completed her thoughts, Michelle chimed in by saying, “Yeah, staying in touch is I think a good idea” (Focus Group, 2/7/17). Maintaining their networks and the relationships built throughout their teacher education program was a key asset that the preservice teachers envisioned to help them enact their visions in their future classrooms.

In addition to their teacher education networks, the preservice teachers imagined their future schools and classrooms and indicated that their future teaching partners and professional learning communities would play a significant role in supporting their vision enactment, too. After Michelle agreed with Luciana about the teacher education networks, she went on to add the following:

Also, I think teammates at whatever school you’re working with. My teacher’s teammate is a new teacher this year and she’s provided so many resources for him. And so I hope that I’m lucky enough to get a teammate like that, or you know, a grade level team that’s supportive of new teachers (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

As with Luciana’s response about teacher education networks, the other preservice teachers added affirmative commentary such as “Yeah” or “Hmm-mm” along with head

nods to agree with Michelle's point about how she envisions her future teaching colleagues to support her in carrying out her vision. These first two themes show the importance of teaching colleagues both during one's teacher education program and then also during those first few years of teaching. These findings also highlight the importance of people over actual physical resources, demonstrating that teacher networks are critical to vision enactment.

Finally, the preservice teachers reported that they believe their future principals and other administrative figures can play an important role in helping them carry out their visions. Interestingly, administration was mentioned as both an asset and a challenge, which shows the significant need for strong leadership and support for each school. Emily was the first to mention administration as a potential asset for enacting their visions. She said,

I think also administration, kind of what Michelle was mentioning earlier, for instance I envision a school having an event for families, and it's like I can't put that on by myself. I need the support of the administration to have a thing for families. I think I spoke in my individual interview yesterday about this school that I'm [going to be] teaching at in New Orleans, they have a community garden and they let parents come in, cook in the community kitchen, and then take the ingredients home to make the meal at home. So like, stuff that you need more than just yourself to put on something like that (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Emily's thoughts show that she pictures needing administration to support her and other teachers in family engagement events because they would be on too large of a scale to do

without school leadership's involvement. Renee added to Emily's thoughts about how important family events were to engaging families and making learning fun for kids. She said,

Yeah, because you can make math and literacy nights, I know in my kid's school, they have literacy nights and math nights but the kids and parents are supposed to come in their pajamas. And you just do an activity that you can take home, it's not like we're doing it at school, it's like what you can physically take and leave with (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

For both Emily and Renee, family engagement typically involves a school-sponsored or school-supported activity or event. The other preservice teachers nodded in agreement while they shared their responses to the questions, indicating that all of the participants envisioned administration playing a key role in helping them carry out their visions of teaching reading and engaging families. However, it is important to note the common theme running throughout Emily and Renee's visions that family engagement stems from the school.

In this section, the preservice teachers' identified assets for helping them enact their visions were described. We learned that their existing teacher education networks would play a key role in supporting them in their future classrooms to help carry out their visions. We also discovered the importance of teaching partners and professional learning communities in their future schools in helping them to enact their visions. And finally, we determined that the preservice teachers picture their future administration playing a significant role in acting as an asset to supporting their vision enactment. These findings illustrate how important people will be in vision enactment, in that no one mentioned

specific resources such as curriculum, funding, or physical items to be assets to carrying out their visions. These findings further demonstrate the importance of developing preservice teachers to have a “funds of knowledge” perspective, as well as continuing to develop in-service teachers to view students and their families through an asset-based lens, because peer networks play such a key role in the perpetual shaping of teachers’ visions. In contrast to the assets, the preservice teachers were asked to identify and describe the challenges they see to carrying out their visions; these are presented in the next section.

Challenges to Carrying Out Their Visions

The final questions posed in the focus group included the following: *What challenges to you foresee in enacting your visions? Any barriers that stand in the way of enactment?* In their responses, three themes emerged: a) aspects of teaching that are out of their control could act as barriers to carrying out their visions, b) a negative school climate and negative mental blocks could get in the way of engaging families, and c) the administration at their schools as first-year teachers could act as a barrier to helping them carry out their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The three themes are described further in the next set of paragraphs.

One of the key challenges mentioned involved all the aspects of teaching that are outside of the teachers’ control. Luciana was the first to share her response to the question by saying, “Curriculum” (Focus Group, 2/7/17). And Michelle added, “Yeah, and testing” (Focus Group, 2/7/17). Michelle later added, “But another thing is that the classroom teachers are so busy and they have so many different things to be worried about constantly” (Focus Group, 2/7/17). The preservice teachers recognized that keeping

up with the demands of teaching (i.e., curriculum and assessment) can leave little time to think about ways to learn about families and integrate family literacy practices into their classroom reading instruction.

Jen added to these thoughts, she said,

I think going back to what Luciana and Michelle were saying before is, I think sometimes teachers get so caught up in like, I have to teach this indicator this day and this indicator this day and we have testing this day and I have to fill out this paperwork and I have an IEP meeting and all that. And so you kind of like lose sight of the more important stuff. So I think that can kind of lead to teaching being – like especially teachers that have been teaching for a while – like stressed and just burned out. ... And then, also, I think when you're really focused on that, it makes it hard to incorporate the things we've been talking about like communicating with parents and having an open classroom with authentic conversations and things, like it's just a lot to keep track of, so I think that can be a barrier (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

The regular demands of teaching are aspects that are out of the control of teachers, thus acting as barriers to implementing parts of their visions that fall outside the scope of teaching (i.e., engaging parents and families). The preservice teachers identified teaching demands and all-around busyness as aspects that were out of their control.

In addition to the aspects of teaching beyond their control, the preservice teachers noted how a negative school environment, including teacher negativity, parent and family negativity, and personal mental roadblocks, could impact their abilities to carry out their

visions. Marie mentioned how some of the teachers are her internship placement school complain and that their comments “create really bad energy for everyone and then nobody wants to be there” (Focus Group, 2/7/17). Luciana added on to her comment by saying, “That’s how my meetings are. ... It’s constant whining and ‘I hate my life, and I hate this job and I had this and I hate that’ and I’m starting full takeover so I was like, ‘So how should I teach my reading groups?’” (Focus Group, 2/7/17). Marie and Luciana brought up how other teachers in their internship placement schools can create negative environments and how it can really drain teachers. Other preservice teachers nodded in agreement and some of them added in similar comments about the lack of professionalism among some of the teachers in their schools.

In addition to the negativity among the teachers and school staff, Jen indicated that some parents can bring in their negativity to the school making it difficult to carrying out their visions of engaging families. Jen commented,

And then another barrier I wanted to bring up is that I feel like sometimes parents are really negative. Like I feel like every classroom has at least one or two families where the family is negative toward you and kind of like critical of the teachers and the school. And that can make it really hard to reach out and have because even when you’re trying to be professional and positive, if the family is viewing you or the school or the classroom negatively then you’re not going to be able to have a good relationship (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Throughout Jen’s written assignments and her individual interview, she had a positive lens and framework when it came to engaging with families and recognizing literacy

assets. Yet, she notes here the reality of engaging families and that working with parents and families who may have a negative view of their child's teacher is a common challenge to engaging families.

In addition to the possibility of having negative teachers and families in their future schools, the preservice teachers mentioned that their personal thoughts can become negative, thus hindering their willingness to add more items to their workload. Marie commented, "I feel like if you try something new and you fail and then you put up this like personal block, like 'Oh, I suck, I never want to try it again.' Just like stop being so negative" (Focus Group, 2/7/17). Other preservice teachers nodded in agreement as if they could relate to what Marie was saying. Marie went on to add,

But yeah, just like putting up these blocks, like I tried to Skype with this person, like this one family one time. And then, [I thought] "Oh my god, this is awkward, I don't want to Skype with anyone anymore." But maybe be like, I don't know, you're both like a little off that day or something, or you're just not used to it. So just keep going even when it feels weird (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Marie seemed to touch on a relatable aspect of teaching, that trying something new or feeling as though something did not go as planned can act as a mental roadblock. In this context, that negative mental block could factor into not carrying out a vision that has been developing over the course of many years.

Later in the discussion, Luciana added, "I think also, it's remembering that we're human beings" (Focus Group, 2/7/17). Other preservice teachers chimed in with agreement. Luciana then went on to mention the following,

So just like we're remembering that you're a human being, too, and even when you're talking about family nights, like you might have a significant other or you also have a sister, you also have a brother, like just having your kids realize, "Yeah, I also have a mom, I also have a dad, I also have an aunt." Because you forget about that sometimes. ... So like, just remembering that you're a human with needs is important and a barrier (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Luciana's commentary reflects how easy it can be for teachers to be hard on themselves and to think that they need to have all the answers. Taking a step back and keeping perspective can help contain negative thoughts, but also keep teachers' visions alive.

Michelle added to Luciana's thoughts, she said,

From one of our meetings we had, for our opening, because we always have agenda in my school. And our opening was how to prevent burnout and that was one of the things. And like, you know, remembering that you're a person. It's really important (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

The preservice teachers noticed the effects of a negative school environment and recognized that negative teaching peers, negative family members, and their own negative thoughts could hinder their abilities and willingness to carry out their visions for engaging families and using their diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

Lastly, although the preservice teachers identified administration as a possible support in carrying out their visions, they also recognized that school leadership figures

could be a challenge to their vision enactment. Renee was the first one to mention administration as a barrier to vision enactment. She said,

I think the administration could be a barrier. If there's not a principal or vice principal that makes you feel welcome and you have the good relationship with them, you're not going to want to go to them with any ideas because you're afraid they're going to tell you "no" (Focus Group, 2/7/17).

Renee's statement illustrates how lack of support from the school's administrators can be a challenge for teachers to carry out their teaching visions.

Michelle added her thoughts, by saying that administrators should be "supportive of what you're doing and understanding" (Focus Group, 2/7/17). Michelle then went on to describe how her school recently had a change in principals and how the teachers were not receptive to the new principal. She implied that administrators need to understand the demands of teaching and that if they do not understand them, it can create a negative environment ultimately hindering their vision enactment.

In this section, we learned that three key aspects in the preservice teachers' future schools could hinder their abilities to enact their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The first barrier included characteristics of teaching that are outside of the teachers' control, such as teaching the curriculum, giving assessments, and attending meetings that all contribute to teachers being incredibly busy. Keeping up with the regular duties of a teacher and then trying to add family engagement initiatives to their to-do lists can be challenging. The second challenge that the preservice teachers highlighted was a negative school climate. If their

future schools have a negative teaching staff or parents and families who are negative, the preservice teachers believed that negativity could interfere with their vision enactment. And finally, the preservice teachers noted that administration could also play a role in hindering their vision enactment by not supporting them in family engagement initiatives. Combined, these three challenges can stand in the way of new teachers using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. Thus, it is imperative that we analyze these findings to identify ways to combat these barriers before they hinder vision enactment.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we took a closer look at seven preservice teachers and their visions for engaging families in their future classrooms. The first two preservice teachers presented, Emily and Renee, viewed families through a “funds of knowledge” framework, yet they envisioned families playing a supportive role with the teacher providing resources to help them support their children at home. Emily’s background of having teachers play a strong role in her academic success, as well as helping her transition to college, contributed to the shaping of her vision as wanting to be a “helping” teacher. For Renee, her view of family engagement was rooted in traditional elements, yet she envisioned adding some modern twists to engage parents and families in literacy. The next two preservice teachers presented, Michelle and Terri, saw families as having rich literacy resources and diverse assets that were to be valued, yet they envisioned using student assessment data as the primary driver of their instruction. Both Michelle and Terri were open to change and allowing their visions to be transformed and developed. The final three preservice teachers, Marie, Luciana, and Jen, had visions of

using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. For all three of them, their backgrounds and their own elementary education experiences as students helped to shape their visions.

After the seven portraits were presented, the chapter concluded with the various supports and barriers to the enactment of their visions. In their responses to the assets they identified to help them enact their visions, three themes stood out: a) their networks from their teacher education program would act as supports to rely on once they are in their first year of teaching, b) their teaching peers and partners in their first school as an in-service teacher would provide support, and c) the administration at their schools as first-year teachers could be an asset to helping them carry out their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. Finally, three themes of barriers to enact their visions emerged: a) aspects of teaching that are out of their control could act as barriers to carrying out their visions, b) a negative school climate and negative mental blocks could get in the way of engaging families, and c) the administration at their schools as first-year teachers could act as a barrier to helping them carry out their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

Chapter 6

Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to examine the visions held by elementary preservice teachers with regards to their future reading classrooms and how they envision using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The study explored how elementary preservice teachers visualized the role that families will play in helping to guide their future literacy instruction within the classroom. This dissertation study was guided by sociocultural theory and a “funds of knowledge” conceptual framework (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), which suggests that children successfully learn when aspects of their cultures, communities, and families are recognized, valued, and integrated into the classroom instruction. Additionally, teachers are the primary conduit to ensure that their students’ funds of knowledge are being recognized and incorporated into instruction (Kidd, Sanchez & Thorp, 2004). This study aimed at looking closely at the diverse literacy funds of knowledge found in families and how preservice teachers envision using those to drive their reading instruction.

Drawing on a variety of data sources, I came to a deeper understanding of the 34 elementary preservice teachers’ visions for how they see families’ roles in their future classroom as well as how they pictured diverse family literacy practices to play a role in their instruction. My key aim was to capture their visions and how they were planning to learn about families and their diverse literacy practices and how they intend to integrate those into their instruction. In order to gain insight into their visions, I designed several written assignments to gain insight into their thoughts and reflections over the course of one semester. I collected and interpreted their a) vision statements from the first and last day of the course; b) written reflections from attending a family literacy event hosted by

Ethiopian-American parents; c) written reflections from their interviews with a family member of one of their students; and d) a survey to gauge their levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy. Following the fall 2016 semester, I collected and interpreted data from interviews and one focus group with 7 of the 34 preservice teachers.

As presented in the findings, this study illuminated that elementary preservice teachers varied in their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. Across the 34 preservice teachers, they all viewed families through a funds of knowledge lens, but not all of them envisioned that family literacy practices would play a role in guiding their instruction. Twenty-one preservice teachers envisioned families as supporting their children at home based on resources provided by the teachers. Although these 21 viewed families as having literacy assets to support children's reading at home, the idea of recognizing the array of family literacy practices to drive their teaching was not on their radar. This finding illustrates that this group of preservice teachers views teachers and families as having two separate roles in children's reading instruction: teachers instruct at school and families support at home. Eight of the preservice teachers described visions of families as having rich literacy and cultural assets, but that student assessment data would be the key driver to their instruction. This group of eight were explicit in their descriptions of how they viewed families and clearly conveyed a funds of knowledge perspective. Yet, they did not indicate that they would identify and recognize diverse family literacy practices as a form of data to help to guide their instruction. Out of the 34, only five of the preservice teachers had visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. These five preservice teachers addressed that they view families as having literacy assets and

discussed how they intend to integrate diverse family literacy practices into their reading instruction.

Although all of the 34 preservice teachers represented visions that were rooted to some extent in a funds of knowledge lens, each group fell along a continuum where some had a deeper, more grounded funds of knowledge perspective. For example, the group of 21 who envisioned families as supporters, they saw family members as possessing skills and assets in order to support their child outside of the classroom by reading and doing homework. For the group of 8 preservice teachers who described families as having rich literacy and cultural assets, but that student assessment would drive their instruction, they focused on how students' backgrounds, cultures, and interests play a key role in contributing to their identity development. These 8 preservice teachers went deeper into their descriptions of families' assets and were able to apply their knowledge of culturally relevant teaching (CRT) (Gay, 2002) into their visions. For the 5 preservice teachers who had visions of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction, they went beyond the basics of integrating CRT and described how they envision "thinking outside of the box" and finding creative ways to learn about families and then to integrate their diverse family literacy practices into their instruction. Using a funds of knowledge framework to examine their visions provided insight into the ways we can plot their visions along a funds of knowledge continuum with some preservice teachers having a surface-level lens and some going much deeper. Below, I revisit the research questions as I review the findings from chapters 4 and 5.

Responding to the Research Questions

In this section, I provide a synopsis of the findings of this study which were presented in chapters 4 and 5. Each subsection addresses one of the three research questions.

How do elementary preservice teachers envision diverse family literacy practices playing a role in their future classroom reading instruction? Twenty-one of the 34 preservice teachers had visions that included families playing a supportive role for the teacher and extending what takes place in the classroom. Similar to the findings from Graue's (2005) study in which she found elementary preservice teachers to view their knowledge as elevated to that of families and that they would send information home to parents, these 21 preservice teachers' visions illustrated that they envisioned themselves as the key source of literacy strategies and information and that they would send literacy resources home for parents and family members to do together. In her study, Graue (2005) also found that preservice teachers were inclined to think of parents coming into the classroom to volunteer from time to time to help in the classroom. The preservice teachers who had "emerging" visions had similar views; they envisioned family members coming into the classroom to share about their cultures or to do read-alouds. Similar to Graue's findings, the preservice teachers in this study tended to view parents as helpers in the classroom that would help on occasion.

Also, out of the 34 preservice teachers, eight preservice teachers had visions that included families possessing assets. However, their visions explained that they exclusively plan to use classroom student assessments to guide their instruction, dismissing family assets as relevant information. Considering the "funds of knowledge"

for teaching work of Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (2005) who described the purpose of their project to be two-fold: a) to “draw on the knowledge and skills found in local households” (p. 71), and b) “to develop innovations in teaching” (p. 71), the eight preservice teachers with “developing” visions in this study only had one part of that two-fold purpose. They envisioned families having knowledge and skills, but they did not envision these assets to help to develop or guide their teaching practices. Further, their visions were rooted in culturally relevant teaching practices to respond to students’ needs. Although they did not envision using diverse *family* literacy practices to guide their instruction, they did envision using diverse *student* literacy practices obtained within the classroom environment (e.g., via observations, exit tickets, benchmarks, running records, etc.) to guide their reading instruction. Just as Turner (2007) used vision as a reflective tool for preservice teachers of reading to convey how they viewed culturally relevant pedagogy in their future classrooms, these eight preservice teachers articulated visions of using culturally relevant teaching practices in response to the diverse literacy needs of their future students.

Five preservice teachers had visions of using families’ diverse literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. To reiterate the work of Moll and his colleagues (2005), these five preservice teachers’ visions contained both parts of a “funds of knowledge” framework. They first viewed families as having literacy assets and skills, and second, they envisioned using these literacy resources to inform their classroom reading instruction. Closely aligning to the findings found in Lenski, Crawford, and Crumpler’s (2005) study in which preservice teachers developed “habits of mind” (p. 4)

to consider cultures in their teaching practices, these five preservice teachers envisioned using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom teaching.

The findings suggest that the preservice teachers all held, to some level, “funds of knowledge” perspectives. All of them envisioned families as having resources to support their children, yet they did not see families playing the same role with regards to their instruction. Only five envisioned an on-going partnership with families to help to guide their instruction. Although eight of the preservice teachers explicitly conveyed that they envisioned families as having literacy assets to contribute to literacy development, they saw student assessment as the guide for their instruction. Twenty-one of the preservice teachers viewed families in supportive roles. Understanding that preservice teachers see the role that families play in literacy instruction in different ways can help us guide the preservice teachers who see families solely as supporters to seeing families as partners in the literacy instructional process.

How do elementary preservice teachers’ visions for using diverse family literacy practices in their classroom reading instruction develop over the course of one semester?

The changes and consistencies in the vision statements provide several insights. First, the static nature of the “emerging” visions highlight a potential need to integrate more opportunities to help preservice teachers recognize families as having valuable literacy resources. Second, the eight preservice teachers who initially had “emerging” visions and transitioned to “developing” shows that change can occur in a fairly short period of time and that these preservice teachers were receptive to the activities involving families, various literacy practices, and other cultures. Also, the changes from “developing” to “advancing” suggest that preservice teachers can make the shift from recognizing diverse

family literacy practices as resources to also considering ways to use those practices to guide their instruction. The consistencies in the “advancing” visions showed promise that these two teachers would continue to envision families as having resources and will seek out ways to plan their reading instruction with those literacy assets in mind. These changes align with the findings of visions changes from Duffy (2002) and his vision project that he integrated into his reading methods courses. He found that many of the preservice teachers were able to develop their visions throughout their teacher education programs by integrating the vision project in semester-long courses.

To what extent do elementary preservice teachers feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy? From the results, the preservice teachers indicated that they are more prepared to engage *families* than *diverse families*. More precisely, 82.3% of the preservice teachers reported that they felt very prepared or mostly prepared to engage families, and 17.6% indicated that they feel somewhat prepared to engage families. To compare those percentages to the levels of preparedness to engage *diverse families*, 70.6% of the preservice teachers felt very prepared or mostly prepared with 29.4% reporting a level of somewhat prepared. While this is not surprising, it does imply that the preservice teachers may feel more comfortable working with and communicating with parents and families who are more like the preservice teachers than they are different. The findings from this study on levels of preparedness to engage families are promising in that 82% said they felt prepared to engage families and 71% said they felt prepared to engage diverse families. In contrast to these findings, Uludag (2008) found that most preservice teachers had positive views of families, but most reported that they were very unprepared to work with families. While the preservice teachers were less prepared to

engage *diverse* families than families, it is promising that 71% reported that they felt prepared to engage *diverse* families.

Second, the preservice teachers indicated that they are more prepared to engage families in literacy than they are to engage *diverse* families in literacy. Nearly 75% of the preservice teachers reported that they feel very prepared or mostly prepared to engage families in literacy, and the remaining approximately 25% indicated that they are somewhat prepared. With regards to engaging diverse families in literacy, 64.7% noted that they feel very or mostly prepared to engage them in literacy and 35.3% reported that they are somewhat prepared or not very prepared at all to engage them in literacy. The survey results showed one preservice teacher reported that he or she does not feel very prepared to engage diverse families in literacy. This was the only report from the entire survey to rate “not very prepared” for levels of preparedness. To ask preservice teachers to engage diverse families in literacy perhaps can seem overwhelming because they are contemplating the many facets of diversity and the myriad ways that they could engage families in literacy. It is not surprising that the more that aspects were added to the questions (e.g., diverse families, literacy) the less prepared overall the preservice teachers reported. As noted in the family member interview analysis section in Chapter 3, many of the preservice teachers interviewed a family member who was also fluent in a language other than English and they reflected on the language differences in their written reflections. Some of them also noted how they wished that they could speak another language so that they could communicate more clearly with parents and family members who did not speak English. The language differences were noted in several of the preservice teachers’ reflections and this could factor into how they view “diverse”

families. If they envision “diverse” families as families who speak different languages, then the findings from the levels of preparedness in the survey seem to correlate. Comparing these findings to other studies that examined similar constructs, the levels of preparedness to engage families among the preservice teachers in this study are quite high. Although Patte (2011) did not ask about levels of preparedness to engage families, in his study, he found that elementary education preservice teachers identified barriers to engaging families. These barriers included elements of diversity: 56% reported cultural differences to be a barrier, 43% noted language differences, 28% identified socioeconomic factors, and 10% stated parents’ levels of education as barriers to family engagement. Also, Turner (2007) found that 85% of the preservice teachers of reading in her study thought that creating parent partnerships would be difficult because they held deficit views of culturally diverse parents and families. Overall, the levels of preparedness to engage families and diverse families are rather high, which shows promise that the majority of these preservice teachers will leave their teacher education program prepared to engage families. However, the difference in levels of preparedness to engage families and to engage diverse families suggests that approximately 30% of the preservice teachers could benefit from more preparation in working with and engaging families from all backgrounds.

What do preservice teachers identify from their reading methods courses as supports to the shaping of their visions to engage families in literacy? (e.g., assignments, class lectures, etc.)

At the end of the survey, the preservice teachers were asked to write in a comments section what they feel has contributed to their level of preparedness. From the

32 participants who commented, 17 of them expressed that the family member interview assignment significantly contributed to their level of preparedness to engage families because it allowed them to learn more about their students and their families. These findings are similar to what Edwards and Pleasants (1997) found in their research on parent stories and how those offered insight for teachers to plan their instruction for students and to understand the families further. Also, Kidd, Sanchez, and Thorp (2004) found that 93% of the preservice teachers in their study identified that learning about one focal family helped them to be able to work with students and their families. Providing preservice teachers with the opportunity to engage and interact with a family member to share more about himself/herself can help to prepare preservice teachers to engage families.

From the seven focal participants, we learned about the three main contributors to the shaping of the preservice teachers' visions for teaching. First, the teacher education program played a significant role in developing their culturally responsive frameworks for teaching. In their focus group and interviews, it was evident that most of the seven focal participants thought their teacher education program impressed upon them the importance of integrating culturally relevant pedagogy into their teaching. In the 1990s, teacher education made a shift to making topics of diversity, culture, and inclusion a "staple" of teacher educators (Marshall, 1999, p. 56). In this finding, we see that the work of culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002) has been an integral aspect of these preservice teachers' teacher education program. Second, their internship placements offered opportunities to engage diverse classrooms and communities and to reflect on how their placement schools may

be similar to or different from their childhood schooling experiences. Third, we learned that the preservice teachers viewed their personal life experiences and backgrounds to play a key role in shaping their visions for teaching and for developing them as teachers and mature adults. Just as Horowitz (2014) found that personal life experiences and backgrounds, among a variety of other factors, shaped how preservice teachers envisioned themselves as teachers, the findings found in this study resonate in that these preservice teachers' personal experiences and backgrounds contributed to the development of their visions for how they envisioned the role families would play in their reading instruction. These findings help us understand the key places of opportunity to help preservice teachers to develop over the course of their teacher education programs.

In addition to the supports that shaped their visions, the seven focal participants also shared their views on what they thought were the assets to enacting their visions. They identified the following as assets: a) networks from their teacher education program (e.g., professors, peers, etc.); b) teaching peers and partners in their first year of teaching; and c) their future administration. These findings show the importance of building relationships and partnerships both during their teacher education programs and then during the first year of teaching.

What do preservice teachers foresee as some of the challenges to enacting their visions for recognizing and using diverse family literacy practices in their future classrooms of reading? In this study, we learned that three key aspects in the preservice teachers' future schools could hinder their abilities to enact their visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. The first barrier included characteristics of teaching that are outside of the teachers' control, such as

teaching the curriculum, giving assessments, and attending meetings that all contribute to teachers being incredibly busy. Keeping up with the regular duties of a teacher and then trying to add family engagement initiatives to their to-do lists can be challenging. The second challenge that the preservice teachers highlighted was a negative school climate. If their future schools have a negative teaching staff or parents and families who are negative, the preservice teachers believed that negativity could interfere with their vision enactment. And finally, the preservice teachers noted that administration could also play a role in hindering their vision enactment by not supporting them in family engagement initiatives. Given that all of these challenges are outside of the preservice teachers' control, it is important to consider the ways that strong visions can lead to the development of literacy leaders. We are reminded of the work of Turner, Applegate, and Applegates (2011) on the development of literacy leaders through the development of strong visions for literacy teaching. We are also reminded of Duffy's (2002) thoughts, he states, "the best teachers are not followers" (p. 333). Adding to these, Turner (2007) writes that visions can be a "source of personal strength and professional integrity" (p. 13). The preservice teachers cannot choose their future administrators or change the negative people around them in their future schools. However, they can be empowered with the development of strong visions throughout their teacher education coursework so that they can become leaders in their future schools who address the challenges that are beyond their control. Combined, these three challenges can stand in the way of new teachers using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. Thus, it is imperative that we analyze these findings to identify ways to combat these barriers before they hinder vision enactment.

Literature Contributions

The findings from this dissertation contribute to the teacher education literature on visioning and vision development. As the preservice teachers' visions illustrated, many of their visions for teaching reading and using diverse family literacy practices developed over the course of one semester. Thus, identifying and developing visions was helpful for the preservice teachers. Just as Turner (2007) found vision to be useful to helping preservice teachers of reading develop and articulate visions of culturally responsive classrooms, the continuation of using vision development in teacher education programs is shown to be helpful for preservice teachers to identify aspects of their content knowledge and pedagogy and to reflect on how they see their future classrooms playing out. This study adds to the evidence that visioning as a tool is helpful for preservice teachers (Hammerness, 2006; Kim, Turner, & Mason, 2015), particularly in considering how preservice teachers envision the role that they believe families will play in their future classroom reading instruction. Although this study did not follow the preservice teachers into their future classrooms to observe the levels to which their visions were enacted, this study advances the vision development literature by exploring the assets and challenges of vision enactment. Given that the preservice teachers identified three assets and three challenges to enacting their visions during their first year of teaching, future studies could use these as a point of departure for future vision studies. Similar to how Hammerness (2003) followed preservice teachers into their future classrooms, scholars could use the identified assets and challenges found in this study to investigate vision development and enactment.

In addition to adding to the vision literature, this study's findings offer a contribution to the family engagement and family literacy scholarship. The literature indicates that teachers play a critical role in building partnerships with families (Kidd, Sanchez, & Thorp, 2004). Additionally, several studies suggest that it is beneficial for our students when teachers use their students' families' "funds of knowledge" to guide their teaching (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2005; Amaro-Jimenez, 2016). Echoing the findings from Brayko (2013) that showed preservice teachers can expand their views of literacy when involved in community-based placements, the findings from this study show that preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction can be shaped and developed when given opportunities to observe family literacy practices from another culture (i.e., the ELCAA event) and to engage family members to learn more about their backgrounds, cultures, and literacy practices (i.e., family member interview assignment). The family member interview experience and reflection was helpful for preservice teachers to put ideas into practice and to reflect on what they learned from family members as experts of their own lives and their own children. Also, the ELCAA experience was helpful and allowed for insight into another specific culture to see literacy and language practices come alive for the preservice teachers. The findings from this study illustrate the impact that family engagement assignments can have on preservice teachers in helping to develop their visions for integrating families' funds of knowledge into their literacy teaching as well as to help to prepare them to engage families in literacy in their future classrooms.

To more specifically discuss the "funds of knowledge" framework (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), this study also contributes to research using a funds of

knowledge lens and helps us have a more nuanced understanding of how preservice teachers view the role of families in literacy instruction. For example, the continuum outlining the different levels to which the preservice teachers held funds of knowledge frames and also illustrating the different visions each group had for the role of the family in literacy instruction showed that preservice teachers can see families as having assets but not necessarily see those assets as a guide to their instruction. Further, preservice teachers can envision family members coming into the classroom to read a book, but not picture family members having extensive skills and rich knowledge. This more distinct understanding of how preservice teachers can view families helps highlight the incredibly specific ways they envision working with families and engaging families. If preservice teachers envision families only as supporters who read for the class from time to time, even though they have much more to offer, then family-teacher partnerships that involve consistent communication will more than likely not come to fruition.

Lastly, this study contributes to the field of multicultural education and the literature on culturally responsive teaching by investigating the preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices in their instruction. The findings from this study indicate that all of the 34 preservice teachers had at least a basic understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy (e.g., they wanted diverse classroom libraries), with 13 of those 34 preservice teachers providing evidence of a more developed understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy (e.g., they wanted to develop bicultural identities in their students). Further, many of the focal participants attributed their teacher education program to the development of their visions of culturally responsive teaching. The findings in this study contrast what Wosley, Young, Scales, Scales, Lenski, Yoder, Wold,

Smetana, Grisham, Ganske, Dobler, and Chambers (2013) found in their study. They found that the area of diversity to “continue to present a problem for most institutions” (p. 213) and an area where they needed the most improvement. While their teacher education program was attributed to helping them to create lenses of culturally relevant teaching, the program could continue to build on this strength to help all of them develop visions for identifying and using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. With their teacher education program placing an emphasis on culturally responsive pedagogy, the preservice teachers’ visions included ways to teach in a culturally responsive fashion. This points to the argument made in Chapter 2 about teaching frameworks and what is or is not emphasized in teacher education programs. For example, if the edTPA framework of assess, plan, and instruct is emphasized without the integration of other elements or constructs (i.e., family engagement), then preservice teachers’ visions will default to what is emphasized or elevated. For these preservice teachers, culturally responsive teaching was evidently emphasized, which is why most of the preservice teachers included some elements of culturally responsive teaching in their visions. Yet, only five teachers envisioned using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. This means we have more work to do to prepare teachers to identify families’ literacy funds of knowledge and also envision using those to also guide their instruction.

Implications for teacher educators. As our schools continue to become more diverse with regards to race/ethnicity, religion, culture, ability, income, background, home country, and beyond, it is important for teacher educators to continue to embed elements of culturally relevant pedagogy into their courses and to help prepare our

preservice teachers to engage families to learn more about their diverse literacy practices in order to inform their instruction for students from a variety of backgrounds. The findings from this study have several implications for teacher educators. These implications include the following: a) teacher educators have the opportunity to help preservice teachers develop their visions in a rather short period of time (i.e., one semester), b) teacher educators can tap into preservice teachers' elementary educational experiences as students to help them shift how they envision teaching reading and engaging families, c) teacher educators can offer more discussion and strategies around the role of the family in order to help preservice teachers shift from seeing families as supporters to seeing families as partners, d) teacher educators can expand preservice teachers' visions of what counts as assessment data in order to help preservice teachers envision diverse family literacy practices as information to also guide instruction, and d) teacher educators can add extra support after giving assignments such as the ELCAA event and the family member interview assignment.

First, the findings from this study indicate that elementary preservice teachers' visions can be developed and transformed over a rather short period of time (i.e., one semester). Knowing the potential for change in visions, teacher educators have the opportunity to help preservice teachers develop their visions for teaching reading, but also other areas of content. Thus, even if a teacher education program does not want to integrate vision development across the program, individual teacher educators can help preservice teachers develop and foster their visions in their semester-long courses.

In addition to the findings illustrating the development of visions over one semester, the study also indicated that the preservice teachers' educational experiences

when they were in school as students played a key role in helping to shape their visions. Teacher educators have many opportunities to offer preservice teachers time to reflect on their own educational experiences and consider how their time as students shapes their vision for teaching. For example, assignments such as a Reader's Autobiography (J. Turner, personal communication, September 3, 2014) that allows preservice teachers to think back on the ways they learned to read and to consider other literacy experiences that shapes their view of teaching reading can help preservice teachers identify and develop their visions for teaching.

Another significant finding included the various ways that the preservice teachers envisioned the role of the family. Twenty-one preservice teachers viewed families as supporters and envisioned family members working on homework or reading to their children each night at home. Knowing these perspectives, teacher educators can offer assignments and class dialogue to help preservice teachers shift from seeing family members as supporters only to also picturing them as partners in the literacy development of the child. Further, many of the preservice teachers envisioned having parents and family members come into the classroom to read a book. The way in which they described these parent and family visits and read alouds involved them coming in every so often, not necessarily on a regular basis. This was interpreted as the idea of having family engagement as one of the items on a teacher's checklist. Only five of the preservice teachers indicated that they would have a regular, ongoing partnership with families with consistent communication and interaction in order to build a routine of using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction. For teacher educators, they can build in strategies, discussions, and course assignments that

can help preservice teachers shift from seeing family engagement as an initiative done once or twice each year to envisioning building partnerships and relationships with parents and families that are grounded in authenticity and consistency.

Further, one of the interesting findings for the “emerging” and “developing” groups of preservice teachers was that they viewed student literacy assessment data (e.g., benchmarks, running records, formative assessments, etc.) as the key driver to their literacy instruction. It seems as though the idea of formative assessments (e.g., observations, exit tickets, etc.) was a common thread throughout their visions for how they would plan their instruction, which implies that this assessment strategy is one that many of the preservice teachers envision using. With that understanding, preservice teachers’ visions of assessment can be developed further to also include diverse family literacy practices as another set of data to help guide literacy instruction. For example, when teaching preservice teachers about formative assessment practices and strategies, teacher educators can also provide formative assessment strategies for preservice teachers to learn about families and their diverse literacy practices. These formative assessment strategies could include weekly or monthly “exit tickets” for students to take home and complete with a family member. These exit tickets could ask for a brief description of the activities the family did together that involved literacy during that week, weekend, or the month. Another formative assessment strategy could involve preservice teachers observing literacy practices found within a family through home visits, community events like the ELCAA, or religious and cultural events. Teacher educators could provide observation forms for the preservice teachers to write down their literacy observations and their observation notes could be discussed during class sessions. Drawing on the

findings from this study, as well as other supporting research, I developed a framework for teacher educators to use to help preservice teachers connect the strategy of using formative assessments with learning more about diverse family literacy practices (see Appendix K). In addition to the framework, I also created formative assessments for preservice teachers to use to gather information about families (also found in Appendix K). Using these resources as well as others, teacher educators can help preservice teachers connect the idea of assessment and family literacy practices and help them come to include diverse family literacy practices in their assessment toolkit, to help them connect the valuable family literacy resources to their classroom reading instruction.

Finally, the findings indicate that the ELCAA event and the family member interview project both helped to transform their visions for teaching reading and engaging families, yet many of these shifts did not show up or shine through in their final vision statements on the last day of class. Thus, if teacher educators include these assignments or similar assignments in their courses, extra support and an added “push” to help these developments “stick” for the preservice teachers would be helpful for them to sustain their visions. In this study, the ELCAA and family member interview assignments were opportunities for the preservice teachers to develop their visions; they were not designed to be interventions. However, based on the findings, the ELCAA event offered the opportunity for preservice teachers to observe a specific culture’s literacy practices, but more time could have been allocated to pushing and guiding the preservice teachers to think about how that experience connected to their visions through in-class discussions. One way that teacher educators can help these developments permeate within preservice teachers’ visions would be to integrate the idea of identifying diverse family literacy

practices as a skill woven throughout the entire teacher education program. Then, teacher educators can offer check-in and discussion points by asking preservice teachers to write vision statements throughout their programs in order to track their vision developments. This might also help to make their vision developments more permanent fixtures in their visions upon completion of their teacher education program. As a whole, the preservice teachers who had envisioned family members as supporters had a basic understanding of the concepts of culturally relevant pedagogy. However, based on their reflections, they indicated a generic view of culture in that all students should feel welcomed, be able to share their cultures and backgrounds, and feel respected. Further, their reflections implied that they envisioned incorporating into their future classrooms the activities from the ELCAA in the same exact manner as they were observed at the event. Some of them indicated that they would read a book to the class in English and in another language, just like the books were read in English and in Amharic at the event. This implies that these preservice teachers are willing to glean ideas presented to them, but potentially need to be pushed to think about ways to apply them to meet the needs of their future classrooms of diverse students and to put their own creative spin on them—not to introduce activities verbatim. Given this, teacher educators can offer more in-class discussions after preservice teachers attend events like the ELCAA to brainstorm ideas and ways to truly enrich the classroom literacy instruction from a cultural perspective.

Implications for teacher education programs. During the interviews and the focus group, the preservice teachers offered several suggestions for helping them leave the program more prepared to engage families. These suggestions included: a) offering more exposure to parent and family engagement activities throughout the teacher

education program, b) collaborating with placement schools and teachers to ensure that preservice teachers are given more opportunities to observe teachers and administrators engaging families, and c) teacher education programs can plan their sequence of reading methods courses to integrate vision development within each semester-long course (Duffy 2002).

First, teacher education programs can work to develop programs that integrate exposure to parent and family engagement activities throughout the entire teacher education program. For example, building in opportunities for preservice teachers to observe multiple back-to-school nights, family literacy events, book fairs, and parent-teacher conferences. Many of the focal participants noted that they would have like to have been able to observe more family engagement activities. Teacher education programs could consider offering a specific course on parent and family engagement and help prepare preservice teachers to build relationships with family members. Further, family engagement and learning about families can cut across other disciplines, including math, science, and social studies. Teacher education programs could explore ways that preservice teachers could identify families' funds of knowledge and use those to inform their instruction in other content areas.

Second, teacher education programs can collaborate with placement teachers and principals to ensure that the preservice teachers are able to see them model engagement initiatives with parents and families. For instance, collaborating with teachers to ensure that at least one home visit is conducted and the preservice teacher intern is able to join and observe the interactions between the teacher and the family. As another example, teacher education programs can support administrators to collaborate on ways that

principals and school leaders can include families in the school environment on a regular basis. Further, teacher education programs could offer community-based placements for preservice teachers to be immersed in the communities; these could be partnerships with after-school programs, community centers, and other local organizations.

Lastly, teacher education programs can plan out their reading methods courses to each include vision development for how they envision their future classrooms, but specifically for identifying and developing their visions for engaging families. Developing vision can allow them to self-assess and self-reflect on the key areas they would like to further foster and develop. One of the significant findings from the interviews and the focus group with the seven focal participants was that their elementary education experiences when they were young children played a critical role in shaping and developing their vision. Preservice teachers can benefit from reflecting on their own educational experiences and considering how they contribute to the developing of their visions for their future classrooms. The findings from this study show vision changes and areas of vision development from just one semester. If teacher education programs integrated visioning throughout the preservice teachers' entire program (Duffy, 2002), the changes and development could be even more pronounced.

Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

From a methodological standpoint, this study had limitations with regards to the duration of the study and the manner in which the survey was given. First, the study's timeline was over the course of one semester, so the time allotted for preservice teachers to develop their visions was rather short. While we were able to see some of the preservice teachers' visions develop and evolve in this study, a longer period of time

would have allowed for the possibility of more preservice teachers' to reflect on their experiences and to grow and develop their visions. Further, with more time, course instructors could offer more assignments and projects that offer additional community- and family-based activities that would provide more experiences to recognize and value diverse family literacy practices and more time to consider ways to integrate them into future instruction. Second, I made the survey anonymous because I anticipated that would garner more participation. But, this was a limitation because I was then not able to compare preservice teachers' visions to their levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy. In retrospect, I would have asked the preservice teachers to identify themselves on the survey questionnaire.

In addition to methodological limitations, limitations of the researcher existed as well. First, longitudinal effects were not able to be assessed and evaluated because I only gathered a snapshot of their visions over the course of the semester. I did not follow the preservice teachers into their first year of teaching to observe further development or how they were carried out. Second, the potential existed for researcher bias because I knew the participants in the study because I was their instructor. Thus, I was aware of their academic work and their attitudes toward teaching and working with students. During the data analysis phase, there was potential for me to analyze their written work or their interview and focus group transcripts through the lens of their instructor. I acknowledged this potential, and in an attempt to mitigate as much bias as possible, I covered up their names during my initial reading of their written assignments.

The findings from this dissertation study indicated that preservice teachers can benefit from thinking about their visions for teaching and having opportunities to develop

it. Stemming from this study, many opportunities exist for future research and investigation. Future research recommendations include the following: 1) preservice teachers could be given opportunities to identify and develop their visions for teaching reading throughout their entire teacher education program with data collected at the end of each semester; 2) professional development for in-service teachers using vision development could be examined; 3) the preservice teachers in this study could be followed into their first year of teaching to explore their vision enactment, including the supports and challenges discussed in Chapter 5; and 4) teacher educators and preservice teachers could use the framework for using formative assessment strategies to learn more about diverse family literacy practices that I created (see Appendix K) based on the findings from this study to examine how the framework and assessment strategies helped to develop their visions, increase their levels of preparedness, and prepare them to learn about families in order to drive their instruction.

To begin, the first research recommendation for future studies could include providing opportunities for preservice teachers to develop their visions for teaching reading and working with families embedded in methods courses throughout the course of their teacher education program. Allowing preservice teachers more time and experiences to develop their visions could provide them with stronger and more clear visions when they enter the teaching profession. This recommendation would address the methodological limitation found in this study of only being one semester in duration.

Next, future research could use a similar design to this study but offer it in the form of professional development or professional learning communities for in-service teachers. Using the construct of vision and a funds of knowledge framework, future

studies could examine how in-service teachers envision using diverse family literacy practices to guide their current classroom reading instruction. Findings from those studies could also be compared to the findings found among the preservice teachers to examine the similarities and differences between their visions as well as their vision development.

Also, given that this study examined elementary preservice teachers' visions at two points in time over the course of one semester, future studies could follow preservice teachers into their first year of teaching to explore how the visions are carried out. This would also address the limitations of the researcher found in this dissertation study in that I did not follow them into their first year of teaching to investigate how their visions were enacted. Using similar qualitative methods and the constructs of vision and vision development found in this study, future research could explore how visions of preservice teachers are enacted once they transition to having their own classrooms.

Finally, one of the key findings from this study included understanding that many of the preservice teachers discussed using formative assessment strategies to learn more about their students in their future classrooms. They conveyed a strong understanding of the purpose of formative assessments as well as the many types of formative assessments (i.e., observations, exit tickets, discussions, etc.). Given that many of the preservice teachers had a solid grasp on using formative assessments and that they were included in many of their vision statements, making the connection to also include learning more about families through formative assessment strategies appears to be one small change in their paradigms that can make a significant difference. Thus, from these findings, I developed a framework and a set of formative assessment strategies for preservice teachers (or teachers) to use to learn more about families on a regular, systematic basis

(see Appendix K). For future research purposes, teacher educators could embed this framework and strategies into their coursework and then examine a) how they contribute to the development of preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction, b) how they contribute to their levels of preparedness to engage families in literacy, c) how they help to prepare them to learn more about families, and d) how the use of the formative assessment strategies affects their funds of knowledge perspectives.

In conclusion, the findings from this study indicated that most of these 34 elementary education preservice teachers had built, to some extent, a foundation of culturally relevant pedagogy and viewed families, although to varying degrees, through a funds of knowledge perspective; many of the preservice teachers attributed this foundation to their teacher education program. The findings also illustrated a nuanced understanding of funds of knowledge perspectives held by preservice teachers and how these distinctions can factor into their visions for the role that families play in their future classroom reading instruction. My hope is that these findings can help teacher educators guide future teachers along this funds of knowledge continuum so that all preservice teachers come to see families as partners in their future classroom reading instruction. Lastly, my personal vision for our future educators is that they will come to see the diverse literacy practices all around them –beyond their literacy benchmarks and beyond their classrooms –and within our families and communities.

Appendices

Appendix A

Pilot Focus Group

Jenny Albro

Wednesday, July 27, 2016

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

11 total participants in attendance

3 faculty members, 8 clinic teachers

University of Maryland Reading Clinic Teachers

Location: Greenbelt Elementary (Prince George's County School)

Agenda

- Teachers are invited to get coffee and snacks upon arrival and find a seat in chairs in a semi-circle formation
- Jenny will have chart paper to record responses and she will record audio with her iPhone
- Jenny will begin by saying, “Thank you for attending this focus group designed to help me develop the best interview questions, research questions, and assignments to help explore teacher candidates’ level of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy. In the fall, I will teach two sections of a reading methods course for undergraduate seniors who will be placed in an internship for three days per week. These 60 students will be my participants. I will also interview professors and instructors of our reading courses. During our time together today, I will start with my research questions, move on to the interview questions, and then to a discussion about possible assignments. I will conclude with a discussion question. If it is okay with all of you, I would like to record the session so that I can go back to listen to it to make sure I didn’t miss anything. [Pause for any objections.] Okay, let’s begin.”
- Jenny’s original notes in regular font; focus group notes in **bold font**
- Research questions:
 - How are traditional teacher education programs preparing elementary education teacher candidates to engage diverse families in literacy?
 - What do teacher candidates plan to do once they start teaching to engage diverse families in literacy?
 - **Do teacher candidates feel prepared to engage diverse families in literacy?**
 - **Beliefs**
 - **Cultural sensitivity**
 - **Multicultural literature**
 - **Cultural competence**
- Interview questions for teacher candidates

- What have you learned in your teacher education program thus far that has prepared you to engage diverse families in literacy?
- What experiences with parents and families have you had in your program?
- What courses have you taken in your teacher education program that you believe prepared you to work with diverse families?
- What else could be included in your coursework to help to prepare you to work with diverse families to foster literacy among your future students?
- What else could be included in your internship to help to prepare you to work with diverse families to foster literacy among your future students?
- When you hear the term “diverse families,” what comes to your mind?
- **How do teachers define diversity?**
- **What is the goal of engagement?**
- **How will they find out about diverse cultures?**
- **How will they engage people at school?**
- **How does your school engage faculty around diversity?**
- **Diverse faculty at your school?**
- **What are other non-traditional ways to engage families?**
- **What types of communication are you planning?**
- **Website to communicate with parents?**
- Interview questions for teacher education faculty of reading courses
 - What assignments have you included in your classes that help to prepare teacher candidates to engage diverse families in literacy?
 - How prepared to you think our teacher candidates are to engage diverse families in literacy when they graduate from our teacher education program?
 - What do you think the teacher education department could do to improve the program around family engagement initiatives?
 - **What does success look like for teacher candidates?**
 - **What have you noticed that students struggle with? Excel in?**
 - **Role of technology**
 - **How does policy help or hurt?**
 - **Is it addressed in the course syllabus and if not what do you do?**
 - **What is their comfort level for teaching diverse students?**
 - **What is their background?**
 - **What is the definition of diversity?**
 - **How do you prepare students to handle all types of diversity?**
 - **How do you prepare students to handle issues/problems?**
 - **Knowledge of strategies**
 - **Do case studies have a cultural component?**
 - **How does your program address diversity?**
 - **How are we engaging all faculty?**
- Assignments

- Bi-weekly example of diverse families and ask students to react, reflect, etc.
- Family engagement around literacy project (teacher candidates choose a way to engage families (e.g., PT conferences, home visits, etc.) and then reflect on the experience)
- **Interview an immigrant who has been through the school system**
- **Interview ESOL teachers and literacy specialists**
- **Use real examples from schools and discuss how the teacher responded**
- **Compare different immigrant backgrounds (formally educated vs. illiterate)**
- **Find out whom to rely on/get help from in the school: Language Line and Parent Liaisons (?)**
- **Interview a librarian**
- **Give survey about defining diversity**
- **What would you present to families?**
- **Evaluate multicultural books in the classroom**
- **Ask mentor teachers how he/she engages families and how the school engages families**
- **Multiple literacies**
- **Student strengths**
- **What would you create?**
- **Comfort level of interns**
- **Service project (book drive)**
- **Protocol of home visits**
- **Maryland Book Bank (near Baltimore)**
- **Lessons designed to be culturally sensitive and respectful**
- **Create a way to communicate with parents**
- **What resources are parents already using?**

Thank you to those who took notes for me during this focus group.

Final Question:

- Do you think teacher candidates should be 100% prepared to teach prior to their first day of teaching? Or, do you think teacher candidates should learn some aspects “on the job”?
 - 100% of the focus group participants stated that teachers cannot be 100% prepared to teach prior to their first day of teaching. Teachers need time to develop their identities as teachers and instructors and to develop classroom management skills. Teachers need to have time to collaborate with other teachers and to learn from them “on the job.”
 - Most of the focus group participants stated that “theory” was the main component taught in their teacher prep programs and too many “reflections” about teaching were mandated/assigned.

Appendix B

Teacher Vision Assignment EDUC 404

At the end of every class session throughout the semester, I will give the students an “exit ticket” that will count as a part of their semester grade. The teacher vision assignment on the first day of class will be exit ticket #1, and on the last day of class it will be exit ticket #11. Some of these exit tickets will be handwritten and some will be submitted via ELMS. They will be graded for completion and inclusion of all items in the directions. Below is the description from the syllabus:

Class Exit Tickets

Each class session will end with an exit ticket for students to complete. Exit tickets may be completed as blog entries on ELMS; others may be in-class exit tickets in pencil/paper format. Exit tickets may include, but are not limited to, the following: one-minute essay, 3-minute pause, think-write-pair-share, directed paraphrasing, writing frames, RSQC2, or Say Something. Not only are these ways for you to discuss and think about topics discussed in class, these should generate ideas for formative assessments (informal techniques to check for understanding) that you can then try out with your students. **Due by the end of each class session, unless otherwise noted.**

On the first day of class, preservice teachers will be asked to write vision statements for how they view their classroom reading instruction. These will be written on the “My Vision” document during the last 15 minutes of class. On a power point slide, I will provide a definition of “vision” so that the preservice teachers understand the assignment. The following is the definition of vision that I will use: Teacher visions allow teachers to consider “what is possible and desirable in teaching to inspire and guide their professional learning and practice. Such visions connect important values and goals to concrete classroom practices” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1017).² Then, I will ask them to write their vision statements around five dimensions: a) assessment, b) planning, c) classroom environment, d) the role of the teacher, and e) the role of parents, family members, and community members.

Throughout the semester, the preservice teachers will have two opportunities to engage with family and community members. First, they will attend the Ethiopian Literary and Culture Awareness Association Event on a date of their choice in either late September or late October. After they attend this event, they will reflect on their experience and what they learned how the event contributed to their visions for teaching reading. Below are some examples of their reflection questions:

1. How did the experiences at the Ethiopian Literary and Culture Awareness Association Event affect your vision of teaching reading? How did it affect your vision for engaging diverse families?

² Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). From preparation to practice: Designing a continuum to strengthen and sustain teaching. *Teachers college record*, 103(6), 1013-1055.

2. How did your attendance contribute to your vision for teaching reading in regards to the following two dimensions: a) the role of the teacher and b) the role of parents, family members, and community members?
3. What specific family, community, and cultural literacy practices did you observe? How do you think you could use those literacy practices to guide your classroom reading instruction?

Second, they will choose a family member of a student in their internship placement and conduct an interview to learn more about the student, the family, and their home/community literacy practices. After they conduct the interview, they will reflect on what they learned and how the interview contributed to their visions for teaching reading. Below are some examples of their reflections questions:

1. Explain why you chose this family member to interview. (Include the information about the family member here, e.g., type of family member, background information, languages spoken, occupation, etc.)
2. Did the Ethiopian Literary and Culture Awareness Association event change your vision of teaching literacy? If so, how so? If not, why not? Did the family member interview (experience learning about a diverse family) change your vision of teaching literacy? If so, how so? If not, why not?
3. What are two things you learned from this experience? How could you use the family literacy practices that you learned about from this family member in your classroom reading instruction?

On the last day of class, preservice teachers will be asked to write vision statements for how they view their classroom reading instruction. These will be written on the “My Vision” document during the last 30 minutes of class. On a power point slide, I will provide a definition of “vision” so that the preservice teachers can review the definition from the beginning of the semester. The following is the definition of vision that I will use: Teacher visions allow teachers to consider “what is possible and desirable in teaching to inspire and guide their professional learning and practice. Such visions connect important values and goals to concrete classroom practices” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1017).³ I will ask them to write their vision statements around five dimensions: a) assessment, b) planning, c) classroom environment, d) the role of the teacher, and e) the role of parents, family members, and community members.

Finally, within the final block of 30 minutes of class, I will give them their vision statements from the first day of class and ask them to compare and contrast their first-day visions to their last-day visions. I will provide a graphic organizer of a Venn diagram for them to complete. The completion of the Venn diagram and the last-day vision statement will collectively be exit ticket #11.

³ Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). From preparation to practice: Designing a continuum to strengthen and sustain teaching. *Teachers college record*, 103(6), 1013-1055.

My Vision

Name: _____

Please include your vision for teaching reading around the dimensions below.

- a) assessment (How do you envision using assessment for teaching reading?)

- b) planning (How will you plan your classroom reading instruction?)

- c) classroom environment (How do you see your classroom environment in regards to reading/literacy?)

- d) the role of the teacher (How do you envision your role as a teacher of reading?)

- e) the role of parents, family members, and community members (Regarding your reading instruction, how do you envision parents, family members, and community members playing a role?)

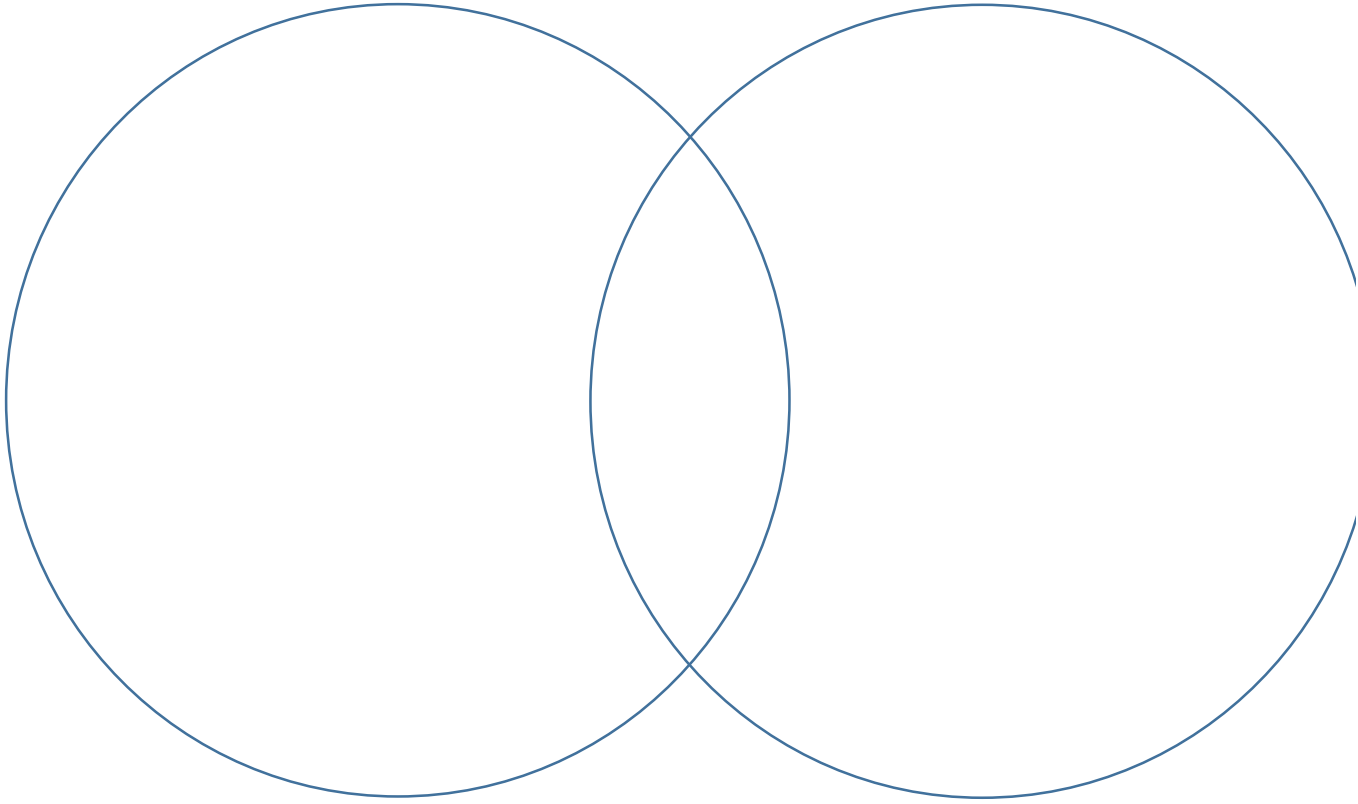
Venn Diagram to Compare/Contrast Vision Statements

Name:

Vision #1 (first day of class)

Vison #2 (last day of

class)



Appendix C

ELCAA Event Reflection (Exit Ticket #7)

Jennifer Albro

Sep 16, 2016 at 4:44pm

5

After you attend the Saturday event hosted by the Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness Association, reflect on the questions below and respond to them in a discussion post. Please respond/comment on at least one post from your colleagues.

- 1 How did the experiences at the Ethiopian Literary and Culture Awareness Association Event affect your vision of teaching reading? How did it affect your vision for engaging diverse families?
- 2 How did your attendance contribute to your vision for teaching reading in regards to the following two dimensions: a) the role of the teacher and b) the role of parents, family members, and community members?
- 3 What specific family, community, and cultural literacy practices did you observe? How do you think you could use those literacy practices to guide your classroom reading instruction?
- 4 Did this experience change how you view reading assessment to drive your reading instruction?

This topic was locked Nov 28, 2016 at 12am.

Appendix D

Family Member Interview Assignment
EDUC 404
Fall 2016
Instructor: Jenny Albro

The purpose of this assignment is to provide preservice teachers with a way to begin to build relationships with family members of your students. This interview assignment will also allow you to think about literacy through a home and community lens as opposed to just a school lens. The main objective is to contribute to the shaping of your vision and further prepare you to articulate ways you can engage families in literacy by learning about one family's literacy practices.

1. Choose a student in your internship whose family you would like to get to know. Choose a student and ask that student who they spend the most time with in their family. Then, **choose a family member of that student and you will conduct a 30-minute interview** with them at some point during the semester, but after you attend the Ethiopian Literary and Cultural Awareness Association Saturday session. Try to think beyond just parents as family members, although interviewing parents is acceptable. Family members could include: parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, guardians, or (in some cases) a close family friend who lives in the same house as the student.
2. Consult with your mentor teacher about your chosen family to ensure she/he approves and be sure to explain to him/her the assignment. Ask your mentor teacher the best way to contact the family member (e.g., phone call, email, letter) and then coordinate a time to conduct the interview. Inform the family member that this is a class assignment to help you learn more about what literacy looks like within families and to help to prepare you to engage families in literacy. Let the family member know that he or she is the expert in this interview and you want to learn more about his/her family literacy practices.
3. You will be given **five** interview questions that you should ask the family member and you are required to generate at least **five** additional questions to ask them. (see interview questions below)
4. After the interview, you will reread the questions and their answers and submit a written reflection about the experience. You will be given **seven** reflection questions to answer. (See reflection questions below.)
5. Submit your notes from your interview. Do not record the interview. Just as we practiced in class, try to have a relaxed, comfortable conversation. If the family member provides a quote that you would like to capture, jot that down, but otherwise, focus on listening and gathering insights into the life and cultural practices of that family, as well as any specific literacy practices. As soon as you are finished with the interview, answer the reflection questions so that the interview is fresh in your mind.

Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself? (i.e., home town/home country, current community, occupation, family structure, languages spoken, etc.)
2. What reading and writing activities do you do at home with [student]? What are some family traditions passed down through your family?
3. How do you define “literacy”? Why do you believe literacy is important?
4. What are your hopes for [student]? What do you wish for [him/her] when [he/she] grows up?
5. What do you believe are the best ways teachers can communicate with and engage families in your child’s education? In your child’s literacy development?
6. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]
7. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]
8. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]
9. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]
10. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]

Reflection Questions

1. Explain why you chose this family member to interview. (Include the information about the family member here, e.g., type of family member, background information, languages spoken, occupation, etc.)
2. Did the Ethiopian Literary and Culture Awareness Association event change your vision of teaching literacy? If so, how so? If not, why not? Did the family member interview (experience learning about a diverse family) change your vision of teaching literacy? If so, how so? If not, why not?
3. Did this interview change any of your views and perceptions about how you intend to engage families in literacy once you have your own classroom? Did it change your vision for how you will learn about your students’ family literacy practices? If so, how so? If not, why not?
4. What are two things you learned from this experience? How could you use the family literacy practices that you learned about from this family member in your classroom reading instruction?
5. Knowing the challenges and time constraints of interviewing a family member of each of your future students, how do you plan to learn about the family literacy practices of your future students?
6. How would you describe the family member’s perspective on literacy and how he/she would like teachers to engage them?
7. Reflect on the 5 questions that you generated. What were at least three aspects you learned from asking those questions?

Appendix E

Survey Protocol

This survey will be given to all of the elementary education preservice teachers in my two sections on the last day of class. I will post it to ELMS in the form of a Google survey to allow for a simple way to respond. I will also have hard copies available at the interviews so those who did not complete it online will fill it out on paper.

The survey questions include the following:

Age:

Gender:

Grade you prefer to teach:

Hometown:

1. Based on the scale below, how prepared do you feel to engage families? (circle the number that represents your level of preparedness)

1	2	3	
4			
Not very prepared	Somewhat prepared	Mostly prepared	Very prepared

2. Based on the scale below, how prepared do you feel to engage diverse families? (circle the number that represents your level of preparedness)

1	2	3	
4			
Not very prepared	Somewhat prepared	Mostly prepared	Very prepared

3. Based on the scale below, how prepared do you feel to engage families in literacy? (circle the number that represents your level of preparedness)

1	2	3	
4			
Not very prepared	Somewhat prepared	Mostly prepared	Very prepared

4. Based on the scale below, how prepared do you feel to engage diverse families in literacy? (circle the number that represents your level of preparedness)

1	2	3	
4			
Not very prepared	Somewhat prepared	Mostly prepared	Very prepared

5. What are some assignments, readings, class discussions, etc. that you have had throughout your elementary teacher education program that have contributed to your level of preparedness? Please explain.

Appendix F

Interview Protocol

Thank you for participating in this interview on elementary education preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide classroom reading instruction. This is part of my dissertation study that I am doing here at the university. After analyzing some of your assignments from our class in fall 2016 and the survey responses, I selected you based on codes and themes that emerged from them.

During our time together in this interview, I will ask questions based on your visions for using family literacy practices to guide your classroom reading instruction. Please be open and candid in your responses as I want you to feel comfortable in sharing your thoughts and opinions. This interview will last approximately one hour.

The interview will be recorded so I can be sure that I can go back and capture all of your thoughts and opinions. Our conversation will remain confidential as your name will not be included with any comments you make during our time today. Are there any questions before we get started?

Before we actually begin, I ask that you complete a pre-interview questionnaire. Please answer all of the questions listed, but if you do not want to share information, that is your choice. Your completion of the questions is voluntary.

Do you agree to participate? [If yes, continue. If no, stop.]

Do you agree to be recorded? [If yes, continue and turn on recorder. If no, take field notes.]

Questions

1. Tell me a little about your classroom reading experiences when you were in elementary?
2. Did you have any specific home reading practices growing up? (e.g., help with homework, reading before bed) If so, what were they? What were some of the ways your teachers engaged your family in literacy?
3. How do you envision your reading instructional time in your future classroom? How will you plan for it?
4. How prepared do you feel to teach reading? How prepared do you feel to assess your students' reading abilities?
5. Do you feel prepared to engage families? (I want a "yes" or "no" here first to assess, but then I will ask for more detail.) Why or why not? (Here, ask specific items that have prepared them to engage families, e.g., course assignments, class discussions, etc.)
6. What learning opportunities or professional development experiences within your student teaching placement have helped to prepare you to engage families in literacy?

7. Outside of this semester, what experiences or other areas in your life have helped to shape your vision for engaging families and learning about their literacy practices?
8. What first comes to your mind when a parent or family member does not show up for a parent-teacher conference or a school-related event?
9. How do you define “diversity”? What is your vision for working with diverse families and populations?
10. How do you define “literacy”?
11. How do you define “family”? What do you think the family’s role entails when it comes to reading/literacy?
12. How do you plan to learn about diverse family literacy practices?
13. What is your vision for using family literacy practices to guide your classroom reading instruction?
14. Now that it is your last semester of your elementary teacher education program, what are two things that you still want to learn more about in regards to literacy instruction? (This question can help to show what is the focus, range, and distance of their visions for teaching reading.)
15. To conclude, I will present you with a brief case scenario about a diverse family and I want you to provide some ideas of ways you could engage them in literacy.
 - a. Case scenario: You are a third grade teacher in a classroom of students who come from various backgrounds that differ in race/ethnicity, religion, language, education levels, immigrant and refugee status, parents’ sexual orientation, and income levels. You have a new student who came to your class in mid-November, but you recently found out that the student and his family just moved to the United States from the country Jordan. What steps would you take to learn more about this new student and his family? How do you envision using knowledge gained about his family and their literacy practices to plan your classroom reading instruction?

Appendix G

Pre-Interview Questionnaire

Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Current Grade Level Placement: _____

Preferred Grade Level to Teach Upon Graduation: _____

How do you describe your race/ethnicity? _____

How would you describe your level of preparedness to engage families in literacy?

- 1 – not very prepared
- 2 – somewhat prepared
- 3 – mostly prepared
- 4 – very prepared

How would you describe your level of preparedness to engage diverse families in literacy?

- 1 – not very prepared
- 2 – somewhat prepared
- 3 – mostly prepared
- 4 – very prepared

What pseudonym would you like to use? _____ (only a first name is required)

Appendix H

Focus Group Protocol

Thank you for participating in this focus group on elementary education preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide classroom reading instruction. This is part of my dissertation study that I am doing here at the university. After analyzing some of your assignments from our class in fall 2016 and the survey responses, I selected you based on codes and themes that emerged from them, as well as an attempt to garner a sample of preservice teachers based on the entire class of preservice teachers.

During our time together in this focus group, I will ask questions based on your visions for using family literacy practices to guide your classroom reading instruction. Please be open and candid in your responses as I want you to feel comfortable in sharing your thoughts and opinions. This focus group will last approximately 90 minutes.

The focus group will be recorded so I can be sure that I can go back and capture all of your thoughts and opinions. Our conversation will remain confidential as your name will not be included with any comments you make during our time today. Are there any questions before we get started?

Do you agree to participate? [If yes, continue. If no, stop.]

Do you agree to be recorded? [If yes, continue and turn on recorder. If no, take field notes.]

I have a copy of each of your vision statements from both the beginning of the fall 2016 semester and the last day of class. I will hand them back to you and I want you to review them. You all participated in individual interviews, so please also reflect on what you shared about your visions for engaging diverse families and learning about their family literacy practices. For the first thirty minutes, I will ask you to use that time to draw your vision for engaging diverse families and learning about their family literacy practices. This can be images of your future classroom, a graphic organizer (e.g., web, figures, etc.), or other visuals. You can use text to describe and label, but try to use visual representations as much as you can. I have paper, pencils, markers, crayons, and colored pencils available. You may also use your computers to find or create digital images and represent your visions in a digital fashion.

Once you complete your drawing, we will spend the next thirty minutes sharing them with each other (i.e., show and tell). Then, the remaining thirty minutes will be a discussion with posed questions from me. Go ahead and get started on your vision creations.

Questions for thirty-minute show and tell.

1. What is your image? (Let's go around and share and describe what you each created the represents your visions. During this portion, please ask questions of each other. Ask for more clarification or detail, etc.)
2. Do you notice any themes that cut across each of the visions shared? (e.g., images or ideas that repeat, reoccur, etc.)

Questions (for final thirty-minute discussion)

1. What has contributed to the shaping of your vision?
2. What is the most important aspect of your vision?
3. What supports do you foresee in enacting your vision? (i.e., are there people, resources, or tools available?)
4. What challenges do you foresee in enacting your vision? (i.e., what barriers will stand in the way of enactment?)

Appendix I

Email Template for Recruitment of Preservice Teachers to Participate in Interviews and Focus Group

January 17, 2017

Dear _____,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my dissertation study that is investigating elementary preservice teachers' visions for using diverse family literacy practices to guide classroom reading instruction.

Based on analysis of your written reflections and assignments from the fall 2016 semester, I would like to invite you to participate in one semi-structured 60-minute interview AND one 90-minute focus group. This [link](#) will direct you to a google spreadsheet with time slots listed for the interview and focus group. If you are willing to participate, please add your first and last name into a time slot for the interview AND add your name to the focus group time slot. If you choose to not participate, it would be helpful to respond to this email and to let me know that you wish not to participate in the interview and focus group. **If you do not add your name by Friday, January 20, I will choose an alternate participant to fill your place.** Please note that your participation in the interview and focus group are voluntary.

If you participate in both the interview and the focus group for the full duration of each, you will receive a **\$75 gift card** upon completion of both the interview and the focus group.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jenny

Jenny Albro
Reading Methods Instructor
PhD Candidate
812.243.1715
albro719@umd.edu
2311 Benjamin Building
Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20740

Appendix J

Final Letter to Participants
(Hard copy given to each participant in a sealed envelope with their gift card)

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Dear Participant,

Thank you for participating in my study, Beyond Benchmarks: Elementary Education Preservice Teachers' Visions for Using Diverse Family Literacy Practices to Guide Classroom Reading Instruction. I greatly appreciate you allowing me to use some of your assignments from the fall 2016 semester and taking the time to conduct an interview and a focus group. As a way to show my appreciation and to compensate you for your time and insight, a \$75 Visa gift card is included with this letter. A receipt is also included if you need it for transactions.

Again, thank you for your time and insight.

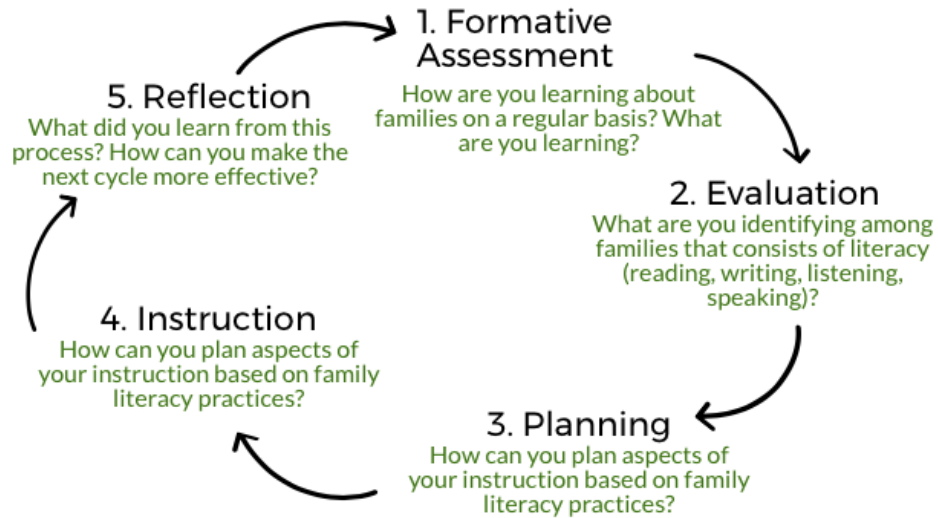
Sincerely,
Jenny

Jennifer Albro
PhD Candidate
Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership
University of Maryland, College Park
Albro719@umd.edu
8122431715

Appendix K

Formative Assessment Strategies for Teachers to Learn More About Families and Their Diverse Literacy Practices

The purpose of assessment in education is to gather information about what students know and are able to do. Assessments can include summative and formative assessments. Summative assessments gather data at specific benchmarks throughout the school year to ensure that students are learning and making progress. Formative assessments gather information about what students know, how they come to know content, what they are able to do, and how they learn new skills in order to guide future instruction. One area that has been underrepresented with regards to formative assessments is how teachers can learn about the diverse array of family literacy practices as data to also drive their instruction. The conceptual framework below outlines how preservice teachers and teachers can consistently learn about their students' families and the literacy practices that occur within the home and the community and plan for ways to integrate those into their instruction. In this framework, teachers should focus more on what families “do” and less on what families “know.”



What is the Formative Assessment to Learn About Diverse Family Literacy Practices Framework?

We know that data should drive instruction. We also know that students' families and communities play a large role in shaping their literacy development. This framework integrates these two concepts by asking teachers to think of family literacy practices as additional data to help drive their instruction. The framework is designed for teachers and preservice teachers to use diverse family literacy practices to guide their classroom reading instruction.

First, teachers should *assess* the literacy practices that exist with each student's family, as well as their community. This means gathering data and information about what families do together and how literacy is involved. For example, storytelling, playing board games, reading recipes and cooking, and visiting museums or cultural events all involve aspects of literacy. When teachers learn about the specific and diverse family literacy practices that occur within their students' families, teachers can come to see how literacy is fostered and developed outside of the classroom.

After teachers gather the data around what families do together, the next step is to *evaluate* this information in order to identify how literacy is included. This step in the cycle is vital to bridging the home and school contexts with regards to literacy instruction. In this step, teachers should ask themselves the following questions: a) what practices involve speaking and listening? b) what practices involve writing? and c) what practices involve reading? In the evaluation part of the cycle, teachers should come to understand what literacy practices are taking place within families and communities. Then, teachers will move to the planning phase where the knowledge around family literacy practices are integrated into the school literacy curriculum.

In the *planning* step, teachers will examine the school literacy curriculum, standards, and objectives, and identify areas where the information about students and their family literacy practices can help to guide the planning of their instruction. For example, if a teacher learns that several families tell stories then that teacher could have students tell stories in whole or small group settings, offer storytelling apps or programs (e.g., StoryCorps) as a listening center, or integrate storytelling into one of the upcoming literacy blocks. Planning can also include the classroom environment, such as creating a diverse classroom library based on the various family backgrounds and literacy practices, and developing a print- and culturally-rich setting where students see that their backgrounds and literacy practices are recognized and acknowledged. Once teachers have planned their daily, weekly, or monthly lesson plans, they are ready for instruction.

During the *instruction* step, teachers will teach their planned lessons or carry out the plans for student learning. It is important for teachers to continue to make observations during their instruction in order to assess student learning and to understand

how the integration of diverse family literacy practices into the instruction is affecting each student.

In the final phase, teachers should *reflect* on the process and what they have learned from going through the formative assessment cycle and how they can make it even more effective in the next cycle.

In this packet, strategies and resources for each step in the framework are provided. Teachers can photocopy materials and use them to gather data, evaluate the family literacy practices, plan their instruction, teach, and reflect on the process. The packet begins with Step 1: Formative Assessments of Family Literacy Practices.

Step 1: Formative Assessments of Family Literacy Practices

The first step to formative assessment involves gathering information. In Step 1, an overview for each method of data collection is presented followed by resources for preservice teachers to use to gather insights about diverse family literacy practices. The methods align with common strategies for formative assessments within the classroom and students, but these are designed specifically for preservice teachers to learn about families and their literacy practices to help to guide their instruction. The methods include the following: observations, questioning, discussions, and family projects. Step 1 begins with the method of observation.

Observations

In our classrooms, one key way teachers formatively assess students is through observations. When wanting to learn more about families, one of the best ways to learn is to watch and take note of what is happening. Teachers can ask families if they can do a home visit, they can attend religious and cultural events in the community (if

appropriate), and they can do a drive through the community. When conducting a home visit, it is important for teachers to think of these as opportunities to learn about students and their families. Teachers should walk away from home visits and other family and community activities with new information about what families *are doing*, and to avoid thinking about what they *aren't doing*. Use the observation form below to perform observations.

Observation Form

Before you go, consider these questions:

1. What do I want to learn from this observation?
2. Why did I choose this setting? (i.e., home visit, cultural event, etc.)
3. How will I potentially use the information from this experience in my classroom or to help plan my reading instruction?

Complete the form below.

Your Name: _____

Grade level you teach: _____

Date: _____

Observation setting (home, community, religious/cultural event):

Observation participants (parents, family members, neighbors, etc.):

1. Who is present at the event/home/community space?
2. Describe the actions among the people present.
3. If this is an event, what is the purpose of the event?
4. What text or texts do you see? (e.g., signs, posters, books, hymnals, etc.)
5. What types of literacy are you observing? (e.g., discussions, images that convey information, forms of communication, etc.)
6. How do you think literacy development is occurring within the family/community for children?

Questioning

In this dissertation study, one of the preservice teachers emphasized the importance of “just asking” questions in order for teachers to learn more about their students and their families. Sending home surveys to gather information or asking questions during parent-teacher conferences are effective ways to learn more about your students’ families and their literacy practices. Use the survey template below to send home with students for families to complete, and use some of the questions to follow up during parent-teacher conferences, too. You can also create a Google form to send the survey via email to families.

Survey

Student’s Name: _____

Name (or type) of family member who completed the survey:

1. What are your favorite things to do together as a family?
2. When you have a chance to get out of the house, what do you like to do?
3. What do you like to do when you are at home together?
4. What are your favorite types of books to read together?
5. What kinds of movies do you like to watch together?
6. Where are your favorite places to go within your neighborhood and community?
7. What language or languages do you speak at home?
8. How do you celebrate your traditions or cultural heritage?

9. How do you like your child's teacher to communicate with you? (phone, email, in-person)

10. Who are the people closest to your child? (family members, friends, etc.)

Discussions

In addition to gaining information about family literacy practices through surveys and brief parent-teacher conferences, having conversations and discussions with family members can help to build relationships among teachers and families and offer more insight into their diverse range of literacy practices. Use the Family Member Interview protocol and the Discussion Starters as formative assessment resources to learn more about families and their diverse literacy practices.



Family Member Interview

Drawing on the work of Buck and Sylvester (2005) and the findings of this dissertation study, the purpose of the family member interview is to provide preservice teachers with a way to begin to build relationships with family members of your students. This interview will also allow you to think about literacy through a home and community lens as opposed to just a school lens. The main objective is to contribute to the shaping of your vision and further prepare you to articulate ways you can engage families in literacy by learning about one family's literacy practices.

1. Choose a student in your internship whose family you would like to get to know. Choose a student and ask that student who they spend the most time with in their family. Then, **choose a family member of that student and you will conduct a 30-minute interview** with them. Try to think beyond just parents as family members, although interviewing parents is acceptable. Family members could include: parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, guardians, or (in some cases) a close family friend who lives in the same house as the student.

2. Consult with your mentor teacher about your chosen family to ensure she/he approves and be sure to explain to him/her the assignment. Ask your mentor teacher the best way to contact the family member (e.g., phone call, email, letter) and then coordinate a time to conduct the interview. Inform the family member that this is a class assignment to help you learn more about what literacy looks like within families and to help to prepare you to engage families in literacy. Let the family member know that he or she is the expert in this interview and you want to learn more about his/her family literacy practices.
3. You will be given **five** interview questions that you should ask the family member and then you generate at least **five** additional questions to ask them. (see interview questions below)
4. After the interview, you will reread the questions and their answers and submit a written reflection about the experience. You will be given reflection questions to answer. (See reflection questions below.)
5. Submit your notes from your interview. Do not record the interview. Try to have a relaxed, comfortable conversation. If the family member provides a quote that you would like to capture, jot that down, but otherwise, focus on listening and gathering insights into the life and cultural practices of that family, as well as any specific literacy practices. As soon as you are finished with the interview, answer the reflection questions so that the interview is fresh in your mind.

Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself? (i.e., home town/home country, current community, occupation, family structure, languages spoken, etc.)
2. What reading and writing activities do you do at home with [student]?
What are some family traditions passed down through your family?
3. How do you define “literacy”? Why do you believe literacy is important?
4. What are your hopes for [student]? What do you wish for [him/her] when [he/she] grows up?
5. What do you believe are the best ways teachers can communicate with and engage families in your child’s education? In your child’s literacy development?
6. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]
7. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]
8. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]
9. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]
10. [Generate and answer one question on your own here.]

Reflection Questions

1. Explain why you chose this family member to interview. (Include the information about the family member here, e.g., type of family member, background information, languages spoken, occupation, etc.)
2. Did the family member interview (experience learning about a diverse family) change your vision of teaching literacy? If so, how so? If not, why not?

3. Did this interview change any of your views and perceptions about how you intend to engage families in literacy once you have your own classroom? Did it change your vision for how you will learn about your students' family literacy practices? If so, how so? If not, why not?
4. What are two things you learned from this experience? How could you use the family literacy practices that you learned about from this family member in your classroom reading instruction?
5. How would you describe the family member's perspective on literacy and how he/she would like teachers to engage them?
6. Reflect on the 5 questions that you generated. What were at least three aspects you learned from asking those questions?

Dialogue Starters

Many times preservice teachers report that they do not know what to say to parents or family members or that they feel unprepared to engage families. The dialogue starters in this section can help to provide topics to discuss and ways to engage families during family literacy nights, in the carpool lane, or other opportunities where you interact with parents and families.

How was your week/weekend? What did you do?

What are you looking forward to this school year? What is your child looking forward to?

What are your favorite hobbies?

What are your favorite books that you are reading right now?

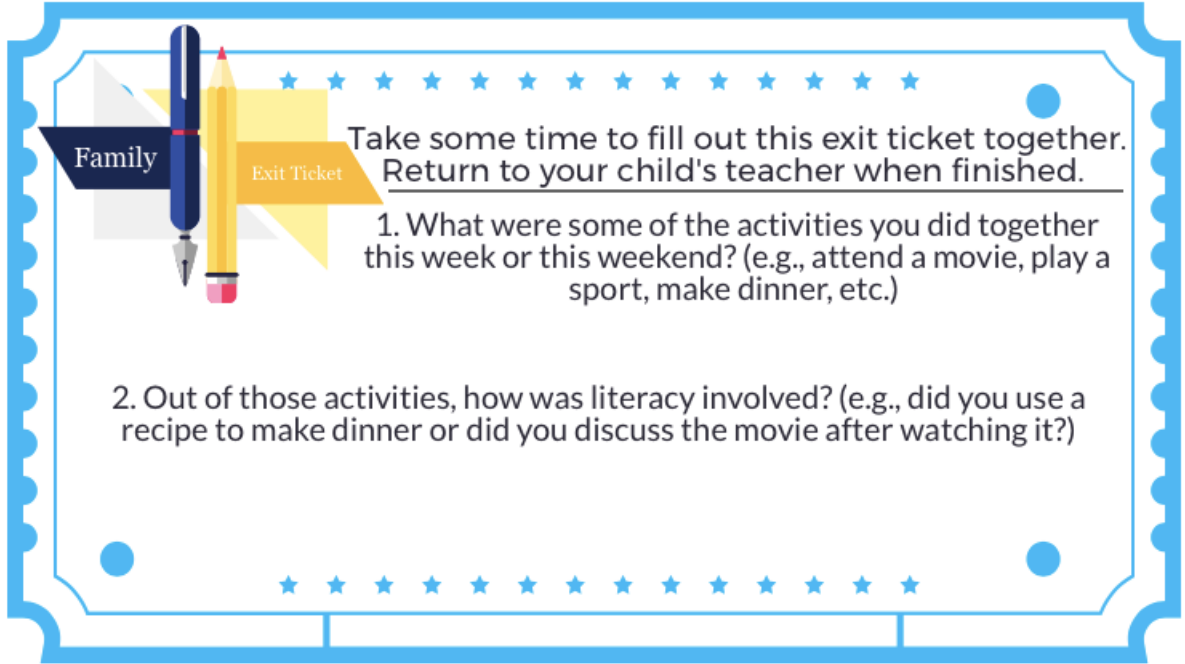
What are your upcoming plans for the break?

Where are your favorite places within your neighborhood/community? Restaurants, events, library, etc.?

Family Projects

Another formative assessment strategy for learning more about your students, their families, and their diverse literacy practices is using family projects. Family projects allows your students and their family members to discuss the activities they do together and to reflect on the literacy learning they naturally do together. This formative assessment strategy can offer rich and detailed information about your students and their families. The formative assessment resources in this section include exit tickets, learning journals, and a postcard project.

Exit Tickets



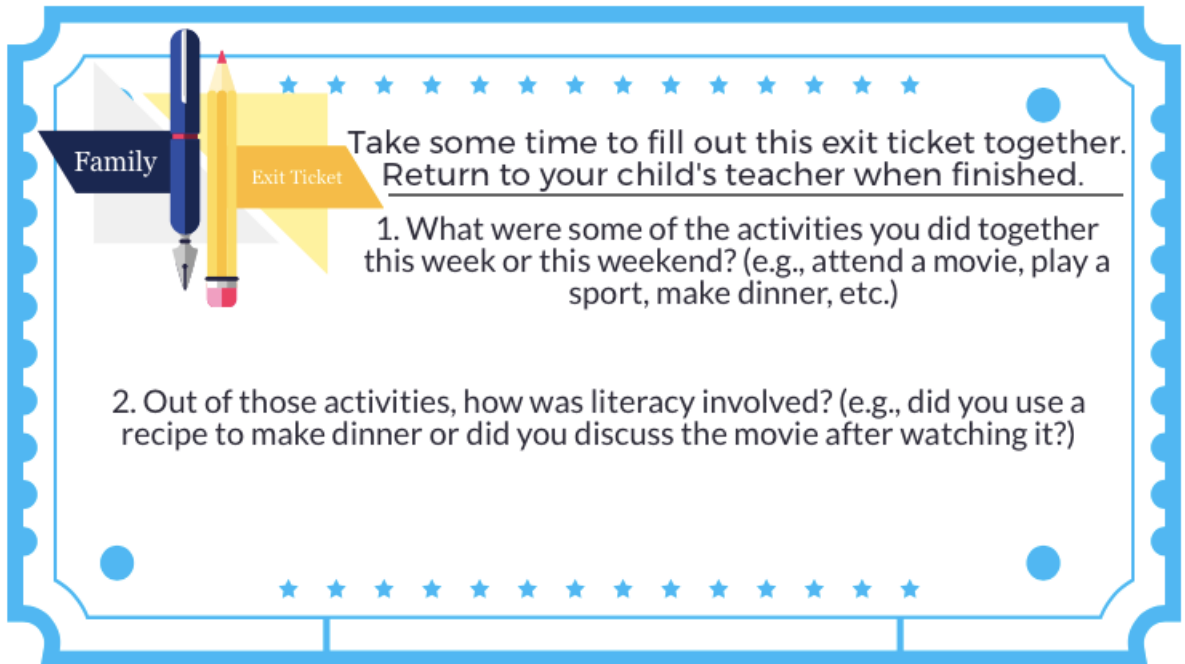
This is a template for an exit ticket form. It features a blue border with a scalloped edge. On the left side, there is a graphic of a blue pen and a yellow pencil. A dark blue banner with the word "Family" in white is positioned over the pen. A yellow banner with the words "Exit Ticket" in black is positioned over the pencil. The form contains two numbered questions and a space for a rating at the bottom.

Family Exit Ticket

Take some time to fill out this exit ticket together.
Return to your child's teacher when finished.

1. What were some of the activities you did together this week or this weekend? (e.g., attend a movie, play a sport, make dinner, etc.)
2. Out of those activities, how was literacy involved? (e.g., did you use a recipe to make dinner or did you discuss the movie after watching it?)

Rating stars: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



This is a duplicate of the exit ticket form above. It features a blue border with a scalloped edge. On the left side, there is a graphic of a blue pen and a yellow pencil. A dark blue banner with the word "Family" in white is positioned over the pen. A yellow banner with the words "Exit Ticket" in black is positioned over the pencil. The form contains two numbered questions and a space for a rating at the bottom.

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Rating stars: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Learning Journals

Another project that preservice teachers can use to learn more about family literacy practices is learning journals. These are designed to be used with a small group of students' families because they can take a lot of time to maintain. It is advised to start with one or two students' families and then add more if time allows. Learning journals are shared between the teacher and a family member in order to learn more about the literacy learning that occurs at home and to also help to build a partnership between the home and school environments. They are also specifically designed to help to inform teaching practices, based on the knowledge of the home practices. For example, if you are struggling to identify texts that interest one of your students, you may use the learning journals activity to learn more about what interests the student and what may he/she may be reading at home with his/her family.

Directions: Using a composition notebook or an online discussion tool (e.g., Google Docs), create an ongoing written dialogue between you and a parent or other family member. Use the letter template below to initiate the learning journals project.

Dear _____,

I am so happy to have [your child] in my class this year! As I learn more about [your child] in the classroom, I would like to learn more about him/her through you and learning more about what literacy strategies and practices you do at home together to help inform my instructional practices in the classroom. One way to learn more and to build a partnership is through learning journals. With this letter, I have included a composition notebook [or attached link to a google doc] that I will send home each week. It would be helpful if you could write down some of the literacy practices you shared together,

including books you are reading, movies or shows you are watching, museums or community activities you are attending, etc. I will respond to each of your journal entries letting you know how your insight has helped to contribute to my teaching practices and [your child's] literacy learning and development. With regular, on-going exchange of information, I believe we can build a solid partnership that will contribute to [child's] literacy education.

Thank you,

Postcard Project

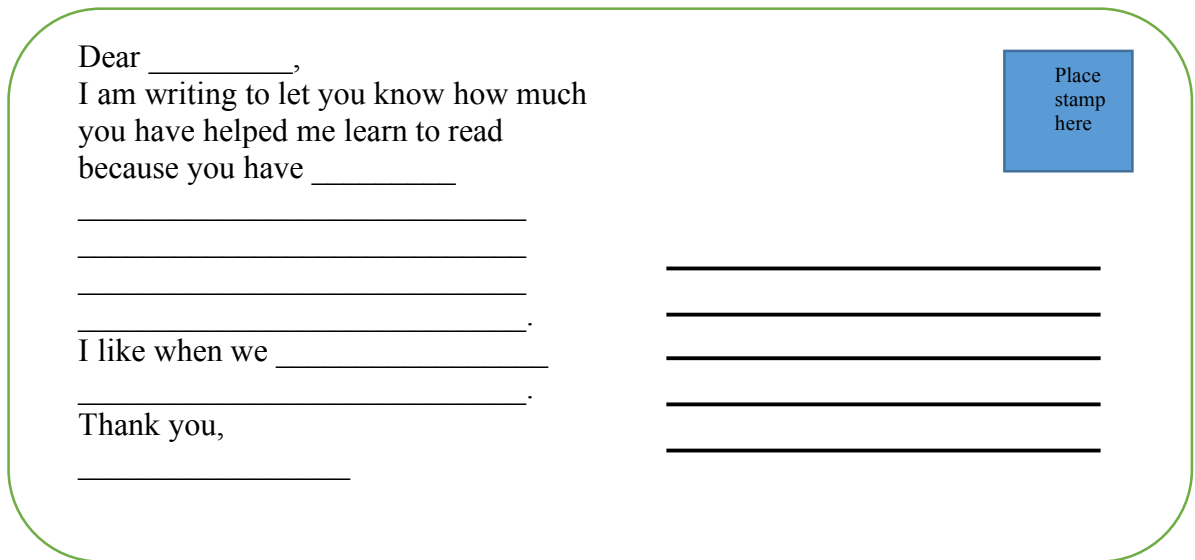
Another project that preservice teachers can use to learn more about families and their diverse literacy practices involves learning more about other family members who contribute to the literacy development and learning for children. The Postcard Project allows students to think about the family members in their lives and how each of those family members has helped them learn. From these, preservice teachers can come to understand in a deeper and more complex way how children see other family members playing a role in their literacy lives and overall learning. Use the Postcard templates below to implement the project.

Directions: First, give each student 3 postcards. Students will identify 3 family members who they think play a role in their literacy learning. Students will write a note to each family member on the postcard and then draw a picture on the front that makes them think of that family member. For example, they could draw where the family member lives, an image of the student with that family member, or an illustration of items or memories that represent that family member. The student will write a note telling that family member how they play a role in their literacy learning. Students will mail the postcard to the family members and also include an additional postcard template for the family member to respond if they would like to reply.

Front of Postcard Template

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners and a thin green border, intended for a photograph or drawing.

Back of Postcard Template

A rectangular box with rounded corners and a thin green border, containing pre-printed text and lines for an address and message.

Dear _____,
I am writing to let you know how much
you have helped me learn to read
because you have _____

_____.
I like when we _____
_____.
Thank you,

Place
stamp
here

Step 2: Evaluation of Family Literacy Practices

Once you have collected the information about the diverse family literacy practices found within the families of your students, it is important to analyze and evaluate your data. In your analysis and evaluation step, you want to look for the areas in your data where you see literacy and then connect to places in your lessons that you can draw on those diverse family literacy practices. Use the data matrix below to analyze and evaluate the information you gleaned from your formative assessments of family literacy practices.

Data Matrix

	Observations	Questioning	Discussions	Projects
What literacy practices did you find? (i.e., storytelling, reading signs, conversations about a movie, sequencing skills from following a recipe, etc.)				
What literacy skills did you find in your data? Oral Language (e.g., listen, explain, ask and respond to questions, etc.) Reading (e.g., using vocabulary from content areas, compare and contrast, summarize, draw conclusions, etc.)				

Writing (e.g., identify intended audience, describe main idea, use organization strategies, etc.)				
What literacy strategies did you find in your data? (e.g., rereading, activating schema/background knowledge, using context clues, making predictions, using graphic organizers, using word attack strategies, visualizing, etc.)				
What connections are you seeing from your data to your instruction? (e.g., how could the skills and strategies found within the family literacy practices contribute to your guided reading, read alouds, classroom library selections, literacy centers, etc.?)				

Other observations? Notes?				
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Step 3: Instructional Planning Based on Family Literacy Practices

Once you complete the data matrix, move on to Step 3 to plan your instruction. In this step of the cycle, you will write your lesson or unit plans. If you have already written them, co-planned them, or use pacing guides provided by your school or your mentor teacher, you can simply add to them—you do not need to rewrite them necessarily. Use the samples below to get an idea of how you can develop your lessons or add to existing lessons.

Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 2nd

Type of Lesson: Guided Reading

Objective(s): To retell a story and include characters, setting, plot, and other key details.	Standard(s) Addressed: <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2</u> Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.5</u> Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.
Formative Student Assessment: Students will verbally retell the story to a peer and then work together to write down	Developing Purpose for Students: Teacher will give example of a recent text he/she read and how he/she was able to

the retelling of the story.	share (retell) it with his/her book club.
Knowledge of Learners: One student with a 504 plan that needs extra time to complete work. One student who is fluent in Spanish and is working to also learn English. All students have worked on the skill of retelling stories in past lessons.	Planned Supports Based on Knowledge of Learners: Teacher will offer more time for student to complete work. Teacher will offer visuals and labels for student to ensure understanding; will also provide Spanish translation if available. Teacher will review that the students have worked on this skill in the past.
Materials: Text: Sophia's Dream (5 copies) Graphic Organizer to write down the story retell	Planned Supports and Enrichments: Supports: Extra time and explanation; peer discussion; modeling; labels/images Enrichments: Students can include aspects of character development in their graphic organizers and describe how the characters changed over the course of the story
Procedures: 1. Teacher will introduce the skill of retelling and why it is important (setting the purpose). Teacher will then introduce the text and read the first page. After reading the first page, the teacher will explain that the author is introducing the character and the setting. Teacher will have an anchor chart nearby to model the story elements and what students should look for while reading. 2. Students will then begin reading. Teacher will monitor reading, both fluency by listening and comprehension by asking questions to individual students as they read. Once the text is completely read by each student, the teacher will discuss the text. The teacher will help the students identify the characters, the setting, the plot, and other key details. 3. The teacher will offer feedback for students based on the observations of their reading and their discussion of the text. 4. The teacher will then have the students complete their formative assessment activity. 5. The group will come back together and share their learning and their project. Closure: Teacher will tell students that they should continue to use graphic organizers while they are reading other texts to help them identify the story elements to make retelling easier.	

Modified Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 2nd

Type of Lesson: Guided Reading

Objective(s): To retell a story and include characters, setting, plot, and other key details.	Standard(s) Addressed: <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.2</u> Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.5</u> Describe the overall structure of a story, including describing how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action.
<u>Formative Student Assessment:</u> As a group, and facilitated by the teacher, students will verbally discuss the story elements. Students will then work together to create a game board that retells the story. The teacher will provide a game board template with the four corners outlining the introduction (“starting point”), the problem, the climax, and the solution. The game board spaces between each corner will be spaces for the characters, the setting, and other story elements to be included in both written text and in drawings.	Developing Purpose for Students: Teacher will give example of a recent text he/she read and how he/she was able to share (retell) it with his/her book club.
Knowledge of Learners: One student with a 504 plan that needs extra time to complete work. One student who is fluent in Spanish and is working to also learn English. All students have worked on the skill of retelling stories in past lessons.	Planned Supports Based on Knowledge of Learners: Teacher will offer more time for student to complete work. Teacher will offer visuals and labels for student to ensure understanding; will also provide Spanish translation if available. Teacher will review that the students have worked on this skill in the past. Through the game board activity, students will collaborate so work can be distributed among the group; and, the students will be able to use and create images and labels based on the text.
<u>Knowledge of Family Literacy Practices:</u> After visiting the homes of the students in this guided reading group, you notice that playing board games is a common theme found within the students’ families. You decide to integrate the family literacy practice of playing board games into your formative assessment for this lesson.	

Materials: Text: Sophia's Dream (5 copies) Graphic Organizer to write down the story retell	Planned Supports and Enrichments: Supports: Extra time and explanation; peer discussion; modeling; labels/images Enrichments: Students can include aspects of character development in their game boards and describe how the characters changed over the course of the story
Procedures: 1. Teacher will introduce the skill of retelling and why it is important (setting the purpose). Teacher will then introduce the text and read the first page. After reading the first page, the teacher will explain that the author is introducing the character and the setting. Teacher will have an anchor chart nearby to model the story elements and what students should look for while reading. 2. Students will then begin reading. Teacher will monitor reading, both fluency by listening and comprehension by asking questions to individual students as they read. Once the text is completely read by each student, the teacher will discuss the text. The teacher will help the students identify the characters, the setting, the plot, and other key details. 3. The teacher will offer feedback for students based on the observations of their reading and their discussion of the text. 4. The teacher will then have the students complete their formative assessment activity. 5. The group will come back together and share their learning and their project. Closure: Teacher will tell students that she will make copies of their game board and they can take it home and play it with their families.	

Step 4: Classroom Literacy Instruction

In this step, it is important for preservice teachers to observe their own instruction by videotaping themselves or to have another teacher, literacy coach, or administrator observe you to offer feedback on how you integrated the knowledge of students' families and their literacy practices into the instruction. If you are unable to record yourself or to have someone else observe you, take notes during (if you can) or immediately after to assess your instruction. Use the form below to record notes regarding your classroom literacy instruction.

Classroom Literacy Instruction Notes

Name: _____ Date and Time: _____

Number of Students (for this lesson): _____

Type of Lesson (e.g., guided reading, whole group, etc.) _____

Observations of the Teacher (the teaching)	Observations of the Students (the learning)	Observations of Overall Learning Environment
Notes:	Notes:	Notes:
Did the teaching practices engage students? If so, how so? If not, why not?	How were the students engaged?	Did the integration of family literacy practices help to build rapport and foster relationships among teacher and students? If so, how so? If not, why not?

Did the teaching practices deepen student learning? If so, how so? If not, why not?	How did the students come to extend their learning?	Does the physical learning environment reflect the lives of the students, including their families and their literacy practices?
Did the teaching practices help make connections between students' home lives and the literacy learning? If so, how so? If not, why not?	How did the students notice the connections between their home lives and the literacy learning?	Does the learning environment reflect a low-risk setting? Do students feel comfortable participating and engaging the content?

Step 5: Reflection

In the final step of the cycle, preservice teachers should reflect back on the entire process, from gathering information on family literacy practices to integrating them into their instruction. Use the reflection questions below to think back on the process, including identifying the areas of success and the areas that you would change for the next cycle.

1. What did I learn about my students and their families from this process?
2. How did this make my teaching or literacy more effective?
3. How did the formative assessment strategies help me plan for specific students or groups of students? (e.g., help to individualize instruction in a center for one student or help to individualize instruction for a small, guided reading group)
4. How did this process help me to learn more about my students' language use and how it contributes to the development of academic language and literacy learning?
5. What feedback did students provide during the reading instruction that can help me plan future lessons? (i.e., did the students notice that you were making connections between their family literacy practices and the classroom reading instruction?)
6. What are my next steps? What will you do differently in the next cycle? What will you do the same?

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